

Historical Science of Kazakhstan: Before and After the Collapse of the USSR

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The article describes the developments in the field of historical research in Kazakhstan since the collapse of the USSR. The paper attempts to analyse historical scholarship development trends to provide an overview of current research patterns, methodology, and shifting theoretical paradigms. The authors collected data using various methods, including a comprehensive literature review and analysis of primary historical sources, and these findings are presented in descriptive form. Contemporary historical scholarship in Kazakhstan is presently engaged in very active and innovative research. Among the tangibles, developments achieved over the past few years include preparing a new generation of thoroughly revised updated textbooks. Besides, many field studies have unearthed new archaeological discoveries in Kazakhstan's territory that could revolutionise how future historians view the past. These discoveries are significantly altering the way scholarship understands the societal-historical interaction with the physical landscape of the entire region. Further progress is being made using interdisciplinary methodologies.

Keywords: *History, USSR, Kazakhstan, Methodology, Modernisation, History of Kazakhstan, Marxism-Leninism, Post-Soviet Republics*

Introduction

The collapse of the USSR and the formation of the independent states became the catalyst for profound changes in the way historical science was conducted. A change occurred after many scholars from the post-Soviet states recognised the decline of history, and this prompted a



challenge to the limiting heuristic possibilities of the theoretical parameters of Soviet historical science. In particular, radical doubts about the Marxist-Leninist theory of socioeconomic formations have led to a new generation of scholars to become actively engaged in developing new tools for research, using innovative methodological techniques, and adopting new developmental schemata for the study of history. Some scholars associate this crisis-of-confidence with a renewed emphasis on using analytical-empirical research to generate new models for the analysis of historical theory.

This article contributes to developing the contemporary academic discourse about the current themes in Kazakhstani historical science. It also attempts to address the more specific issues surrounding the theoretical and methodological enquiry of the 'History of Kazakhstan' and other post-Soviet states.

Methodology

The purpose of the article is to analyse the changes that have occurred in Kazakhstani historical science since the collapse of the USSR. After defining the primary research aim, the next step was to set objectives, formulate questions, identify problems and the central concepts to be applied in the study. The main sources used were drawn from secondary and primary data, and included: archival materials, monographs, reports, and government reports from educational programs.

It should be noted that the authors took a direct part in the process of analysis, commenting, and interpretation of the data. This study is based on the authors' scientific judgments, formulated as a result of archival materials analysis, reviewing many written works, and their observations. As a result, the findings demonstrate that historical research since the collapse of the USSR has both expanded the horizons of its source base considerably and the use of interdisciplinary methodologies approaches to the study of materials. This led in some cases to a significant revision of earlier findings and created conditions for studying new problems in domestic historiography.

The article draws on the scientific works and materials from the personal archive of B.G. Ayagan. Studying the history of the multiparty system in Kazakhstan, B.G. Ayagan, began to collect materials on developing the multiparty system in Kazakhstan in the 1980s, during the era when glasnost and perestroika were first ushered in. However, this first wave of liberal expression did not immediately spread to Kazakhstan, despite the malaise of discontent with the USSR Communist Party manifesting itself in the public protest movements in Kazakhstan at that time.

Thus, the article provides a historiographic excursion, identifies the sources of information used to analyse the transformation of historical science in Kazakhstan after the collapse of the



Soviet Union and the proclamation of independence, covering the chronological framework from 1991 to 2020.

1. How to reform historical science?

With the USSR collapse, the new climate enabled significant changes in research and conceptual and methodological approaches in Kazakhstan's historical science.

The historical scholarship community of Kazakhstan in this period faced completely new challenges. There was no longer the former centralising bodies of the Ministry of Education of the USSR and its Department of Social Sciences. Until that point and for many decades, centralised, comprehensive political directives were issued to cover many specific research issues, including various methodological instructions.

However, the main point of departure occurred when the party machine, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, headed by their General Secretaries, collapsed and censorship of any speeches that should have been accepted for strict execution and obligatory quoting abruptly ended. Decisions and decrees of party congresses, which served as direct instructions on the coverage of the most fundamental topics of history, now no longer applied, and control of party bodies over the formation of the USSR's historical consciousness was no longer either omnipotent or all pervasive.

