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## Origins of Kazakhstan identity and modernization of public consciousness

**Abstract.** *One of the most important priorities in the formation and development of multinational Kazakhstan as an independent and competitive state was the promotion of the idea of interethnic harmony and stability in the young state. The first President – Elbasy N.A. Nazarbayev has repeatedly emphasized that harmony in society, unity of the people and stability are the main assets that form the basis of Kazakhstan’s statehood. Kazakhstan, being a unique example of interethnic harmony, peace and stability in the Central Asian region and the world space, has managed to attract the attention of public and state figures, scientists from many foreign countries with its achievements in the field of interethnic relations. This is evidenced by various articles and works of many well-known foreign figures who draw attention to the Kazakhstani model of interethnic harmony, rightly called the model of Nursultan Nazarbayev.*

*In this article, the authors tried to find key arguments in favor of the methodological merits of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – N. Nazarbayev’s Kazakhstani model of interethnic harmony and civil unity. Gives the author’s definition and concept of «identity». The authors assigns a special role to the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, as the most important institution for instilling Kazakh patriotism among our youth. The authors concludes: «the civilizational choice made by Kazakhstan in favor of preserving cultural diversity turned out to be deeply thought out». He draws an interesting analogy between the concepts of «identity» and the concept of «civilization».*

*Another advantage of this article is the assertion of its author about the indisputable role of N. Nazarbayev’s programmatic article – «Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan’s identity». Today, according to him, the modernization of the consciousness of Kazakhstan is the formation of a modern perception of the world is the most important task. Without the implementation of this presidential task, it is impossible to carry out economic reforms, political modernization and, of course, it is impossible to create the foundations of Kazakhstani identity.*

**Key words:** *identity; modernization of social consciousness; Ruhani zhangyru; patriotism; historical memory; national traditions; social harmony and national unity.*

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**Introduction.** The modern world is going through a stage of radical rethinking of the ways of social development. The concept of economic growth, based on the priority of quantitative indicators of increasing the scale of production, fades into the background. Currently, many scientists, thinking politicians and heads of state have concluded that the problems of growth

should be considered in a different plane, namely from the standpoint of social development. In practice, this means a reorientation of state economic policy, focusing on the effective use of the potential of the human factor, reducing inequality in the distribution of income, preserving moral values, and developing creative work.

**Discussion.** For Kazakhstan, the problems of efficiency and quality of economic growth are of particular importance. For a long time, our economic development was assessed by the rate of quantitative increase in the gross social product, without considering such a powerful strategic resource as the spiritual sphere, law, morality, and the whole system of non-material production. Our country has entered a new historical period. The most important task is to enter the club of the thirty most developed countries of the world.

«I am convinced», writes N. Nazarbayev in his article «Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan's identity», the large-scale transformations we have begun should be accompanied by an advanced modernization of **public consciousness**. It will not only complement political and economic modernization - it will act as their core» [1].

Further, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, reflecting on the prospects for the development of Kazakhstani society, writes: «Before our eyes, the world begins a new, largely unclear, historical cycle. It is impossible to take a place in the advanced group while maintaining the old model of consciousness and thinking. Therefore, it is important to concentrate, change yourself and, through adaptation to changing conditions, take the best of what the new era brings».

What factors and to what extent affect the viability of the state, its national security, and the dynamic development of the country's economy? The International Center for Problem Analysis and Public Administration Design in Moscow conducted research involving scientists from different countries of the world, including Kazakhstan. Among the working groups of researchers were representatives of various political parties, scientists of different ideological preferences. And the objects of research were citizens of many countries of the planet, of all five continents. In the course of the research, 72 parameters for evaluating non-force and non-material criteria were nominated. All of them were divided into two typological blocks: the ideological and spiritual state of society and the civilizational identity of the state. In addition to

these two parameters, two more were determined: the quality of public administration and, finally, the fourth - material.

The results of the correlation analysis made it possible to establish the following hierarchy of the significance of these factors:

1. Ideological and spiritual state of society - coefficient - 0.74.
2. Civilizational (national) identity - 0.69.
3. The quality of public administration - 0.54.
4. The last line - material factor - 0.28.

The results convincingly confirmed that the tools of intangible, spiritual sociocultural quality have a much greater, decisive importance for the sustainable development of society and the state. All this confirms the dominant role of non-economic factors in the effective development of the country's economy, domestic business and ensuring state and national security. The economy cannot be effective if it is not based and is not built on the principles of social justice, a high culture of management, and, of course, on high moral and ethical standards in conditions of a strong civic identity.

