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THE CHALLENGES OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE**

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LANGUAGE AND THE DEFINING OF IDENTITY IN KAZAKSTAN: THE CHALLENGES OF SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE¹

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Executive Summary

During the Soviet era, the Communist Party attempted to inculcate all USSR citizens with a sense of belonging to a single community of "Soviet people." Although in the last years of the USSR this effort was not very successful, most citizens were acutely aware of membership in another Soviet-created classification, i.e, their "ethnic group" or "nationality" [natsional'nost']. This category, registered in passports and other official documents, affected individuals' access to higher education, job mobility, as well as other opportunities.

Significantly, most Soviet citizens lacked a sense of loyalty to their republic of residence in any way that was independent of ethnic identification. In most cases it was as easy for Soviet citizens to change their residence to a new republic as it was to move within a single republic. The combination of transparent borders and strong ethnic affiliations meant, for example, that most ethnic Russians in Kazakstan were very conscious of being "Russian," but did not have a strong sense of being "Kazakstani."

The importance of republic identities and their relation to ethnic identities changed radically with the decline and eventual collapse of the USSR. As all republics pressed for more sovereignty, borders began to gain greater significance; as a result, the definition of republic identity became a central political issue.

As each republic gained the power to make more decisions concerning life within its boundaries, it also faced the task of defining its own identity. The core "identity question" was the relation between the state and the titular nationality. Would the republic move in the direction of a "civil state" or a "nation-state"? In the "civil state," all ethnic groups and their individual members would have equal rights, status, and support from state institutions; by contrast, in the "nation-state" members of the titular nationality would enjoy particular privileges not available to the rest. Thus, for example, the educational system would emphasize the titular group's role in history of the region; likewise, among populations outside the republic, only members of the titular nationality might receive aid in returning to their "historic homeland;" the titulars' culture and language would also be singled out for state support.

"Nation-statists" have generally defended their group's special status based on history (claiming that they were the true heirs to the territory) and the need for a protected space for their own ethnic

¹This Report was prepared in the late summer of 1996, and delayed in distribution by NCSEER. Further reports will address subsequent developments. [NCSEER Staff note.]

group and culture to flourish. Civil statistis reject such claims as a basis for privilege today, and/or dispute the titulars' historical interpretations.

The type of state identity promoted by republic leaders in the newly independent post-Soviet states has been closely linked to issues of regime legitimacy. Policies favoring titular nationalities have naturally enhanced legitimacy among the privileged group; among other nationalities, of course, "nation-state policies" have had the opposite effect. Political leaders have had to be mindful of the policies related to identity that are supported by opposing segments of society. Of course for demographic reasons alone it has been easier for leaders of republics with large titular nationality majorities to adopt policies in harmony with the nation-state model. Conversely, it has been more difficult in republics where "titulars" are only a minority or small majority of the population.

This study examines several aspects of the political process of creating a state identity in Kazakstan, where the population of the titular nationality constitutes a smaller share than in any other post-Soviet state. It focuses on the period since the 1986 disturbances (i.e., following the installation of Gennadii Kolbin as republic party first secretary). The study relies primarily on the analysis of documents concerning language and other related policies. At the end of the Soviet period, Kazakstan's population contained approximately equal proportions of Kazaks and Russians (approximately 40 percent each), and 20 percent inhabitants of other nationalities. Kazaks have had a long history of contact with Russia and their republic shares a border of over 4,000 miles with it. Not surprisingly, Kazakstan's economy is tightly linked to Russia.

The scope of use for the Kazak language had shrunk greatly during the late Soviet era as the scope for Russian expanded. By the late 1980s, between a quarter and two-fifths of Kazakstan's Kazaks were totally ignorant of "their own" mother tongue or illiterate in it; the vast majority of these individuals, especially among urban residents, were educated entirely in Russian. Meanwhile, less than 1 percent of Kazakstan's ethnic non-Kazaks were fluent in Kazak. This meant that in the country as a whole, less than one third of the population was literate in the republic titular language. The single language uniting the republic was Russian, spoken by at least 80 percent of the population. The low level of Kazak language skills among ethnic Kazaks greatly complicated efforts of nation-statists to attract supporters from among their co-ethnics who favored many other elements in their program.

In the wake of the December 1986 Almaty (Alma-Ata) disturbances, Moscow entrusted the new republic party first secretary (outsider and ethnic Russian Gennadii Kolbin) with many difficult tasks, including the uprooting of nationalism and elimination of alleged corruption in Kazakstan. Through Kolbin, Moscow introduced some innovations in its language policy in the region: under the new secretary's leadership the republic party and government adopted a resolution specifically devoted to improving instruction of Kazak.

Although this resolution marked a milestone, when viewed in its broader context (especially a parallel resolution to improve instruction of the Russian language in Kazakstan) it is clear that as a whole the language policy (designed in Moscow) was still intended to "internationalize" Kazakstan rather than open the door to broad "kazakization." This was still part of the attempt to bind the "Soviet people" more closely together.

Following the lead of the Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, Kazakstan and most other Soviet republics adopted language laws in 1989. By the time Kazakstan adopted its version in September of that year, Nursultan Nazarbayev had already replaced Kolbin as republic party leader. From the beginning of his tenure Nazarbayev adopted a much more "pro-Kazak" stance on language and certain other issues than his predecessor. Many of the positions he embraced had previously been primarily promoted by members of the informal opposition.

The final version of Kazakstan's language law, a compromise filled with ambiguity, was the product of extended public debate throughout much of 1989. Among the most contentious issues was whether Kazakstan should have only one "state language," or whether Russian should hold an equal position. This issue was "resolved" by proclaiming only one state language, but making Russian the "language of inter-ethnic communication." Moreover, Russian was mentioned in the majority of the law's articles. Neither the law nor subsequent documents defined the meaning of "language of inter-ethnic communication." Although a few years later this term would disappear from official documents, the vagueness that it represented has remained a hallmark of language policy in Kazakstan ever since.

In the middle of 1989, the USSR's seeming durability probably reassured non-Kazak-speakers that Moscow would continue to protect their language rights for the foreseeable future. This radically changed over the next two years. By the summer/fall of 1990 (the time of public debate of Kazakstan's "Declaration of Sovereignty") it was becoming much more likely that the Soviet political system would continue to undergo radical change, leading to a much reduced role for the center. In this atmosphere the debates about republic identity (including language issues), took on much greater significance. The republic's increasing powers raised the stakes in defining whose interests needed to be considered in formulating policy.

The debates about identity became and have remained highly relevant to the territorial integrity of Kazakstan. Over time, as political distance between Kazakstan and Russia increased, many non-Kazaks began to worry that they might become "alien" in a Kazak nation-state that they considered their own home. Throughout his tenure as Kazakstan's leader, Nursultan Nazarbayev has been acutely sensitive to the dangers of such sentiments. They could serve as fertile soil for activity by Russian nationalist forces (whether based in Kazakstan or Russia) who might attempt to stir up separatist sentiment and/or demands for regional autonomy.

In the September 1990 draft Kazakstan's Declaration of Sovereignty (henceforth DS), nation-

statists had achieved inclusion of a clause that questions of secession from the USSR would be decided "taking into account the interests of the indigenous nation" [koreennaia natsiia]. Such a statement provoked bitter opposition from civil statistes, and it was overhauled before the final DS was adopted. Similarly, the DS draft spoke of a republic "gene pool." This was entirely omitted in the latter version. The opposing sides also battled each other on issues of language. The draft had referred to Kazak as the single "state language," but made Russian the "official" one. Following considerable debate, the final version of the DS entirely omitted any reference to language.

Kazakstan's December 1991 Declaration of Independence (DI) also dealt with the identity issue by ambiguity and avoidance of the most controversial issues. In fact, the DI's only reference to language did not link the state much closer to Kazak than to other languages. Article 8 simply referred to the state's obligation to assist "the rebirth and development of culture, traditions, and language, and the fortification of the national dignity of the Kazak nation [natsiia] and of representatives of other nationalities [natsional'nosti] living in Kazakstan."

In June 1992, less than six months after the DI, public debate began on a published draft of independent Kazakstan's first constitution. Unlike the DI, the first constitution was preceded by an prolonged public and parliamentary debates. Here again issues related to identity, especially language, occupied a prominent place. The authors of the first constitution, like those of the DS and DI, announced its adoption in the name of all the people [narod] of Kazakstan (without reference to nationality). However, it also contained elements which can be construed as concessions to nation-statists, e.g., a vague reference to "Kazak statehood" [kazakhskaia goudarstvennost'].

Questions of language status were among the most controversial issues in the debate on the first constitution and were one of the main reasons that the document was not approved by the parliament until early 1993. In the end, this document repeated the earlier pattern of vagueness and compromises. Once again Kazak was left as the only "state language," and Russian remained the "language of inter-ethnic communication." Although this constitution prohibited "any restrictions of rights and freedoms of citizens due to a lack of mastery" of Kazak or Russian, it required that all candidates for president have a "complete mastery" of Kazak, and candidates for vice president "a mastery."