For peoples living outside the USSR, it might be challenging to imagine how to complete the surveillance, and censorship of ideas had been up until that time. The control extended into all areas of academic enquiry and was relentless. The situation could best be compared only with the totalising thought control processes described in the books by G. Orwell "1984" (Orwell, 2013) and "Animal Farm" (Orwell, 1996).

At the same time, it was ironic to read in the book by the American author Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History or the Last Man" (Fukuyama, 2006) that many social issues were allegedly resolved under Soviet rule. Fukuyama appears to have had little understanding of the nature of totalitarian societies if he genuinely believed that in a society where fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to life, were not observed, and any social issues could neither be openly discussed or effectively solved.

Throughout the Soviet era, state-sponsored repression of personal beliefs and opinions never ceased. This was compounded by other deprivations, including the constant lack of food and quality clothing. People secretly engaged in personal 'subversive activities' by listening to the Beatles' music - classified as the products of the "rotting West" by ideologues of communism. Any doubt about the "political correctness" of the decrees of the Communist Party was labelled as "denigration" or "attacks on the Soviet system" or ardent "nationalism." The national history of the constituted peoples that made up the USSR territories underwent the



most severe deformations; with the illustrious past of these peoples, the contribution of their distinctive cultures to world civilisation, all subject to such monstrous political repressions during the Stalinist period, which culminated in the tragic deaths of millions of the population during the collectivisation period of the 1930s (History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Short course, 1938, p. 28)

Before the period of glasnost and perestroika, only foreign authors could write about these crimes against humanity, such as Robert Conquest ("The Harvest of Sorrow" (Conquest, 1986), "The Great Terror" (Conquest, 1990) and Nicolas Werth "History of the Soviet State" (Werth, 2006).

This topic was also partly addressed in the work of historian and political scientist Martha Brill Olcott (Olcott, 2002) and Frederick Starr (S. Frederick Starr, 1972). It should be emphasised that all these works only became known to Kazakh scholars after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Authors of the article highlighted the permanent surveillance and violation of human rights during the rule of I.V. Stalin and the command of Y. Andropov and L. Brezhnev in the USSR. Only the permitted ideas proclaimed by the party apologists of Moscow formed the official orthodoxy of Soviet historical science (Kozybayev, Baypakov, Burkhanov, Koshanov, Kumekov, Sagadiev, Tuimebaev, et al., 2010).

To understand the complexity of the USSR regime, it is worth turning to the experience of modern communist states that survived after the collapse of the USSR and extant systems found in countries such as China, North Korea and Cuba. The power of these states is built on the principles of centralised government.

The hegemonic theoretical paradigm for a state-sponsored historical enquiry was based on the works of K. Marx and F. Engels, and including a particular focus on the "Manifesto of the Communist Party," written in 1848 (Marx & Engels, 1848). The works of K. Marx, F. Engels, and V. I. Lenin were declared as "an integral doctrine of Marxism-Leninism." In fact, under the guise of "the teachings of Marxism-Leninism," the "Short Course" of the CPSU was created and edited by I.V. Stalin. (History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). Short course, 1938, p. 28)

Not all researchers are probably aware that the canons of the "Short Course" were always supplemented by so-called closed decrees, for example, on the work of the "Tatar Party Organization" of August 9, 1944, and other similar directive documents (Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b) "On the state and measures to improve mass political and ideological work in the Tatar party organization," 1944), and that these decrees played an extremely detrimental role in the further improvement of the historical science in all research centres, including Kazakhstan.



Even the revisionist declarations of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, denouncing the late Soviet dictator I.V. Stalin and condemning the "cult of personality" that the late Joseph Stalin created to glorify his power and leadership (Naumov, 1996), were left untouched in "The Short Course of the CPSU" which continued to hide the unpalatable ideas of the dictator under the new names of works not only in the history.

Stalinism's fundamental doctrines about the "class war" - the elimination of all capitalist markets and private enterprises, establishing the proletariat's dictatorship, and creating "socialism in one country" - became the basis for covering any questions of Soviet society. Modern historians might find it difficult to comprehend just how theoretically confining it was to be forced to drive the entire rich culture and civilisation of people into the narrow framework of class antagonisms and endless battles. However, in Soviet historiography, it was as narrowly restrictive as that.