Let's go back to the research results. Of the four most important criteria, two results are close in terms of their indicators: the ideological and spiritual state of society and the civilizational factor or civic identity, that is, the quality of the national unity of the state.

In our opinion, these are two complementary spiritual components that influence each other according to the law of communicating vessels. The higher the culture and spiritual and moral parameters in society, the more stable the ethnic and civic Kazakh identity will be.

Civic identity requires no less community and homogeneity than ethnic identity. This is the homogeneity of political and general culture, as well as civic public consciousness.

Kazakhstan was formed and is being established today as a union of peoples and ethnic groups. This union will be stronger and more united, provided that its main participant - the Kazakh ethnos, as a state-forming entity - is more united. Kazakhs are the fastening fabric of society, the core of the state, this is its supporting structure.

The integration of others, including small ethnic groups and cultures in Kazakhstan, into a single community, into Kazakh identity will be difficult if the integration of the state-forming ethnic group itself, the Kazakhs, is disrupted, therefore it is very important to overcome the existing today, albeit conditional, but persistently existing differences and divisions one and the same people to the southerners, the Westernizers and others. Unfortunately, we come across isolated facts of citizens of our country with a fuzzy or drifting identity.

Why is it so important for us to engage in the formation of civic identity? Why should we not allow the loss and departure from traditional national values that our society has stood on for centuries? Without this, there can be no social immunity, and without it, psychological immunity decreases, the organization and unity of the state decreases.

In our opinion, a society from which the cultural core has been removed has not even zero, but negative assimilation potential. The depletion of the cultural layer leads society to destructive results, and it is not excluded, and to disintegration. Culture is a set of moral, moral, ethical values that form the basis of national identity. This is what makes society collected and organizationally unified. Each state faces the challenge of finding and strengthening the threads that unite us.

Identity is the spirit of the people, the spirit of the nation. The world has long been convinced that the basis of all, without exception, latent and well-known crises, including global ones, is the crisis of culture and spirituality, national and civic identity.

Of course, the unity of legal and political culture is inconceivable from unity with culture as such. Civil identity in Kazakhstan can be successful and with a stable beginning only under one condition, only on the basis of the high culture standards of all ethnic groups in the country, the historical consciousness of all ethnic groups and cultures through the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. There are no other resources (only through culture) of civic identity at our disposal. Even if one simply imagines the development of Kazakhstani society purely theoretically,

relying only on the political and legal component without a cultural core, it would be an irreparable lesson from the enormous state damage that the ethnic and culturological characteristics of ethnic groups would be forgotten, for example, the Caucasian Lezginka. And this will entail the loss of political significance.

In modern societies, mechanisms for the formation of interethnic harmony are largely based on identity management processes, on identity politics. To maintain interethnic harmony and mutual interethnic tolerance, the formation of a constructive civic identity and the positive development of ethnic identity are important. The identity of the citizens of the country - like ethnic identity - is understood in the meaning of «who we are» and «what we are». In this sense, identity is seen as self-identification with the community, the idea of it, the emotional experience of these ideas and the willingness to act [2, p. 50].

There are more than ten scientific definitions of the concept of «identity». But, in our opinion, the most capacious and easily perceived: identity is a collective «I». When a citizen, regardless of his national and social origin, his worldview and ideological preferences, considers Kazakhstan to be his homeland, when he feels and says: «This is my land, this is my flag», «this is my President», «this is the anthem of my Motherland» - then we can talk about the signs of our identity.

In science there is such a term - the discourse of identity, that is, it is a concept in which a person in the context of a certain culture and social community defines himself to one or another ethnic, religious, political and similar groups.

Kazakhstan is a multinational state. Geographically, our country is located in the very center of Eurasia. Next to us are states in which dozens of other ethnic groups also live. Moreover, countries such as Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan are characterized by precarious stability. There is tension in interethnic relations in neighboring China, in particular in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. All this makes the problem of preventing interethnic conflicts, timely identification of the factors causing the potential for conflict among the most urgent. One of the main tasks of society is the formation of a culture of interethnic relations.

The Kazakhstani experience, the work created by the First President – the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, confirms the need for a thoughtful, balanced and delicate national policy in all public spheres: political, social, cultural and economic, taking into account the general trends of the country's development. National unity, stability and security in a political society do not arise by themselves, they must be persistently formed.

What does N. Nazarbayev call for in his article, referring to the tasks of modernizing the thinking of Kazakhstanis? First of all, to cultivate in oneself love for the native land, for the Fatherland, for your people. This article is a real program document, a real methodological guide to spiritually manage yourself and your consciousness to protect yourself from global zombies. Today, the main battlefield is the souls and hearts of people.