The extended discussion of 1992 was the last time that Kazakstan witnessed an open debate in the press regarding a specific document with a direct relation to language issues. In 1995, when the next constitution was written, the parliament had already been dissolved and the press was much more docile than three years earlier. Although the 1995 constitution introduced some new formulations with regard to language, it maintained approximately the same balance between nation-state and civil state positions as the previous one. Kazak remained the sole "state language," but the category of "language of inter-ethnic communication" was abandoned. Instead, it was replaced by a formulation stating that Russian was "used on a par with [naravne s] Kazak in state organizations and

organs of local self-government." However, no authoritative definition has been forthcoming for the term "on a par with."

Many civil-state-minded citizens of Kazakhstan understand this clause to mean that Russian is recognized as the second "state" language. Nation-statists, however, insist that this is not so, and that the clause means that Russian may or may not be used in government institutions, but that Kazak is always obligatory. Numerous scholars and practitioners in Kazakhstan interviewed during research for this project in late 1995 and early 1996 concur that the ambiguity is intentional; a more explicit policy—whatever its nature—would have provoked a reaction from its opponents that the leadership sought to avoid.

The plausibility of this interpretation is heightened by a recent attempt to modify the 1989 language law. In late 1995 or early 1996, a draft revised version of the 1989 law was circulated to central ministry and oblast officials for comment. Further changes were added to the draft taking into account the feedback received. Both of the recent drafts reflect the ambiguous wording of the second constitution concerning use of Russian in state organization and organs of self-government. One of the most ambiguous formulations is a one-sentence article stating that "The state language is obligatory for official [sluzhebnyi] communication and office work [deloproizvodstvo] of Kazakhstan Republic organizations, enterprises, and institutions , [and] the Russian language is used officially on a par with [nariadu s] the state language." Although this seems to say that Kazak is obligatory in all cases, the wording and punctuation leave open the possible interpretation that Russian is also obligatory or close to it.

Certain statements in the recent draft revisions seem to signify a shift toward the nation-state model. For example, Art. 1 in both recent versions tells that Kazak's position as "state" language "obliges each citizen of the republic to acquire a mastery of the Kazak language, perceiving it as a most important factor of consolidation of the entire society." This is remarkable not only for making Kazak language study an "obligation," but also for identifying Kazak language as a consolidating force.

Even more telling than the details of the articles, however, is this project's apparent fate. According to information from staff at the Kazakhstan Committee on Nationality Policy, in May 1996, after the second version was printed and almost ready for submission to parliament, Kazakhstan's deputy premier Nagashbay Shaykenov expressed opposition to the idea of a revised language law, and so it seems the revision has been put off into the indefinite future.²

Not surprisingly, the compromises and imprecision of the documents are also reflected in public statements of Nursultan Nazarbayev. Kazakhstan's leader seems acutely aware of the dangers

²The Law was passed by the Majlis on November 22, 1996, but as of the date of distribution of this Report, is still awaiting action by the Senate. See also Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, Vol. II, #222, 11/26/96. [NCSEER Staff note.]

of adopting policies with "extreme" orientations. He has repeatedly emphasized that strained ethnic relations could destroy Kazakhstan's civil peace, have a catastrophic effect on the economy, and threaten the country's territorial integrity. Knowing that the process of creating a Kazakhstan identity isolated from Russia, Russian language, and Russian culture could unleash forces which would destroy Kazakhstan, in Soviet times Nazarbayev clung to the idea of continued strong links to Russia, and in independent Kazakhstan he has been the outspoken advocate of a new "Eurasian Union." And he has repeatedly stressed that all citizens of Kazakhstan (regardless of ethnicity) have an equal claim to republic citizenship. In line with this moderate position, Nazarbayev has urged a very gradual timetable for raising the status of Kazak, explaining that change will take a generation, and that efforts must focus on the young.

At the same time, Nazarbayev has exhibited his awareness of the need to satisfy some demands of fellow citizens who accept much of the nation-state model. Thus, he has publicly recognized that Kazakhstan is the only hearth of Kazak culture and language on the planet, and that historically Kazaks have a special claim to the territory now within republic borders. Nazarbayev has also acknowledged the intimate tie between a people and language, and he has publicly supported a single state language.

Nazarbayev has been identified as the author or major proponent of compromises on some of the most controversial language issues. In 1989, his solution was adopted on a hotly contested article in the 1989 language law concerning language requirements for jobs and availability of services to citizens. In reference to the use of Russian, Nazarbayev also claimed credit for promoting the wording "on a par with the state language."

Given the demographic and geographic diversity among Kazakhstan's oblasts, it might seem that a federal political system would allow the regions of the country to arrive at local solutions to language policy issues. Federalism in Kazakhstan, however, might open the door to autonomy or secession, and probably for this reason has been rejected.

Naturally, the legitimacy of Kazakhstan's leaders does not rest entirely or even primarily on questions of identity, let alone just its symbolic aspects. Indeed, at present most of the country's population judges its leaders more by the standard of living it provides than any other criterion. But the symbolic issues indicate frames of reference in which individuals are likely to approach practical problems, many of which (e.g., salary bonuses, job eligibility, and university entrance exams) have major economic consequences. Despite the importance of the more tangible economic factors which can be sources of legitimacy (not to mention others, such as the nature of the political process), citizens' perceptions of their leaders' "identity mindsets" may be a critical factor disposing them to leave or remain in the republic, or inclining them toward behavior compatible with civil peace or unrest.

Introduction

Along with other possible forms of self-identification, during the late Soviet era most inhabitants of the USSR were acutely conscious of their officially prescribed affiliation with at least two communities. One, formally cultivated throughout the educational system, was "the Soviet people." According to Soviet official writings, all citizens of the USSR belonged to this group. The other category, based on "nationality" or "ethnicity" [*natsional'nost'*],¹ was historically rooted in such criteria as a common territory, language, history, and economic community.² Although inculcating this latter affiliation was not part of the socialization process that schools, the Komsomol, and party propaganda were supposed to promote, for individual citizens ethnic identification was formalized through official documents they held throughout their adult lives. "Nationality" was often considered in quotas for education and jobs. Consequently, it became an important marker relevant to major life opportunities and limitations.

Despite the fact that the Soviet Union was a federal system, most of its citizens were not officially encouraged to acquire a strong sense of belonging to a particular union or autonomous republic. Thus, for example, populations of Armenians living in Azerbaijan were not taught in a consistent (let alone effective) fashion to view Azerbaijan as their homeland, and almost certainly they felt stronger ties with fellow Armenians in Armenia or Russia than with Azeris in their republic of residence.

Upon the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the political basis for common citizenship and "Soviet" affiliation or identity dissolved, but the foundations for ethnic group identification certainly remained. Simultaneously, because each republic became an independent unit with borders that acquired a new significance, the formerly weak category of republic identity also took on a new saliency. In a short time the task of republic leaders changed from supporting a Soviet identity to defining a new identity for their own entire ethnically diverse republic populations.

At the end of the Soviet era, articulate spokesmen of each titular nationality's intelligentsia throughout the country began to demand that newly emerging republic identities become more "national in content," i.e., more closely linked with the republic's titular nationality. These spokesmen, for example, demanded that policies concerning educational curricula, language, migration, and state symbols (e.g., design of flags, national anthems, etc.) reflect a special privileged status for members of the titular ethnic group living in their own "homeland." Moreover, frequently these titular representatives attached the concept of "homeland" to the entire territory of republics whose borders had been created by Soviet power. In their minds, "independence" was above all an achievement of the ethnic group from whose name of the republic was derived. It is not surprising that many members of non-titular nationalities felt threatened by such ideas.

As republics moved toward sovereignty, a conflict emerged over how to define the identity of the emerging states. This can perhaps best be imagined as a conflict between two (admittedly

oversimplified) polar models of the state. Let us refer to the first as the "nation-state" model. "Nation-statists" view their territorial unit above all as the embodiment of (usually their own) titular nationality's acquisition of statehood. They believe that in "their" republic the titular group's language and culture should occupy a special position and be a focus of government support. This often entails privileges or special rights for members of the titular group, such as eligibility to hold top political posts or other jobs. By contrast, the "civil statist" consider their republics to be political units which should equally be the homeland of all inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity, religion, language, race, etc. In their view, the "X" republic should not confer any special status on members of its titular ethnic group or their culture.

Throughout the republics of the former Soviet Union, nation-statists have placed great emphasis on the promotion of the republic's titular language as the state language. They have sought for "their" titular language to fulfill many of the functions which in the Soviet period were fulfilled by Russian. Communist Party ideological writings in the last decades of Soviet power had consecrated Russian as the "language of inter-ethnic communication" and even non-Russians' "second mother tongue." Only during the collapse of the old regime did proponents of the nation-state" receive the opportunity to press for change in the linguistic order. In some republics, where the titular language had maintained a strong position (e.g., Armenia, Estonia and Lithuania), the shift to "state" language proceeded rather quickly. In other areas (such as Kazakstan or Belarus) the process has been much more difficult.