In 1991, after the Soviet Union finally collapsed, the following set of tough questions arose for the historical scholarship community of Kazakhstan:

1. What should be the new methodological foundations of scientific research if the country no longer recognises the "Marxist-Leninist" theory-methodology?
2. On what basis should history books, textbooks and educational programs for schools and universities, which will be used to teach millions of students in schools and students in higher educational institutions, be written?
3. How to organise the training of new personnel in graduate and postgraduate education after the collapse of the previous system of training teachers of public disciplines?
4. How to find a place for Kazakhstan studies in the global community of historians? How to study such complex and controversial issues, such as the demarcation of boundaries, the coverage of inter-ethnic conflicts in the past, and the contemporary period?

Trying to answer these questions and also address the massive outflow of personnel from redundant scholarship became the central organising tasks of research institutes in the 1990s. While significant progress has been made in addressing some of the problems over the past period, there are still many outstanding problems that have not been effectively resolved.

In principle, all these major problems were relevant for historians practicing in all post-Soviet states, although some were more pressing than others - such as the training of postgraduates to fill vacant positions.

After three decades, post-Soviet states can confidently claim that the recovery after USSR's sudden disintegration was highly problematic. It is no secret that some historians have

embarked on the platform of nationalist rhetoric or have become heralds of narrowly partisan political slogans to proselytise on the demarcation and delimitation of borders or sanitise and idealise brutal ethnic conflicts from past times.

Particularly sensitive topics of crucial importance to national historical states have been demarcating historical borders, resolving religious and ethnic conflicts, and re-situating Kazakhstan's relationship within the post-Soviet Russian sphere of influence. The enduring legacy of the recent political past and the apparent reluctance of the former authorities to consult with informed academic research has arguably led to the marginalisation of post-Soviet republics' historical research institutions.

For almost all post-Soviet republics, the problems of the repression carried out by the Soviet authorities, the ideological background of mass violations of human rights in the USSR, and the assessment of the nature and essence of Soviet power turned out to be enormously sensitive. Disclosure of new archives on information about the famine and political repressions carried out by the Soviet leadership during the era of Gorbachev horrified not only the general reading public but also it would appear naïve and politically ingenuous academic circles. Scholars also learned that the mass shootings and repressions of the 1930s, and state-sponsored violence during the Brezhnev period of the 1970-1980s, were also 'whitewashed' so not to offend political opinion. In the same period, a movement of dissidence also developed in the USSR that began to challenge the official propaganda manufactured by the regime. While western readers know more about academics like A. Sakharov and A. I. Solzhenitsyn, in Kazakhstan, the main resistance came from dissidents such as Makhmet Kulmagambetov, together with workers of the church (priests, clergymen) and representatives of repressed peoples, who ultimately succeeded in exposing human rights violations and the suppression of dissent. Through their memoirs and the extant archival materials, the fate of prisoners of war of World War II was finally revealed in Kazakhstani historians' work, but only after independence (Ayagan, 1995; 1998; Vykhodchenko, 2014; Smagulov, 2020).

Even such a benign unifying factor as the joint participation of the USSR peoples during World War II began to receive a new critical examination based on actual historical sources rather than the received wisdom of Soviet propaganda. In some cases, this led to different diametrical re-evaluation in the works of historians researching in different post-Soviet republics.

As a direct consequence of this alienation, academic and professional ties were cut off almost instantly, mutual consultations on topical issues ceased, reducing significantly the number of collaborative scientific journals and joint monographs.

Invitations to scientific conferences and meetings of specialised councils to defend the doctoral dissertations became extremely rare.



To more transparently cover the topic and analyse it from a long term perspective, the authors propose considering the modernisation of historical science in the Republic of Kazakhstan using theoretical frameworks.

2. Union of Science and Historical Faculties (Departments) in Universities

By 1991, 3 institutes of historical profile functioned in Kazakhstan: Ch.Valikhanov institute of History and ethnology, R.B. Suleimenov Institute of Oriental Studies, Institute of archaeology named after A.Kh. Margulan.

Despite the weak material and technical base and lack of financial resources, scientists continued scientific research on various aspects of National History (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 14-15). Together with scientists from the universities' historical disciplines departments, the institutes compiled new model programs for schools, historical faculties and universities, and developed textbooks. The collective work "History of Kazakhstan from ancient times to the present day" edited by the then director of Ch. Valikhanov institute of history and ethnology, Academician of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic M.K. Kozybayev, was prepared in 1996 (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 59-63). It was the first fundamental work prepared in the years of independence directly on national history. These essays were the first to reveal "white spots" on the national history, such as the famine of 1928-1933, Stalinist repressions and mass deportations of Soviet Koreans, Poles, Finns, Kurds, Crimean Tatars, Greeks, Lithuanians, Germans, Chechens, Ingush, Karachais, Balkars, Meskhetian Turks to Kazakhstan from the Caucasus, Crimea from the Volga region, and the Far East. New archive data, statistical materials and methodological principles for covering historical events were presented in this work.