There is a theory: an ethnos, a people have that territory and the ability to govern it, to the extent that they have the strength and power of the people's spirit, the ability to radiate passionate energy. We have a large, vast territory. This is a historical indicator of the strength of the Kazakh spirit. We are proud of this. But this also imposes on our and the coming generation new, more lofty responsibilities.

No society can exist without a value basis. There is a system of values - there is a nation, there is a people. The destruction of one of them is inevitably accompanied by the loss of the other. The First President, in his meditation at the foot of Mount Ulytau, spoke about the historical reality. And she, this given, is defined in the life-affirming mentality of the Kazakhs. The Kazakh people are historically destined to cement our state with their ethnic basis.

One of the most important criteria identified by N. Nazarbayev in the program for the modernization of public consciousness is the preservation of historical memory. Historical memory is a semantic synonym for genetic memory. It seems to us that in both cases it is primarily the memory of generations, their continuity, the genetic and spiritual basis of national traditions. National traditions are the spiritual bond of society. Traditions are in

constant flux. Everything valuable that was filled in Kazakhstani society remains at his disposal. Even in the event of fundamental shifts in the social paradigm, the previous experience is not discarded, but receives a new place and a new role in new conditions. Everything new is important, everything old is necessary. This principle should be called the principle of «combined development». For the normal development of society, it is necessary to seek and find the assemblage points of traditions [3, p. 66-67].

The modern stage in the development of human civilization is distinguished by the substitution and even change of moral values and concepts, that is, sublimation. Unfortunately, some cultural criteria migrated to the field of «cultural archeology», became a kind of memorial to the culture of the past era: conscience, respect for elders, the concept of honor, the role and value of the family, asceticism, and so on. Mercantilism, consumerism, cynicism and ignorance began to dominate.

In 2016, an international group of scientists, politicians and creative authors presented the report «Xenophobia, Radicalism and Hate Crime in Europe 2015». By almost all parameters and criteria, the citizens of the post-Soviet space turned out to be incomparably more tolerant than the residents of the European Union.

The report's conclusion is disappointing: «The analysis carried out for 2015 confirms that a process of decay and a crisis of tolerance has begun in Europe. The European society is experiencing a civilizational confrontation and split along ethnic and religious lines» [4].

Tolerance is patience and open-mindedness. This is a whole spiritual practice and scientific theory. There, in Europe, a person is taught: any difference is normal, it is worse than us, but train your will for patience.

Our history is different from the European one. Of course, not everything is going smoothly with us, but we have not and do not have oppression of other peoples, religious wars, millions of people have always lived peacefully and live in a very diverse society with us. We have a historical rule, we have an age-old tradition of Kazakhs - hospitality.

We do not need to endure, we do not need to restrain ourselves - instead of tolerance, we have hospitality. We do not tolerate - we just love and respect.

Having created such a unique spiritual instrument as the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the President, not just, figuratively speaking, wrote a libretto for the score he compiled, he did it so subtly and accurately that each musical instrument issues its own, necessary note, plunging the entire Kazakh society into a state of touching perception of the sovereign anthem of friendship between peoples.

When by his decree on March 1, 1995, he created the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, he took a symphony orchestra as a prototype, where each instrument has its own part, its own timbre and its own sound.

**Result.** What conclusions can be drawn, what is the result? The Kazakh model of interethnic harmony differs from the models of European multiculturalism, the American «melting pot», «ghetto» and others in that in Kazakhstan, each ethnic group has an instrument with a special timbre and sound in the orchestra of the all-Kazakhstan symphony of friendship. It is in the dissimilarity that he is dear and loved by his neighbor.

What makes our Kazakhstani model different from other models? There are several fundamental and methodological differences.

**First.** Our model, N. Nazarbayev's model, uses the right of openness as the main, basic basis, not isolation, as is observed, say, in the model of the American «melting pot» or European multiculturalism. We have the principle of ethnic and cultural «diffusion» we have defined. For us, culture is a spiritual substance that has no boundaries. But it is based on the solid foundation of an ethnic core. And the ethnic core is a triad: language, national traditions and historical memory. Thus, forming the foundations of Kazakhstani identity, through the authoritative Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, which has become a school of Kazakhstani patriotism and an academy of spirit, we create conditions for each ethnic group to absorb and absorb the traditions of other cultures, to remain in oneself, to know their language, to know their traditions.

The civilizational choice made by Kazakhstan in favor of preserving cultural diversity turned out to be not only far-sighted, but also deeply thought-out. In our country, each «cultural type» and ethnos complements other types, like a missing sound, which, **without merging or absorbed** by another sound, creates a special chord with them. It can be emphasized **without merging and separating**.