This study will examine the evolution of the concept of a new state identity in the Central Asian republic of Kazakstan, where in the Soviet era the titular nationality language, Kazak, had a quite limited sphere of use outside the home, especially in urban areas; Kazakstan was a republic where Russian had made great inroads. Today the problem of state identity in Kazakstan, including its linguistic aspects, still remains largely unresolved. In 1996, an attempt was made to revise the republic's law on language that was originally passed in 1989. However, probably because of continuing disagreement over fundamental questions of identity, the draft law (which had already been widely circulated among government officials and accordingly revised) was not submitted to the parliament*

The arguments about identity are shaped not only by forces within Kazakstan, but by other countries, especially Russia. At present Kazakstan seems to be moving economically and politically closer to Russia. However, underlying contradictory images of Kazakstan's identity still remain. Although there may not be any immediate crisis which will exacerbate the problems of state identity

*The Law was passed by the Majlis on November 22, 1996, but as of the date of distribution of this Report, is still awaiting action by the Senate. See also Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, Vol. II, #222, 11/26/96. [NCSEER Staff note.]

in Kazakstan, over the long run the contradictory images of identity could fuel crises that would threaten Kazakstan's civil peace and even territorial integrity.

We will see below that, as elsewhere, since the late 1980s some forces in Kazakstan have sought to create something resembling a nation-state in their republic; others have insisted that their republic remain a "civil state." In examining this issue, our primary lens will be official documents and speeches concerning language policy and closely related questions. Our study will highlight the severe dilemmas that the decline of the Soviet political system has posed to Kazakstan's leaders as they have sought to maintain their republic's territorial integrity and independence, yet satisfy a population holding contradictory images of Kazakstan's identity. Before we proceed to discuss the problems of Kazakstan, we will first briefly consider some aspects of the relation of language and identity and introduce some concepts which will be used below. Then we will turn to Kazakstan's specific situation: we will first consider the unique combination of historical, geographic, demographic, and linguistic factors which make defining its identity so difficult. We will next analyze images of Kazakstan's identity embodied in a selection of major policy documents issued between 1987 and 1990, and then (though in less detail) consider analogous questions in political documents since Kazakstan's independence (most importantly, the Declaration of Independence and two constitutions). We will note that as the Soviet Union collapsed and it became critical for Kazakstan to define its own unique identity, the political process yielded compromises and what appear to be deliberately vague formulations. Following our review of policy documents, we will look at the public pronouncements that the official policies adopted since Nazarbayev became the republic leader bear his strong imprint. To convey a sense of the close link of language corpus and language status in questions of identity, we will briefly look at the question of place names. Finally, we will examine the recent effort to revise Kazakstan's language law.

Language and the fate of the nation

Language can be a key bond which links members of a community and gives them a sense of shared belonging. One reason is that a common language facilitates transmission of information among people who share that language. The key role of this instrument is stressed by such social science theorists as Karl Deutsch, who saw complementarity or relative efficiency of communication among individuals as "the essential aspect of the unity of a people."³ Language is also a potentially powerful bond because of shared emotional ties to it. This is certainly the case in such a society as late twentieth century Ireland where the Irish language is less important as an efficient channel for communication than as an emotional bond.

Although a single state language shared by the overwhelming majority of a country's population may be an asset in national consolidation, this is a condition which many countries of the world do not meet. Moreover, a strong sense of ethnic or state identity need not involve maintenance

of "one's own" particular language.⁴ Given this fact, it is remarkable that language often rises to a prominent spot on the political agenda and becomes inextricably entwined with autonomy or separatist movements, such as in Canada or Spain. Despite political leaders' claims, language problems may not be the force driving fissiparous movements. Rather, political leaders who skillfully use the banner of language rights to gain supporters (and ultimately political power) may be the most critical ingredient. Paul Brass, who has written extensively on language politics in India, illustrates how language is not necessarily politically important in every multilingual society. Rather, it's politicization depends on manipulation by that society's elites.⁵

This does not mean that it is simply a coincidence or accident that language so often appears at the heart of battles for state power. As Ernest Gellner has argued, there is something quite logical about the tie between the state and its promotion of a single language. Gellner notes such factors as the modern state's need for a costly educational infrastructure; this pushes the modern state toward a condition in which political and cultural boundaries are on the whole congruent. Language is often a major element of the "cultural boundary."⁶

If one looks at post-Soviet states' language problems through this lens, it is obvious that individual politicians able to manipulate symbols and the populations' perception of various events can play key roles in the development of ethnic nationalism. Thus, the full picture of language politics in the republics of the former Soviet Union would require an analysis of the political groups themselves. Although such an exercise lies beyond the purpose of this study, the present analysis of documents relevant to state language policy can be a first step toward understanding the dynamics of the debates on this very important issue. Moreover, these documents are themselves of great symbolic significance and also have major practical implications.

Although individuals with the same ethnicity often share a linguistic bond and live in geographical proximity, nothing inherent in the concept of natsional'nost' means that members of the same natsional'nost' must live in the same territory or share an attachment to it. Indeed, members of ethnic groups might be widely dispersed, and so (for example) in Soviet terms, Ukrainians living in Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, and Uzbekistan were all equally of Ukrainian natsional'nost'.

Based on Lenin's writings, however, Soviet official treatment of nationality problems linked populations and territory with a closely related term, nation [natsiia]. According to official party texts, a nation was "an historically formed, stable community of people for whom are characteristic a community of economic life, language, territory, and certain psychological traits (national character, self-consciousness [samosoznanie], interests, etc.) manifest in characteristics of its culture and everyday life." Naturally, ethnic groups [natsional'nosti] concentrated in particular territories constituted the core of nations [natsii]. In class society nations were said to represent "none other than the ethnic form of co-existence of socially diverse forces."⁷ In such cases, "nations" were antagonistic actors on the world scene, often involved in conflict with one another.

Like nations in class society, Soviet nations were also said to be based on historically derived communities which thus had a common territory and at least in origin an ethnic base. However, the situation in the Soviet Union, as a socialist society, had supposedly transformed the very nature of nations. Unlike the conflicting nations of pre-socialist times, in the USSR the nations' outstanding characteristics were said to be an amicable union, unity, equality, international solidarity, and the dominance of an internationalist ideology.⁸ Although the republics of the Soviet Union were said to have emerged as the expression of the right to self-determination by Soviet nations, the "national statehood" [natsional'naia gosudarstvennost'] of the republics was supposedly no longer based on a single ethnic group. Consequently the Soviet type of national statehood was said to "reflect and reinforce the unity of the national and international in the development" of all peoples of the USSR. Thus, the "national statehood" of Soviet nations was to represent not only the "nation [natsiia] which gave its name" to a particular republic, but in equal fashion the interests of all other "ethnic groups" [natsional'nosti] inhabiting it.⁹

Soviet Communist Party doctrine in the 1970s affirmed that Soviet nations were developing along a trajectory bringing them closer together. The dominant tendencies were said to be flourishing [rastsvet] and coming together [sblizhenie]. Eventually, nations would merge with one another, i.e., undergo sliianie. In the meantime, however, in the process of sblizhenie of all nations [natsii] and ethnic groups [narodnosti], the Party was already said to be directing and facilitating the creation of the "Soviet people" [sovetskii narod].¹⁰ Although the party claimed that the new amalgam embodied elements of all Soviet nations, Moscow's policies make it clear that the culture of the "Soviet people" had and would continue to have a strong Russian tint.

By analysis of these Soviet era doctrines and careful attention to changes in the way the above mentioned terms were used, we will be able to discern movement in the Gorbachev era towards recognition that the Soviet Union was not just one seamless and amicable people [narod]-which happened to consist of diverse ethnic groups and nations-but a society in which titular ethnic groups' rights to particular privileges in "their own" territory began to be recognized. This was an important step in opening opportunities for nation-statists to promote their political agendas.

Not surprisingly, among active participants in debates over republic identity in Kazakstan since the late 1980s, the proponents of something closer to the nation-state have generally been ethnic Kazaks, while the proponents of equal rights and privileges for all nationalities in Kazakstan have been from non-titular groups. However, the dividing lines between opposing sides of this debate are much more complex than a simple division according to officially registered ethnic identification. Though not very numerous, individual "non-titulars" have supported local attempts to identify their republic of residence more closely with the particular republic's titular ethnic group. Much more common are "internationalist-minded" members of titular nationalities who have been willing or even

eager to downplay the titular group's special role in "their own" republic. Often such individuals are among the russified elites.

Legitimacy and Identity

The question of state identity acquired particular salience in the late- and post-Soviet era in part because the republic leaders were searching for ways to legitimize their rule. Of course legitimacy is not based solely on issues of identity, and for that matter many regimes manage to persist even when they are viewed as illegitimate by subject populations. Nevertheless, the leaders of the new post-Soviet states are all sensitive to the potency of such national symbols as national flags, anthems, money, monuments, place names, etc., all of which can attract support from groups among the population or alienate them. Moreover, conceptions of state identity profoundly shape policies relative to citizenship, eligibility for welfare benefits and employment opportunities, and other rights of various categories of immigrants and refugees.