Given the need to create an essential document in June 1995, the National Council on State Policy under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan adopted a new "Concept for the Formation of Historical Consciousness in the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Kozybayev, Baypakov, Burkhanov, Koshanov, Kumekov, Sagadiev, Tuimebaev, et al., 2010). In the "Concept" new directions of historical science development were outlined. The document identified priority ways of reforming historical science (Kozybayev (Ed.), 1993, p. 241-299).

In the period between 1989-1991, there was a sub-division and segmentation of both historical science into more specialist disciplines and the formation of new areas of enquiry derived from the fields of the social sciences, including sociology, cultural studies, international relations, and political science. In particular, new political history courses such as the "Modern Theory of Socialism" and somewhat later, the "Theory of Socio-Political Relations" (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 16) were introduced. Organised within the history faculty of the CPSU, new specialist departments of political science and sociology were founded and centres to research public opinion. In most cases, the personnel corps of these divisions came from the departments of historical science.



Kazakhstan's historians in 1991-1993 prepared standard programs, teaching aids, and educational literature. The set textbooks of the Soviet period were replaced entirely by a new series right through from grades 4 to 11. The design of textbooks has also changed to reflect better publishing processes and pedagogical support using colourful illustrations and examples of primary sources.

By order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic, alternative types of textbooks were introduced. In contrast with, for example, Russia, the material was selected to reflect the inclusivity and diversity of the country and avoid any ideas of racial or religious superiority.

In history, research in archaeology continues to actively develop and progress during the period of independence of Kazakhstan. This reflects a continuation with the previous Soviet regime, since local research in Kazakhstan was not viewed as having a significant impact on the national consciousness of the peoples of the USSR. For example, in the period of independence, the "Code of Archaeological Monuments of Kazakhstan" was compiled by archaeologist V.A. Groshev (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 59-63).

Historian and archaeologist V.F. Zaybert singled out the Botay culture of the Eneolithic (4–3 thousand B.C.) as the basis for the formation of the origins of the steppe civilisation in the Ural-Irtysh interfluvium (Mukanova, G.K., 2019, p. 160–166).

3. Reforming the Historical Higher School

During the years of independence, the improvement of the historical higher school of Kazakhstan was carried out in the context of integration of higher education of Kazakhstan into the European educational space.

Since 2010 in Kazakhstan, there have been dramatic changes in higher education. With the introduction of the Bologna Process, the Councils for the defence of doctoral and candidate dissertations closed. Instead, there has been an adoption of the three-tier system of education: Bachelor - Master - Ph.D., based on the principles of the Bologna Declaration (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated March 31, 2011 No. 127 On approval of the Rules for awarding degrees). By inertia, doctoral, and master's theses' defence continued (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 25).

In Russia, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, by 2020, the previous model of assigning academic titles has been preserved, but recently there is also a gaining momentum in categorical awarding only the Ph.D. degree. However, the question became quite logical: how effective is the model introduced as part of establishing the Bologna process? Furthermore, in general, how modern are the requirements of the Bologna Process as a whole?



Starting from 2011 in accordance with the new "Rules for awarding academic degrees," the dissertation's preparation and the defence began to be carried out under the Ph. D. Degree programs, which began to radically change the quantitative and qualitative indicators of scientists with academic degrees (Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated March 31, 2011 No. 127 On approval of the Rules for awarding degrees). In Kazakhstan, such a categorical imposition of the Bologna process requirements does not necessarily improve the level of development of science and arguably might even make it worse.

In 2016, amendments and additions were made to the State Compulsory Standard for Doctorate Studies to include the concept of postdoctoral studies (motivation for scientific career growth). In the same year, the opportunity was provided to obtain a Ph.D. degree on a paid basis.

Master and Ph.D. programs were first introduced in 2004. Until 2012, master's programs were mainly only available in the humanities (OECD, 2017).