This is very important, therefore, this is the **second** feature that distinguishes our model from others. It can be defined as the principle of communicating vessels, when a kind of atmosphere of ethnic and cultural diffusion is created. In such conditions, there is a process of exchange and complementing each other, enriching the ethnic core through the development of a cultural shell.

Summarizing these two factors that distinguish our Kazakhstan model and give it its own unique framework, we can derive its methodological formula, referring to the scientific base.

In our opinion, the concept of «identity» is similar to the concept of «civilization». Argentine scientist Igor Andrushkevich presented and substantiated the structure of «civilization» in the form of three concentric spheres: the inner sphere – the «**core**», the type of belief that determines the scale of preferences, the criterion for distinguishing between good and evil, and moral maxims. The common spirit of the people is formed in the core. It, the core, is embraced by the «**nutritious pulp**», which is something other than «culture» (cultural shell). **The third layer** – «**protective shell**» – public and state structures that protect the nutritious pulp (cultural shell) and the **core** from external and internal enemies - the army, police, prosecutors, courts, and so on [5, p. 28].

In our opinion, as the fourth substance, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan should be added and ranked among the most important component of the formula derived.

We do not exclude that this project, proposed in our material, may cause doubt, and disagreement, and criticism. And this is good.

After all, the development and search for meanings and images based on the historical multinational cultural heritage is a key moment.

This is especially important in conditions when the whole world is moving in the assessment of development from quantitative to qualitative parameters (as was discussed earlier). In other words, this is the correspondence of the growth of spiritual and moral ideas of peoples about the values of life.

Every ethnos, every nation is a complex dynamic phenomenon. Belonging to it cannot be described using a narrow set of criteria. It is even more difficult to do this in a multi-ethnic, multi-ethnic society, such as our country. Genetic and social diversity makes Kazakhstan one of the most important domestic government concerns. The most obvious criterion for national politics is self-awareness. The common Kazakhstani citizenship, uniting representatives of many ethnic groups for centuries, has not lost the multinational composition of our state. The uniqueness of the ethnogenesis of Kazakhstani society is that the national identity of each ethnic group inevitably means solidarity with the fate of the entire people of Kazakhstan. We have formed a kind of synthesis of the highest and most worthy ideals of each of the cultures represented in the republic.

**Conclusion.** Kazakhstan today acts already as a hotbed of Eurasian identity, as its ethno-cultural archetype. Kazakhstan has a huge potential for civic identity. N. Nazarbayev in his article «Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan's identity» set the task of enormous social and state importance - through a qualitative change in the consciousness of Kazakhstanis to build a fundamentally new relationship of each

of us to the country, to our native land, to each other.

N.Nazarbayev's insistence on changing and modernizing public consciousness through strengthening the role of such a powerful strategic resource as civic and ethnic identity is caused by the rapidly changing reality around us. Many thinking politicians and, in general, scientific thought have come to understand that the gain and success in the future lies not only in technologies, but in the culture and creative potential of those who create these technologies. The progress of human qualities, culture, noosphere as a real practical priority was advocated by the great scientists of the past from K. Marx to V.I. Vernadsky.

Taking such a priority as the basis of state policy means making progress in those areas that, by developing the non-material and non-commercial component and breaking the deadlock of «market fundamentalism» and «consumer society», give a great social and economic effect.

Winning today in global competition can only be achieved by relying on skilled, knowledgeable, morally prepared citizens. Without this, the strategy of advanced development is not possible [6, p. 5].

And if we deliberately work to strengthen Kazakhstan's identity on the basis of the program of the First President-Elbasy – «Course towards the future: modernization of Kazakhstan's identity» – «Ruhani zhangyru», using spiritual and organizational tools for modernizing consciousness, then we will get the effect of synergy.

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### Қазақстандық бірегейліктің қайнар көздері және қоғамдық сананы жаңғырту

**Аңдатпа.** Көпұлтты Қазақстанның тәуелсіз және бәсекеге қабілетті мемлекет болып қалыптасуы мен дамуындағы маңызды басымдықтардың бірі жас мемлекеттегі этносаралық келісім мен тұрақтылық идеясын ілгерілету бағыты болды. Соңдықтан Тұңғыш Президент – Елбасы Н.Ә. Назарбаев тәуелсіздіктің алғашқы күндерінен бастап қазақстандық мемлекеттілікті нығайтатын басты құндылық ретінде елдің бірлігі мен қоғамдық келісімді мемлекеттік саясаттың бұлжымас қағидасына айналдырды. Қазақстан Орталық Азия аймағында және әлемдік кеңістікте этносаралық қатынастар саласындағы жетістіктерімен татулық пен тұрақтылықтың бірегей үлгісі ретінде көптеген шет елдердің қоғам және мемлекет қайраткерлерінің, ғалымдарының назарын аударды. Бұған Нұрсұлтан Назарбаевтың моделі деп аталатын этносаралық келісімнің қазақстандық үлгісіне назар аударатын көптеген танымал шетелдік қайраткерлердің түрлі мақалалары мен еңбектері дәлел бола алады.