In directing the process of defining their emerging states' identity, leaders of former Soviet republics have been obliged to consider the effects on legitimacy of various symbols and policies among segments of the population with divergent and even contradictory interests. On the one hand they have been drawn to enhance their legitimacy among the more nationalistically minded titular-group intelligentsia and this group's followers among the masses. In all of the post-Soviet republics (i.e., the former union republics) the titular ethnic group constitutes at least a plurality of the population, and in most cases a majority. Consequently, even if leaders eschewed the term "nation-state," they have often used rhetoric incorporating some of the elements of identity supported by its proponents. However, all post-Soviet states also have citizens who favor something much closer to the civil state. Concerned about political legitimacy among the latter, political leaders have been obliged at times to tip somewhat in the other direction.

The problem of legitimacy among non-titular groups in post-Soviet republics is likely to be of particular relevance to territorial integrity in cases where the minorities live compactly, and where their own "titular homeland" is the powerful Russian Federation or another relatively strong state.¹¹ Such states have great potential for mischief in fostering separatist movements among their co-ethnics in less powerful republics. Political leaders in the less powerful newly independent countries have had to be careful (especially in pronouncements for consumption by republic minority populations and external audiences) to stress the multinational nature of their states and the government guarantee of equal rights to all who live on their territory.

Background on Kazakstan

The remainder of this study will focus on Kazakstan. The problem of defining a republic identity arguably has been and remains more problematic in Kazakstan than in any other state which

emerged from the USSR. This is because although a large proportion of the country's Kazak population appears to support at least part of the vision of a Kazak nation-state, some of the elements in this vision are unacceptable to much of the rest of the population, including many Kazaks. The large share of the population opposed to the nation-state is related to Kazakhstan's unique history, geography, and demographic composition, all of which link the republic to a Russian or "Eurasian" identity. These same reasons also explain the seriousness of the threat of separatism in Kazakhstan.¹²

The "nation-state" proponents in Kazakhstan are similar to their counterparts elsewhere in newly independent states in that they claim that all the territory of present-day Kazakhstan was historically inhabited by the titular nationality; this is one of the primary bases for their claims that the Kazak people have a collective right for their culture and language to occupy a privileged position within Kazakhstan's borders. They reject arguments that Kazaks' minority status in their titular republic is any reason for the state to encourage cultural pluralism. At the same time, however, they do not ignore the importance of demography. They favor such measures as the promotion of large Kazak families and migration of the Kazak diaspora to Kazakhstan in order to increase the ethnic Kazak share of the country's population. Naturally, the civil state proponents approach matters very differently, and point out that Kazaks are only one of many ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, and at that not even a majority.

In addition to the universally prevalent dimensions of the "nation" vs. "civil" state debate throughout the former Soviet Union, at least one aspect seems more characteristic of Kazakhstan (and other Central Asian republics) than the rest of the newly independent countries, particularly the Baltic states. Many of the proponents of the civil state in Kazakhstan—including many of the best educated and most russified Kazaks—claim that Kazak culture and language are backward and not appropriate bases for life at the end of the twentieth century. In the spring of 1996, one of the "hottest" topics of conversation among intellectuals in Almaty (Alma-Ata)¹³ was a public statement by Kazak historian Norbulat Massanov to the effect that Kazak culture and language should be left alone as historical monuments, and no attempt be made to use them in contemporary life. Massanov allegedly stated that Kazak was a "language of nomads," in which "civilized people cannot communicate."¹⁴ According to this view, any efforts to define the Kazakhstan republic identity in terms of its titular ethnic group will not only cause discord, but if "successful," drag the country at least several decades backward.

For the moment, let us turn to the historical legacy of Russia's contact with the territory which eventually became Kazakhstan. Tsarist Russia began to maintain intensive trade contacts with this area already in the eighteenth century; moreover, Russia's trade with points to the south (e.g., Tashkent, Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand) also crossed the Kazak steppe. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a series of Kazak rulers seeking to defend the territories under their control from Kazak and non-Kazak rivals turned to Russia for help. Already in 1731, Empress Anna Ioannovna granted

podanstvo (status as citizens) to the Kazak Khan Abulkhayr of the Small Horde, and by so doing fortified his position in the struggle with the Dzhungars and with his own political rivals. Beginning in the 1820s, Russia built a series of military outposts to consolidate imperial rule in territories inhabited by Kazaks. Because over time such forts were built further south and closer to the Kokand Khanate, they later played a key role in facilitating Russia's conquest of Turkestan.

The nature of the unification of Kazak territories with Russia (i.e., was it voluntary or forced?) has provided grist for some of the most heated arguments of Kazak historiography. These debates are directly relevant to questions of identity, since the "voluntary" interpretation logically supports the position that Kazaks themselves historically sought bonds to Russia; the other side tends to champion the view that over the last two and a half centuries Russia/the USSR has acted aggressively towards Kazaks, and so today independence requires vigilance to assure freedom from Russian domination.

History is also a major arena for debate on questions about which lands currently in Kazakstan should be part of the republic; it is also the basis for debate about the current demographic and linguistic situation in Kazakstan. Proponents of the "nation-state" model stress that demographically Kazakstan became "less Kazak" due to policies imposed by alien colonial rulers (i.e., Russian tsarist/Soviet governments), and that the same were responsible for the declining status of the Kazak language across the board. They point to such phenomena as the famine during collectivization which killed millions of Kazak citizens, the government-supported mass settlement of Slavs to fertile rural Kazak lands and to cities where they received choice housing. They also see the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Koreans, Chechens, Germans, and members of other ethnic groups to Kazakstan as events which contributed to the republic's undesirable "internationalization." Naturally, they also blame the tsarist and communist regimes for closure of Kazak educational institutions and the linguistic russification of economic administration, culture and other fields.

Even though the supporters of the civil state model in Kazakstan may recognize the tragic consequences of famines and deportations, they tend to stress that other ethnic groups also suffered the effects of misguided or evil Soviet policies, and that the non-Kazaks who now inhabit Kazakstan are entitled to equal rights to it as their home. Moreover, they emphasize the non-coercive aspects of russification; with regard to language, they stress that Kazaks themselves made voluntary choices to use Russian instead of Kazak, and that for the most part the results should not be blamed on Russia.

Of course the specific history of Kazak-Russian relations owes much to geographical factors. Geography, however, should also be considered in a context broader than political and military conquest. The cities which developed from early Russian military outposts or commercial centers on Kazak territory were very distant from population centers (now part of Kazakstan) located in the south. This contributed to close links between many cities of present-day Kazakstan and urban centers of the Urals and Siberia. Thus, the economies and transportation networks of many of

Kazakstan's urban centers (e.g., Oral [Uralsk], Kostanay, Petropavlovsk, Kokshetau [Kokchetav], Pavlodar, Semei [Semipalatinsk], and Oskemen [Ustkamenogorsk]) are more closely linked with such cities in Russia as Orenburg, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, and Barnaul than they are with distant cities of Kazakstan's south, such as Almaty or Shymkent (Chimkent).

The fact that the nature and location of the Kazak-Russian frontier repeatedly shifted over the last 250 years also complicates the task of establishing an independent Kazakstan identity today. Prominent Russian politicians and intellectuals (most famous, perhaps, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) have argued that Russia has a greater historical claim to vast areas of Kazakstan's north than does Kazakstan. (Among other things, certain Russian scholars maintain that Kazak herdsmen may have seasonally crossed certain lands in search of finding feed for their livestock, but that this did not constitute a serious claim to such territories.)

The definition and enforcement of boundaries is further complicated by the very length of the frontier. The current state border between Kazakstan and Russia stretches for more than four thousand miles, from Astrakhan in the west to Gorno-Altai in the east. Moreover, even under Soviet power, certain territories were shifted between Russia and Kazakstan (not to mention Kazakstan and Uzbekistan).

Naturally, during the Soviet period Russia's enormous impact on Kazakstan was mediated through the central party apparatus, which in turn was dominated by Russia and Russians. Despite the collapse of the USSR, Russia has continued to have a major influence on its southern neighbor. Although Kazakstan's post-Soviet leadership has consistently sought more autonomy for Kazakstan to determine its own political fate, it has also demonstrated an acute awareness of the country's dependence on Russia. As president of independent Kazakstan, Nazarbayev has resisted the recreation of a union dominated by Russia, but he has also assiduously sought to retain and restore political links with it.

Just six months after Kazakstan became independent, Kazakstan signed a treaty with Russia "On Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Aid." True, many of the provisions of this document remained unfulfilled. But efforts in the same direction continued, and in June 1994 Kazakstan signed a new bilateral agreement with Russia "On Further Deepening of Integration and Economic Cooperation."