By the beginning of the 21st century, a number of additional serious problems were identified. One of them was related to the teaching of the history of Kazakhstan in universities. The problem amounted to a visible decline in the historian's prestige as a specialty and the reduction and termination of training of such specialties in related fields as archivists, anthropologists, and archaeologists. Further, it was discovered that the language training of historians had also fallen significantly.

The evidence showed there was overall inadequate collaboration and communication with colleagues at the international level. Another major threat to historical scholarship was associated with the insufficient elaboration and development of new theoretical and methodological approaches by domestic historians.

The Government of Kazakhstan, concerned about the decline in the prestige of historical science, acted by resolution N 416 of May 5, 2008, to organise a new "Institute of State History," which was entrusted with the task of covering the history of independent Kazakhstan from new methodological approaches (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated May 5, 2008 No. 416). The main subject of activity was defined as "scientific and analytical support for the process of formation of state and historical identity, creation and theoretical justification of the modern history of the state of Kazakhstan." New requirements in modern times required different approaches to covering historical events and innovative research methods and techniques.

4. In search of scientific truth and new methodology

With historical science development in the years of independence, historians could revise many historical conclusions and study many hidden topics previously thought of as taboo during the Soviet period. A clear example of how the Soviet government prohibited the study of Kazakhstan's History before the Soviet period is the "Bekmakhanov case." E. Bekmakhanov wrote a work devoted to the uprising led by Kenesary Kasymuly. Some communist critics praised the book as being written against the Russian people, as it extolled national uprisings against Russia. The author of the book was charged with a political accusation of bourgeois-national ideology's propagandist. The Collegium for Criminal Cases of the Supreme Court of the Kazakh SSR sentenced E. Bekmakhanov to 25 years in prison with serving a sentence in one of the GULAG distant camps (Memories of Ermukhan Bekmakhanov, 2005). This case shows how strong the Soviet regime's total control was and that history could not develop freely during the Soviet period. However, with the declaration of independence, Kazakhstan historians began to look for new approaches and theoretical paradigms.

Considering the role of history in shaping the worldview, a series of meetings were held with the support of state bodies, where the issues of reforming and modernising the humanities and social science disciplines, primarily history, were put at the forefront after two decades of independence of Kazakhstan (Archive of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, fund 708, inventory 139, file 49, sheet 1-6.).

Strengthening sovereignty and statehood at the end of the 20th century presented new challenges for the 21st century and made the minefield of developing new teaching curriculums and investigative research even more complicated. In our opinion, these problems were inextricably linked with the wider political agenda of state-building that has taken on a new immediacy for all the republics of the former USSR, not excluding Russia (Pivovarov, 2010).

For instance, the growing phenomenon of social networks (the internet) and the emergence of a whole squad of amateur historians and armchair enthusiasts have begun to play an enormous role in popularising alternative worldviews, political theories, and opinions about inter-ethnic relations.

However, there are still major problems with training scientific personnel, developing reliable methodological approaches in order to help fill in the salient blank spots in the history of Kazakhstan. Moreover, many important sources pertaining to the country were spread far and wide in international archives. In this situation, a scholarship could not adequately proceed without support from state funding. In recognising this need and the importance of continued scholarly research, the Kazakhstan government actively allocates funds through various government programs.



The state program "Cultural Heritage" expanded the source based on Kazakhstan's History from 2004 to 2009 (Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated January 13, 2004 No. 1277, About the State Program "Cultural Heritage" for 2004-2006). According to the program, research work was carried out in foreign archives of Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Armenia, Hungary, and Switzerland.

The textbook "Modern History of Kazakhstan," prepared by a team of scientists from the Institute of State History, became very popular for the university audience. By 2010, the release of 5 volumes of the academic publication "History of Kazakhstan (from ancient times to the present day)," prepared by academicians of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan M.K. Kozybaev. (Kozybayev, Baypakov, Burkhanov, Koshanov, Kumekov, Sagadiev, Tuimebaev, et al., 2010, p. 768)

Professional historians were allowed to publish their ideas on the pages of the "Otan Tarihi" ("Homeland History") journal. New journals and media have become catalysts for new ideas and scientific concepts.