Бұл мақалада авторлар Қазақстан Республикасының Тұңғыш Президенті – Елбасы Н.Назарбаевтың этносаралық келісім мен азаматтық бірліктің қазақстандық үлгісінің әдіснамалық негіздерінің артықшылықтарын ашып көрсетуге тырысты және де «бірегейлік» түсінігінің өзіндік анықтамасын береді. Авторлар Қазақстан халқы Ассамблеясы – қазақстандық патриотизмді жастардың бойында тәрбиелеудегі ең маңызды мекеме ретінде ерекше рөл атқаратынын атап өтеді: «Қазақстанның мәдени әртүрлілікті сақтау үшін жасаған өркениетті таңдауы – терең ойластырылған мәселе болды», – деп түйіндейді. Олар «сәйкестік» пен «өркениет» ұғымдары мен тұжырымдамасы арасында ерекше ұқсастық бар екендігіне көңіл аудартады. Бұл мақаланың тағы бір артықшылығы – Н.Назарбаевтың «Болашаққа бағдар: рухани жаңғыру» атты бағдарламалық мақаласының рөлі туралы авторлардың берген терең түйін-мәлімдемесі. Бүгінде, Елбасының айтуынша, қазақстандықтар санасының жаңғыруы мен заманауи әлемдік көзқарас қалыптастыру – ең маңызды міндет болып табылады. Елбасының бұл тапсырмасын орындамай экономикалық реформаларды, саяси жаңғыртуды жүзеге асыру және ең бастысы қазақстандық бірегейлік негіздерін қалыптатыру мүмкін емес.

**Түйін сөздер:** сәйкестік; Рухани жаңғыру; патриотизм; тарихи жады; ұлттық дәстүрлер; қоғамдық келісім; ұлттық бірлік.

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### Истоки казахстанской идентичности и модернизация общественного сознания

**Аннотация.** Одной из важнейших приоритетов в становлении и развитии многонационального Казахстана как независимого и конкурентоспособного государства стало продвижение идеи межнационального согласия и стабильности в молодом государстве. Первый Президент – Елбасы Н.А. Назарбаев, неоднократно подчеркивал, что согласие в обществе, единство народа и стабильность – это главное достояние, формирующее основу казахстанской государственности. Казахстан, являясь уникальным примером межнационального согласия, мира и стабильности в Центрально-Азиатском регионе и мировом пространстве сумел привлечь внимание общественных и государственных деятелей, ученых из многих зарубежных стран своими достижениями в сфере межэтнических отношений. Об этом свидетельствуют различные статьи и труды многих известных зарубежных деятелей, обращающих внимание на казахстанскую модель межэтнического согласия, по праву называющейся моделью Нурсултана Назарбаева.

В данной статье авторы сделали попытку найти ключевые аргументы в пользу методологических достоинств казахстанской модели Первого Президента Республики Казахстан – Н. Назарбаева межэтнического согласия и гражданского единства. Дают авторское определение и понятие «идентичности».

Особую роль авторы отводят Ассамблеи народа Казахстана, как важнейшему институту по воспитанию у нашей молодежи казахстанского патриотизма. Авторы полагают, что: «цивилизационный выбор, сделанный Казахстаном в пользу сбережения культурного многообразия, оказался глубоко продуманным». Интересную аналогию они проводят между понятиями «идентичность» и понятием «цивилизация».

Еще одним достоинством этой статьи является утверждение его авторов о бесспорной роли программной статьи Н. Назарбаева «Взгляд в будущее: модернизация общественного сознания». Сегодня, по его утверждению, модернизация сознания казахстанцев, формирование современного мировосприятия – важнейшая задача. Без реализации этой задачи Елбасы невозможно осуществление экономических реформ, политической модернизации и, конечно же, невозможно создание основ казахстанской идентичности.

**Ключевые слова:** идентичность; модернизация общественного сознания; Рухани жаңғыру; патриотизм; историческая память; национальные традиции; общественное согласие; общенациональное единство.

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