Although not purely a matter of Kazakstan-Russia relations, Kazakstan's efforts to bring closer cooperation among states of the former USSR or those of just the CIS are also evidence of Russia's impact on its southern neighbor. As early as the summer of 1992, Nazarbayev called on leaders of the CIS to form a "new union."¹⁵ He elaborated his thoughts on this concept in 1994 as he revealed details of his plan for a new "Eurasian Union of States."¹⁶ This idea has found little support outside of Kazakstan. However, the republic has proceeded to tie its fate closer to Russia by such measures as signing (in March 1996) a quadripartite treaty with Russia, Belarus, and Kyrgyzstan "On

Deepening Integration in the Economic and Humanitarian Spheres."¹⁷ And the following month Boris Yeltsin visited Almaty for the signing of five bilateral Russia-Kazakstan accords.

These agreements do not change the fact that relations between Russia and Kazakstan have been troubled, and that Russia has had much more leverage over Kazakstan than vice versa. One of the key events shaping bilateral relations was Russia's introduction of restraints on the supply of rubles in mid-1993. In the fall of that year, Kazakstan was left with little choice but to introduce its own currency. At least in the short run, this had serious negative consequences for Kazakstan.

Russia's ability to control most of Kazakstan's trade with most states not contiguous with Kazakstan and to curtail vital raw material and energy supplies to Kazakstan have also posed enormous difficulties for Kazakstan. Likewise, Russia's (alleged and/or real) support for separatists within Kazakstan, its (albeit largely unsuccessful) pressure on Kazakstan to force it to introduce "dual citizenship," and hard-nosed negotiations on terms for leasing the former Soviet space facility at Bayqongyr (Baikonur) have all demonstrated Kazakstan's vulnerability to pressure from the north. The Russian State Duma's April 1996 resolution condemning the Minsk accords (which signaled the death knell of the USSR) and the reaction in Kazakstan is yet another example of Russia's political forces' ability to create tension in Kazakstan.

The impact of Russia on Kazakstan is enormous both in direct as well as indirect ways. The links between some of the direct forms of influence (e.g., support for Cossacks demanding autonomy or even secession) and potential political instability in Kazakstan is often fairly obvious. But some of the less direct sorts of influence may ultimately be equally threatening. Thus, failure to supply materials vital to Kazakstan's industry can exacerbate Kazakstan's economic crisis, undermine legitimacy, and destabilize the entire political system.

Nazarbayev has cited historical precedent almost as justification for his tendency to consider carefully Russia's reaction to his own policies. He has taken special note of the fact that Kazaks have often had to conduct a "flexible and balanced policy" and obtain the "support of powerful neighbors." Only thanks to this have Kazaks been able to "survive and preserve their ethnic bonds, their native language, customs, and traditions."¹⁸

Ethnodemographic factors also link Kazakstan to Russia and thus have a major impact on policies relevant to identity. Among all the USSR's fifteen union republics, at the end of the Soviet era Kazakstan had the lowest percentage of population belonging to the titular ethnic group: as of 1989, Kazaks and Russians each accounted for about 40 percent of the total, with another 20 percent belonging to other nationalities. (Two other groups, Germans and Ukrainians, constituted over half of the remaining 20 percent, while each of the other nationality groups represented only about 2 percent or less of the total.)

Although the share of Kazaks in the total Kazakstan population has risen rapidly in the period since 1991, as of 1996 Kazaks still comprise a little less than half of the total. Moreover, the

creation of a single nation-state identity is impeded by the very uneven distribution of ethnic groups throughout Kazakhstan. Although in such oblasts as Atyrau and Qyzylorda (Kyzyl Orda) Kazaks constitute almost 90 percent of the population, in other oblasts such as North Kazakhstan, Qostanay (Kustanai), and Qaraghandy (Karaganda), they are still under 25 percent. Logically, few Russians inhabit those areas with the largest share of Kazaks: only 7 and 8 percent respectively of Qyzylorda's and Atyrau's population is Russian. By contrast, the Russian share of North Kazakhstan, Qostanay, and Qaraghandy oblasts' population is 60 percent, 46 percent, and 50 percent, and in Eastern Kazakhstan is 63 percent. The physical separation of Kazaks and Russians—and different styles of livelihood—is also reflected in the fact that most Kazaks live in rural areas (over 60 percent); by contrast, this applies to less than one fourth of the Russians in the republic. Moreover, much of Kazakhstan's rural Slavic population inhabits different villages from their Kazak counterparts, and are concentrated in different rayons and oblasts. Rural population in rayons of southern oblasts is predominantly Kazak with only a small share of Russians: in Qyzylorda Oblast, Russians account for under one percent of the rural inhabitants, with Kazaks accounting for over 97 percent.¹⁹ On the other hand, many villages of northern and eastern Kazakhstan are primarily Slavic, with few Kazak inhabitants. As the urban/rural demographic patterns might suggest, Slavs are more common in Kazakhstan's industrial employment, whereas Kazaks dominate the livestock sector.

Kazakhstan's heterogeneous ethnic composition, of course, is closely related to linguistic patterns which link Kazakhstan to Russia. Moreover, the linguistic picture has seriously complicated efforts to disentangle Kazakhstan's identity from that of the "post-Soviet Union" or Russia. At present the language which provides a channel for communication among the largest share of Kazakhstan's population is not Kazak, but rather Russian. According to the 1989 census, over 80 percent of Kazakhstan's population were either native speakers of Russian or fluent in it. Almost all of Kazakhstan's Russians and many members of the other (especially Slavic) minorities are native Russian speakers. Although they may not have claimed Russian as "native" in the 1989 census, in practice many Kazaks are also indeed native Russian speakers in the sense that they grew up in homes where Russian was the dominant or exclusive language, they attended Russian-medium schools, and understand little if any Kazak.

Even the majority of Kazakhstan's Kazaks who are not native Russian speakers are nevertheless fluent in it. In all, 64 percent of Kazaks claimed fluency in Russian in the 1989 census. This is particularly striking in comparison with analogous figures from other former Central Asian republics of between 23 and 37 percent. Although the 1989 census purported to show that over 98 percent of Kazak SSR Kazaks were native speakers, participants in the public debate of Kazakhstan's language problems generally accept that at least 25 percent of Kazaks speak little or no Kazak; many participants in this discussion claim that a full 40 percent of Kazakhstan's Kazaks have a weak

knowledge of the Kazak language or none at all. The overwhelming majority of these 25 to 40 percent are probably more fluent in Russian than Kazak.

The position of the Kazak language in Kazakhstan deteriorated precipitously between the 1960s and mid 1980s. Among the most serious blows was the elimination of approximately 700 schools where Kazak language had been the language of instruction and the conversion of many into Russian schools. As a result, even many rural areas inhabited largely by Kazaks were served only by Russian educational institutions. Likewise, though about one-fourth of the million inhabitants of the capital city Almaty, were ethnic Kazaks in the mid 1980s, the city had only one or two secondary schools with Kazak as the medium of instruction. Moreover, as of 1988-89, only 5 to 7 percent of pupils in North Kazakhstan and Pavlodar Oblasts studied in Kazak language schools or groups; yet Kazak children accounted for almost one-fourth and one-third respectively of those oblasts' school children.²⁰

It should be emphasized that much of this process of converting Kazak schools into Russian ones was not imposed by Moscow in any direct sense. Indeed, many Kazak parents realized that the quality of education in Russian-medium schools was higher than in the analogous Kazak ones, and that the former opened doors to superior educational and career opportunities for their children. This phenomenon is still operative today. Because it slows the promotion of Kazak-medium education, it also impinges on efforts to link Kazak language more closely with the identity of Kazakhstan, even for its ethnic Kazak inhabitants. It also explains the reluctance of some of the republic's Kazaks regarding efforts to "kazakize" the educational system.

Russian of course also made great inroads in the workplace. In describing Kazakhstan's dominant Russian language environment [russkoiazychie] in 1989, Nursultan Nazarbayev (then Kazakhstan party first secretary) recounted: "All state business, all political questions, and all our organized activities [meropriiatiia] take place exclusively in Russian. I was at a party conference: there were 298 delegates, all Kazaks, and one Russian person, the rayon military commissar, and just the same everything transpired in Russian."²¹

Movement toward a "linguistic" nation-state model in Kazakhstan (i.e., giving significant privileges to individuals with a mastery of Kazak) is also impeded by the very low level of competency in Kazak among the republic's other ethnic groups. According to the 1989 census, less than 1 percent of Russians claimed fluency in Kazak. Consequently, even though at the end of the Soviet era over 80 percent of the republic population was fluent in Russian, no more than half that many was fluent in Kazak.

Creation of a republic identity based on broader use of the Kazak language is also problematic because Kazak lacks a standardized set of terminology to represent concepts in such technical areas as medicine, electronics, genetics, or engineering, or even in certain areas of office work. This

means that unless linguistic "kazakization" is preceded by work on important language corpus questions, there is a high likelihood of inefficiency due to lack of uniformity.