5. Cooperation of Kazakhstan with foreign countries and international organisations

At the same time, Kazakhstan's entry, as an independent state, into the world community, allowed scientists of the Republic to study additional literature, including the works of the so-called in Soviet period "bourgeois" scientists or materials hidden under the heading "secret." A positive role was played by familiarisation with the significant literature published in English, French, German, Persian, Chinese, and research in foreign archives. Copies of the Fro Mauro maps were brought from the Vatican. In particular, the historians of Kazakhstan extracted and put into circulation the materials of The Hoover Institution Library and Archives (USA), The International Institute of Social History (IISH), which is part of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. During the same period, Kazakh scientists worked in Moscow's archives (Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation), St. Petersburg, Orenburg, Moscow, and Kazan.

One of the crucial factors that beneficially influenced historical research development was Kazakhstan's entry into UNESCO and the cooperation it received. During the Soviet period, Kazakhstan did not have the opportunity to join the organisation because of Moscow's influence, only the RSFSR, the Belarusian, and Ukrainian SSR became part of UNESCO.

It must be added that in no small extent, the mechanism of Soviet participation in UNESCO focused on realising, first and foremost, the political and ideological interests of the totalitarian state, focusing almost exclusively on the desired propaganda results, instead of a real contribution to the development of domestic systems of education, science, culture, and communication. Besides, the expressed goal of the USSR in participating in UNESCO



programs in the fundamental and natural sciences was to pay "special attention to the collection of scientific and technical information and documentation," and to use programs in the social and human sciences "for an active struggle against bourgeois concepts and development models" (Permyakova, 2012, P. 129-132). Only in the areas of the technological and natural sciences that were inevitably less impacted on by ideology was it possible to preserve the spirit of genuine academic cooperation.

Since independence, Kazakhstan has been taking steps to join UNESCO. The UNESCO Office in the Republic of Kazakhstan has been operating since December 1994. It has operated in four countries, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

In domestic and foreign policy, Kazakhstan is consistently implementing the ideas of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and dialogue between civilisations, the maintenance and development of which is one of the main priorities of UNESCO.

In 2001, UNESCO approved the "Tentative List of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites" presented by the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (UNESCO, World Heritage List, 2003, 2004, 2008).

Since 2011, in the field of social and humanitarian sciences, within the framework of program-targeted funding (agreement with the Science Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 247 dated April 25, 2011), fundamental research has been carried out aimed at defining the scientific foundations of the role and place of historical and cultural values of the Turkic peoples, development of the integration tendencies of the Turkic states, and the preservation of their distinct ethnic-linguistic characteristics in the context of rapid globalisation.

Kazakhstani scientists began to actively publish the results of scientific works in international databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and others. The sharing of publications written in international co-authorship in the total flow of publications is considered a relative indicator of integrating the country's researchers into the world scientific community. In Soviet times, Kazakh scientists could not even dream of such a possibility of free international cooperation.

6. Towards modernisation

The first meeting of the Interdepartmental Working Group was held on July 5, 2013, with the participation of representatives of the Presidential Administration, members of the government and deputies of parliament, representatives of governing bodies, and a large number of scientists of the country (On the modernization of national history, 2013, p. 28-29).



"Kazakhstani historical science faces a real challenge, the answer to which may well be found." (On the modernization of national history, 2013, p. 30-31). With these words, the Secretary of State Marat Tazhin began his speech at the first meeting of the interdepartmental working group on national history study. Marat Tazhin noted that modern history has gone beyond its narrow disciplinary framework and has become an interdisciplinary science. Firstly, the accumulated historical facts and evidence allow us to assume that Kazakhs' ethnogenesis occurred much earlier than it has always been interpreted by historical science. Second, we must understand the main meanings of modern history (On the modernization of national history, 2013, p. 30-31).

In compliance with the decision taken at meetings of the Interdepartmental Working Group, the work of the historical community of Kazakhstan has acquired an entirely new character. The impulses flowing from the commission's solution opened up enormous prospects for a detachment of professional historians.

Electronic educational materials, methodological manuals, elective courses had been prepared. A genetic bank (cryopreserved DNA and blood samples) and an information database containing personal data and the results of a study of the population genetic structure of the modern population of Kazakhstan had been created. For the first time in Kazakhstan, a paleo genetic laboratory was opened.

In 2013-2016, large-scale work was carried out to search and retrieve documents and materials collected in the world's most extensive archives. Systematic processing and systematisation of the identified new sources (oriental manuscripts, archival documents, artifacts, epigraphy, travel notes, cartographic materials, visual material of foreign travellers, and others) stored in Kazakhstan and foreign funds were carried out (Ayagan (Ed.), 2018, p. 68).