The above factors have major implications for the debates between "native statist" and "civil statist." First of all, Kazakhstan's geography, demographic picture, history, and the nature of the Soviet political system all have contributed to the reduced spheres of use of Kazak and greater sphere of use of Russian. This is an important fact for proponents both of the civil state and the nation-state models. As noted above, the "civil statist" reject the premise that the government should provide special privileges to any particular ethnic group living on its territory. Naturally, this translates into opposition to policies which might give the Kazak language special privileges and undermine others.

For the nation-statists, however, the picture is much murkier. The reason for this is closely tied to the very complex question "What is the basis of identity for the Kazak ethnic group?" A century ago, when a minute proportion of Kazaks were ignorant of the Kazak language, it was much clearer that language was a basic component of Kazak group identity. (This is true despite the fact that the Kazak language did not acquire a standardized written form until the Soviet period.) Moreover, at that time a relatively small proportion of Kazaks spoke Russian or another foreign language.

Today, on the other hand, the overwhelming majority of Kazaks have a fairly good passive (and many an excellent active) knowledge of Russian; moreover, many lack fluency in Kazak. This means that today it is very divisive to define membership in the Kazak nation in a way that requires fluency in the Kazak language. Of course a Kazak nation-state based identity which encompasses Kazaks regardless of linguistic ability naturally refers to a much larger population than one requiring a particular level of Kazak language skill. But it is also one which does not satisfy the aspirations of nation-statists concerning the Kazak native language.²²

Kazakhstan's demographic situation makes this an especially troublesome dilemma for nation-statists. As noted above, in 1989, the year Kazakhstan passed its language law, Kazaks constituted approximately 40 percent of the republic's population. Of these, probably no more than 60 percent could read and write Kazak.²³ Thus, it is very likely that in 1989 only about 25 percent (or less!) of the republic's population could read and write in the state language.

The much higher proportion of the population literate in Russian has greatly complicated promotion of the state language as a unifying force. Kazakhstan appears to be the only independent country in the world whose name refers to the single ethnic group whose language has "state" status, and whose population is overwhelmingly literate. . . but in another language.

The existence of such barriers to promotion of Kazak as the state language in Kazakhstan does not, however, mean that the stakes of government-defined language status are any lower than in countries where the state language has a much stronger position. Indeed, for the quarter of the population literate in Kazak (whose spokesmen sometimes claim special responsibility as the rightful

heirs of the Kazak patrimony and as its protectors), the opportunities for upward mobility are potentially very great. Moreover, for the millions of Kazaks and non-Kazak fellow citizens who lack a knowledge of the state language, such policies are extremely threatening.

Before proceeding to examine the emerging "nation-state" and "civil state" images of Kazakstan represented in various documents, it is important to acknowledge the difficulty (and probably impossibility) of separating demagogic rhetoric from sincere beliefs in positions of proponents of various policies. Indeed, many of independent Kazakstan's spokesmen for the nation-state not long ago espoused orthodox Communist party doctrines promoting integration of the USSR's population into the "Soviet people." As we indicated above, current and aspiring political elites may use language as a political weapon. Some of them may sincerely believe in what they are espousing while others may merely be cynically exploiting it. The "real" views of most, undoubtedly have evolved over time, and they probably fall between the extremes of pure cynicism and full belief in their utterances. Although such issues are intriguing parts of the policy picture, they lie beyond the scope of this study.

The Conditions for Public Discourse

We will soon turn to an examination of the changing and conflicting images of state identity as they appeared in official policy statements concerning language since 1987. Most of the analysis will be based on materials gleaned from the Kazakstan press of this period. Before proceeding, however, it is critical to note the context in which these materials were published—in particular some fundamental changes in the political process, including transformation of the media environment.

As of 1987, Kazakstan was an integral part of an empire ruled by a centralized party directed from Moscow. Indeed, at the end of 1986, Moscow had installed a new Kazakstan republic party first secretary (ethnic Russian Gennadii Kolbin), one of whose apparent functions was to tighten Moscow's grip over the republic. During the next few years, however, all republic parties (led by the Baltic and Transcaucasus) achieved greater autonomy from the center; by the time Kolbin was removed in mid-1989, republic political forces were again gaining power vis à vis the center. Naturally, this trend took a great leap forward with the collapse of the USSR in 1991.

As elsewhere in the former USSR, in Kazakstan, too, this change was accompanied by the appearance of new opportunities for political participation both by new groups of elites and masses. Gorbachev's policies permitted and in some cases encouraged Soviet citizens to take a more significant role in political decisions affecting their lives. As a result, "informal" organizations began to aggregate and articulate interests, and the government organized multicandidate elections.

These developments, along with such phenomena as the shift of power from the party to the state apparatus, mean that the analysis of such documents as party pronouncements and speeches by republic local party leaders in 1987 must be approached very differently from those of 1989 or 1991,

let alone 1995 or 1996. In early 1987, Kazakstan republic First Secretary Kolbin spoke with authority (if not text) from Moscow, and his words can be taken as an authoritative reflection of the central party policy. It is much more difficult to determine the mix of authority behind policies articulated in late 1989, since leaders in Moscow and Almaty were often publicly pursuing different goals; and by 1993-1994 different branches of government within Kazakstan were publicly struggling for power among themselves.

It is also necessary to take into account that the press became much more open in Kazakstan after 1989, and media appeared which had a greater degree of independence from the government. True, since 1994 the process seems to have reversed itself, but even the "official" media today (e.g., Kazakhstanskaia pravda or Egemen Qazaqstan (not to mention the "independent" press), carry a much livelier debate than was imaginable in 1987-88. Because of this, it is much easier today to discern contrasting images of identity in the 1990s than in the Kolbin era; however, much of the material in the press is of substantially less help in determining official policy.

Our discussion of images of identity reflected in language policy immediately below will revolve around three separate events between 1987 and 1990. The first will be two resolutions on language adopted jointly by the Kazakstan party and government. These were issued in March 1987, less than three months after Gennadii Kolbin had been installed as Kazakstan party first secretary. The second event is the language law passed by Kazakstan's Supreme Soviet in September 1989. The months leading up to its passage witnessed widespread public debate of language issues, and the replacement of First Secretary Kolbin by Nursultan Nazarbayev, an ethnic Kazak. Despite the greater latitude in policy decisions granted to republic party leaders, at this time few people could imagine that the political structure of the Soviet Union would soon begin to crumble.

This situation radically changed over the next year, so participants in the public discussion relevant to Kazakstan's October 1990 declaration of sovereignty were already considering language in a new context. True, in most parts of the USSR the prospect of full political independence still seemed remote, but politicians and members of the creative intelligentsia throughout the USSR were asking whether the Soviet Union could survive without a new union treaty fundamentally changing the power structure.

In the later sections of this study we will consider additional documents from the post-Soviet period and some statements reflecting Nazarbayev's policies. In much of the post-Soviet era Nazarbayev's speeches have not coincided with the public statements of other major politicians, in particular deputies of earlier parliaments. Thus, we must read Nazarbayev's speeches through a different lens than for Gennadii Kolbin's in 1987. Likewise, unlike the situation in the mid-1980s, the later documents were published in an atmosphere that still permitted criticism of policies that were publicly supported by the political leadership, including the president himself.

Let us now turn to a more detailed examination of the documents and the environments in which they emerged.

Language Concessions in the Wake of Zheltoksan:

The Resolutions of March 1987

Thanks to policies introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev, in the late 1980s members of the Kazak creative intelligentsia and scholarly community began openly to press for measures which would raise the status of the Kazak language. Many of these initial efforts involved ways to improve Kazak language skills, above all among the Kazak community, and the provision of more services in Kazak.

The first significant concessions on this front were the resolutions mentioned above that were adopted in March 1987. In the wake of the December 1986 disturbances (i.e., Zheltoksan), the party appears to have realized the urgency of doing something to assuage the injury to Kazak pride and promote harmonious ethnic relations. To this end as early as January 1987 the Kazakstan party established a republic commission on relations between ethnic groups, followed by parallel commissions at lower levels.²⁴ In terms of language, the party's same concerns seem to have produced the resolution "On Improving the Study of the Kazak language" (henceforth RoISKazL) accompanied by a parallel resolution "On Improving the Study of the Russian Language" (henceforth RoISRusL).²⁵

Though timid when compared to measures designed to boost the Kazak language status of just two or three years later, the RoISKazL is an important milestone. It marks the first time in memory that the party publicly identified the local language as a matter worthy of special attention.

Without citing specific facts, the RoISKazL criticizes previous mistakes which had led to the "noticeable tendency of decline of the prestige of the Kazak language in recent years, especially among individuals of the indigenous ethnic group." In calling to make bilingualism the norm in Kazakstan, the resolution outlines a number of measures to improve the study of Kazak in the schools and the workplace. In the case of children, the resolution emphasizes improved instruction for Kazaks in their native language rather than Kazak as a second language for others. As for the workplace (which appears to be only a secondary focus), the RoISKazL is somewhat more directed toward non-Kazaks. The resolution also calls for publishing new dictionaries, conversational manuals, and other educational materials, as well as for establishing methodological laboratories in schools. In addition, the resolution provides for the creation of Kazak courses for television and radio, and the training of teachers in the new specialty, "Kazak language and literature in the Russian school."

These measures promoting the Kazak language at first glance seem incongruous with the general direction of Moscow's policy aimed at uprooting "nationalism" in Kazakstan at this time. In

early 1987, ideological tracts of the central party emphasize links with the entire USSR and strongly criticize manifestation of local or ethnic isolationism. Following Moscow's replacement of long-time Kazakstan party first secretary Kunayev with outsider Gennadii Kolbin, the party officially blamed the ensuing disturbances on drunk and drugged nationalist hoodlums; the party's explanation was that nationalists had emerged due to serious shortcomings in ideological work of the Kunayev era. To make up for such defects, a March 1987 Kazakstan party plenum mandated intensification of internationalist and patriotic upbringing; a critical part of this was to be the cultivation of "a feeling of belonging to a single indissoluble fraternal family of peoples of the USSR, of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and of boundless dedication to the Leninist banner and the work of the Great October."²⁶

Similar problems are highlighted in a Communist Party of the Soviet Union (henceforth CPSU) Central Committee July 1987 resolution specifically dedicated to "the work of the Kazak Republic party organization in providing internationalist and patriotic education to workers." This document declares that all manifestations of chauvinism, nationalism, national isolation or self-conceit [chvanstvo] should be viewed as an "encroachment on the outstanding accomplishment of socialism, the international unity of Soviet society."²⁷

The practical side of demands for greater "internationalism" was reflected in cadre policy. In January 1987 (just weeks after Kolbin's selection as republic party leader), a CPSU Central Committee plenum called for the mix of administrative cadre throughout the USSR to "reflect more fully the national structure of the population."²⁸ This was an attack on what Moscow viewed as its loss of control over cadre appointments during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Kolbin's appointment in Kazakstan demonstrated Moscow's effort to detach local cadres from allegedly corrupt circles by rotation of personnel out of "home areas" and to dispatch party functionaries from the center to supervise "clean-up" in far-flung republics. Kolbin's promotion of Moscow's program could certainly be viewed by its victims as an attack on many long-serving Kazaks (not to mention local inhabitants of other ethnic groups) and pressure for their replacement by new incumbents, and when possible, outsiders.

The central party also seems to have designed educational policies to support "internationalization" through achieving a new mix among higher education students, i.e., assuring that Kazaks enjoyed no particular advantage in their titular republic. Kolbin oversaw a campaign to reduce the proportion of Kazaks, who were said to be "overrepresented" in many of the republic's most prestigious higher educational institutions. The attempt to "internationalize" education was still evident in the middle of the Kolbin era, when a February 1988 CPSU plenum devoted to education reaffirmed a policy of holding school classes with different languages of instruction in a single building.

As described above, the RoISKazL granted some improvement to Kazak language status in Kazakstan. However, when viewed in comparison with the corresponding resolution on the Russian language it becomes apparent that the party's language policy in early 1987 was still primarily designed to inculcate a common Soviet identity, in part through continued promotion of the "second mother tongue."

As indicated above, the ROISKazL was not issued alone, but rather in conjunction with the "Resolution on the Improvement of Study of the Russian language." This document, unlike the ROISKazL, was a reaffirmation of previous policies rather than a new initiative. In 1983, for example, the CPSU and Soviet government had adopted a resolution on improvement of the study of Russian in educational institutions of the USSR; this was soon followed by analogous resolutions in republics, including Kazakstan. Moreover, the ROISRusL specifically cites the policy documents of 1983.

One of the striking features of the RoISKazL is that it leaves knowledge or study of the Kazak language entirely optional, especially in the case of non-Kazaks. Indeed, the resolution emphasizes that study of the Kazak language is not obligatory: in criticizing past mistakes it refers to the lack of unified Kazak language curriculum "for members of the indigenous ethnic expressing the desire to study it" (emphasis mine, WF). The "freedom of choice" is reemphasized in the recommendation to party and soviet organs to organize Kazak language study courses and circles for members of their staffs "on the basis of strict observation of the principle of voluntary participation." Despite the creation of the new specialty "teacher of Kazak language and literature in the Russian school," and political work intended to explain the "appropriateness" [tselesoobraznost'] of a knowledge of Kazak, there is nothing in the resolution to imply action that would in reality encourage most non-Kazaks in the republic to study the Kazak language (let alone learn it) in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, in contrast to the resolution on Kazak, the ROISRusL identifies Russian in traditional Soviet fashion as the "language of friendship and brotherhood of peoples." Reflecting this special status, (in contrast to the RoISKazL), the RoISRusL sets the goal for every secondary school graduate in Kazakstan (regardless of ethnic group or language of instruction)—to master the Russian language. No such objective is set for Kazak in the ROISKazL. Of course even prior to this resolution Russian was already a mandatory subject in the Kazak school curriculum which (at least on paper) was to be studied beginning from the early elementary grades.

Both the RoISKazL and RoISRusL refer to a voluntary choice concerning language. However, the RoISRusL identifies Russian as the "language voluntarily adopted by the Soviet population [sovetskimi liud'mi] for inter-ethnic communication." In this way, it implies that the "voluntary choice" has already been made, collectively, and is not a matter decided by the individual. It is also worth noting that unlike the RoISKazL, which refers to the "strict" observation of the voluntary principle, the word "strict" is not used in reference to the "voluntary" nature of Russian study.

Although each of the March 1987 resolutions mentions the desirability of bilingualism [dvuiazychie], the improvement of language study envisioned in both refers primarily to Kazaks, not Russians or members of other nationalities. In the case of the RoISRusL, the main "target" group is rural Kazaks. Even in their case the majority were already "bilingual" in that they had at least a rudimentary knowledge of Russian. Thus the task was to improve their Russian skills, not to start from scratch.²⁹ In the case of study of Kazak by non-Kazaks, of course, most individuals had minimal or (more likely) no skills, and very few might be expected to progress beyond the "weak mastery" level.

A peculiar system of responsibility for implementation of the RoISRusL and RoISKazL seems to have assured that Kazak would receive less attention than Russian. Kolbin himself described the particular arrangement, according to which the party placed responsibility for measures to improve Russian instruction in the hands of Kazaks, and responsibility for measures to improve Kazak language instruction in the hands of Russians.³⁰ In his public remarks Kolbin did not note that in the case of improving Russian, the Kazaks who supervised this work—perhaps with some rare exceptions—could all speak Russian and appreciated its value in achieving social mobility. This would almost never be true in the case of the Russians charged with responsibility for Kazak instruction.

The policy toward the languages of "minority" ethnic groups inhabiting Kazakstan (i.e., non-Russians and non-Kazaks) also suggests a party view that members of the "Kazak nation" should not enjoy particular linguistic advantage in the republic, and that Kazakstan's multiethnic population was an inalienable part of the Soviet people. This seems especially clear in the case of Germans, whom Moscow was trying to persuade to remain in Kazakstan and other areas of the USSR. (At this time, Germans accounted for about 6 percent of the republic's population, and were the most numerous after Kazaks and Russians.) In late May or early June 1987, the presidium of the Kazakstan Supreme Soviet met to examine the teaching of German as a native language and to outline measures to improve it.³¹ In this period the party also signaled a higher degree of attention to the Uyghur and Korean languages.³²

Thus, along with the measures relevant to the Kazak and Russian languages, "minority" language policy also seems to have been directed at further "internationalization." Taken as a whole, the steps in the two resolutions provided little basis for anxiety or even discomfort on the part of the republic's population without a knowledge of Kazak. For the time being, language policy in the Soviet Union was still largely in the hands of the central party, which sought to promote the Russian language as a critical adhesive bonding the country's population to one another. Despite the concessions in the way of giving Kazak a higher status, the party was certainly not signaling a willingness to countenance policies which would allow the nations of the Soviet Union to develop in a way that would lead to their separation.

The 1989 Language Law

Along with most other Soviet republics, in 1989 Kazakhstan adopted a language law making the language of its titular nationality the republic "state language." The process of creating these laws was remarkable in that it involved participation by a very large number of citizens who wrote letters to newspapers, took part in public meetings, and other political activities.

Unlike the December 1986 disturbances which had precipitated the resolutions of March 1987, there was no single dramatic local event which preceded the 1989 law. Indeed, the heightened political saliency of language in 1989 in Kazakhstan probably had more to do with developments outside the republic than within.