In 2014, an order was issued by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic "On improving the Model curricula in the discipline "History of Kazakhstan", this order cancelled several outdated provisions and initiated new programs (Current archive of MES RK).

The First President of Kazakhstan proposed the new research methodology, N.A. Nazarbayev, in the article "Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan's identity," and was published in April 2017 (Nazarbayev, 2017, April 12). A team of historians, together with the Nazarbayev Foundation and the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, systematically hold large international scientific conferences.

In 2018-2020, Kazakhstan's historical science continued to develop under the state's patronage, and this is happening under the direct influence of the state's authorities. On November 21, 2018, an article by the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev, 2018), revealed new approaches to the modernisation of the historical



consciousness of society in the context of the development of innovative technologies and the formation of new socio-cultural values and ideas. The article gave an impetus for financing and the start of implementation of several target programs, such as "Archive - 2025", "Great names of the Great Steppe," "Genesis of the Turkic world," "Museum of Ancient Art and Technologies of the Great Steppe," "A Thousand Years of Steppe Folklore and Music," and "History in Cinema and Television" representing new trends in the understanding of national history and culture.

A new impetus to Kazakhstani historical science was given with President K.J. Tokayev creating new positions to consider the Golden Horde's role in Kazakhstan's history.

Interest in history is growing in the society of Kazakhstan. There are many enthusiasts, non-professional historians who spend their time and energy studying history. The internet is actively growing communities of practice interested in often some novel or specialist area of history. Local history has significantly developed. Enthusiasts shift in the archives, reveal previously unknown documents and maps, and publish them. State authorities and ideologies are very active in turning to history. At the same time, scientists are trying to establish historical truth objectively and dispassionately.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

The historical science of the 21st century is currently facing cardinal problems that require a different set of solutions, including rethinking the way historians have to date modelled the historical process and the formation of new inter-disciplinary perspectives and methodologies.

The dynamics of scientific and humanitarian development that have occurred in Kazakhstan provide an opportunity for further advancement in historical scholarship. The findings of this study suggest the following recommendations:

- historical science needs to develop new methodological approaches not only to explain the events of the past but also to predict possible scenarios of the future;
- the transformation of history in the context of university science is taking place in Kazakhstan, which can be traced through the development of new curricula, new generation textbooks, the inclusion of new subjects, taking into account the modern requirements of scientific development;
- analysis of the state of historical science in Kazakhstan shows that history will continue to maintain its priority areas, developing them in line with the trends of our time, subject to active government support;

- in the historical science of Kazakhstan, the active role of fundamental scientific research carried out by scientific research institutes is noted;
- for the development of historical science and its relevance by Kazakhstani society at the regional level, it is advisable to expand and deepen intraregional (within the regions of Kazakhstan) cooperation within the development of Kazakhstani history.
- we would recommend creating a single information platform at the international level to facilitate greater cooperation within the international scholarship community.

Overall, it can be emphasized that during the period that has passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstani historical science has gone through a challenging path of renewal. Both the governing theoretical paradigms and the research methodology have changed and are continuing to evolve. The search toolkit has also expanded, and research archives, including those in overseas countries, are increasingly becoming accessible. A new generation of textbooks has been prepared and published, opening up the minds of Kazakh schoolchildren to previous undisclosed histories. Monographs and books have also been introduced into scientific circulation, revealing "white spots" of national history. Furthermore, the scientific community of Kazakhstan has overall successfully managed to embrace inclusive internationalism and avoid the pitfalls of narrow nationalism, xenophobia, and religious sectarianism.

The historical community of historians of Kazakhstan, as our analysis shows, has generally adapted to new conditions and new economic relations. In addition to grant and project-targeted financing, scientists participate in international funds projects, such as the Adenauer Foundation, Soros Foundation, and other organisations operating in the republic. In some cases, joint projects are carried out with sponsoring organisations in the conduct of research work. Nevertheless, the commercialisation of projects and the integration of science into the knowledge economy have not been sufficiently resolved, and more development is required in this area.

At the same time, it should be noted the scientist-historian prestige has dropped significantly, and the influx of talented young historians has also decreased. The problems were compounded when several innovations turned out to be ill-considered, and as a result of which the exact procedure for conferring academic degrees was devalued. Thus, the path of modernisation of historical science turned out to be thorny and somewhat problematic.

The next step in the study can be a comparative analysis of historical science development in the post-Soviet states.



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