During the second half of Kolbin's tenure in Kazakhstan—most of 1988 and early 1989—Moscow had begun to grant non-Russians greater freedom to express national and religious identities which differentiated them from the rest of the Soviet population. Inasmuch as Russian elements had dominated much of Soviet culture, the new relaxed controls meant opening the door to those who sought to emphasize the differences between Russians and other ethnic groups. As part of this trend local historians throughout the USSR began to write and publish accounts reinterpreting their past. In their new works, they often rehabilitated heroes who had long remained unmentionable because of real or alleged association with forces opposed to Russia. In 1988 and 1989 Moscow also permitted non-Russians greater freedom to mark their own national and religious celebrations than in the immediately preceding years.

At the same time, non-Russian authors wrote more openly about the fate of their languages and, though usually still couched in terms of a return to a true Leninist nationality policy, directly criticized the denigration of languages under Soviet rule. Nationality concerns, including language, figured prominently in the extraordinary CPSU 19th Party Conference of June-July 1988. Besides calling for "greater concern for the active functioning of national languages in state, social and cultural life," that meeting's resolution also encouraged the study of republic titular nationality languages by members of other nationalities living in each republic.³³

Soon Gorbachev personally signaled the party's greater attention to minority language issues in a January 1989 speech to representatives of the scholarly and cultural community. He stated, "Of course we must not allow even the very least numerous people [narod] to disappear, nor the language of even the least numerous people to be lost."³⁴

Under pressure from popularly supported organizations, in the late summer and fall of 1988 progress was made towards raising titular languages' status in all three of the Baltic republics. In August or September, Estonian authorities agreed to give Estonian the status of "state language." Within a month the presidiums of the republic soviets in Latvia and Lithuania made analogous recommendations.³⁵ These promises soon resulted in the passage of language laws fulfilling that promise. The first law was adopted in Estonia in January 1989. Just one year later, by the end of

January 1990, all republics but one either had constitutions or other laws which granted the titular nationality language a privileged status.³⁶

Although the Baltic republics passed their sovereignty resolutions already in the fall of 1988, at the time of adoption of most republic language laws in 1989 the overwhelming majority of the USSR's population still saw their future within a persisting Soviet state. Few, even among the language laws' most ardent proponents, could have foreseen that within two or three years the legislation that they were approving would provide the legal foundation regulating language use in fifteen independent countries.

By early 1989 the Soviet leadership appears to have recognized some of the serious limitations on its power to impose political decisions on the national republics throughout the USSR, including Central Asia. One sign of this was an end to the unsuccessful cadre "cleanup" presided over by the center's representatives in the republics. In June 1989, Moscow removed the communist party leaders who had supervised this work in both of the two largest republics of Central Asia, Kazakstan and Uzbekistan.

The new republic leaders were permitted and probably even encouraged to take bold new measures to help shore up the party's sagging legitimacy. Like his counterpart Islam Karimov in Uzbekistan, Nursultan Nazarbayev co-opted many of the platforms of local nationalist opposition groups. In addition to shifts on environmental and economic issues, the new leaders also adopted more "national" positions on cultural and linguistic problems. The adoption of language laws should be viewed in this context.

The broader picture of nationality policy which emerged in 1988-89 was thus one in which Moscow seems to have been attempting to foster greater legitimacy among diverse ethnic groups by conceding more room for each individual group's unique development. The center had not abandoned its attempt to inculcate a sense of belonging to a "Soviet people," but was simply more willing to acknowledge that unity did not mean uniformity.

The party's policies were generally reactions to *faits accomplis* rather than bold initiatives to take the lead in a rapidly changing environment. This was also the case in the spring of 1989 when the party showed increasing signs of a new tack. A suggestion was made at a March meeting of the CPSU Central Committee to consider the division of authority between the center and union republics, and to review questions such as citizenship, national languages, and cultures.³⁷ At about the same time the central party newspaper *Pravda* sent up a trial balloon related both to division of power and national languages; it published an article by a Moscow State University professor who endorsed "official" status for languages of the national republics.³⁸

Over the next months the party gave its blessing to other developments that it had little power to change. The draft of the CPSU nationalities platform published in August 1989 granted authority to the republics themselves to resolve questions about the "suitability of recognizing as the state

[language] that language which belongs to the people giving the name" to the union and autonomous republics.³⁹ This principle was later reaffirmed in the CPSU nationalities platform adopted at its September 1989 plenum,⁴⁰ but it hardly gave the republics something that local leaders had not already seized. After all, by that time most republics had already passed language laws. Among its other provisions the platform called for legally designating Russian the "state-wide" [obshchegosudarstvennogo] language used on the territory of the entire USSR and functioning with equal rights with the state languages of the republics.⁴¹

Although the nationalities plenum occurred almost simultaneously with the Kazakstan Supreme Soviet session which adopted the republic language law, outspoken Kazaks had hardly waited until this time to air linguistic issues and propose alternative resolutions. Indeed, though it appears that through most of the Kolbin era the Kazakstan party leadership still shielded the masses from linguistic nationalism, in the fall of 1988 some very radical ideas were already being openly discussed among the cultural elite. In November 1988, a number of members attending a plenum of the republic writers' union expressed support for giving Kazak (and only Kazak) "state" status. At the time, none of the flavor of this discussion was reflected in the republic press. Indeed, the media gave the impression that writers had endorsed two state languages. This was what the well-known Kazak writer and political figure Olzhas Suleymenov reported in a Pravda interview, a piece that was quickly reprinted in Kazakstan.⁴²

The issue of how many state languages Kazakstan should have captures the republic identity dilemma in a nutshell; not surprisingly, then, it remained a central problem throughout the debates leading up to the adoption of the 1989 law, and continued to be a major point of disagreement even after independence. As the reporting of the writers union meeting might suggest, the reaction of the Kazakstan party in 1988 was to support two state languages, Kazak and Russian. However, within months it shifted to supporting a "one-state-language" solution, though with some important qualifications to be noted below.

During the months leading up to the law's adoption by Kazakstan's Supreme Soviet, the republic's press was filled with acrimonious debate reflecting contradictory views of Kazakstan's identity. The most intense discussion occurred after the publication of the draft law in late August and before its adoption one month later. However, many of these same issues were discussed as well in the spring and early summer months.

Regarding the question of how many state languages Kazakstan should have, those who argued for two state languages stressed that Kazakstan was part of the vast Soviet homeland; in addition, they tended to point out that because an even larger share of Kazakstan's population spoke Russian than Kazak, Russian had to be a second state language. Proponents of two state languages often framed their discussion of the language problem in terms of democracy, maintaining that the proper way to make a decision would be through a republic referendum.⁴³

a decidedly distinct tint of Kazak culture and language. Because the USSR would self-destruct in another two years, this latter issue would soon acquire even greater saliency.

Abstract questions about the number of state languages and "language of inter-ethnic communication" were of course closely linked to more specific practical questions. Among the most important in this category were those related to requirements of language proficiency for employment. This issue had surfaced already in the spring of 1988, when poet M. Shakhanov had proposed language criteria in hiring for particular jobs.⁵⁴ By February 1989, the Kazakstan party buro, noting the lack of bilingual personnel in such places as health institutions, registry offices, on public transport, and at railway stations and airports, suggested the creation of a list of professions requiring a knowledge of Kazak and Russian. In considering this problem, the buro did not suggest language skills as a blanket requirement for the entire republic, but rather "proceeding, of course, from each region's local conditions."

The August 1989 published draft of the language law carries a provision concerning administrative personnel and staff in a long list of institutions whose responsibilities included regular contact with citizens of various nationalities; it states that such individuals will be obliged to know Russian and Kazak "to the extent necessary to fulfill their official functions" (Art. 17 of draft). This evoked strong protests—especially from non-Kazak speakers—who expressed fears that such a clause could become an excuse to remove non-Kazak personnel and replace them with Kazaks.

Changes were made in this article following the public debates. Although the law as adopted in September guarantees citizens the right to appeal to and address staff of various institutions in the citizens' language of choice, it softens the requirement on employees' knowledge of Kazak and Russian, saying this should be observed "to the degree that corresponding conditions are created." In addition, it adds a new paragraph to the article stipulating an "extremely objective, gradual and strictly differentiated order of attestation and selection of cadre with obligatory consideration above all of the workers' practical, moral, and political qualities." In parallel fashion, following the public debate on the language law, the final version eliminates the draft's requirement that all graduates of vocational, specialized, and higher educational institutions possess a knowledge of Kazak and Russian.

Among its other provisions, the September 1989 Law on Languages provides Kazak, Russian, and local official languages practically equal status in the work of organs of state power and administration, and in the judicial system (Arts. 8 through 14). The law offers all citizens the right to choose the language in which to address and discuss their business with employees in such spheres as education, health, commerce, communication, and transport (Art. 16). It also provides every citizen the right to choose the language medium of education from preschool up through higher education, and guarantees students the right to take entrance exams for higher education in the languages used as medium for instruction in the republic's schools. (Arts. 18 and 20). In addition,

the law guarantees the equal functioning of Kazak and Russian in the mass media and culture (Art. 21). In terms of language instruction, the law makes both Kazak and Russian obligatory school subjects from primary through higher education, and mandates that both be included in the list of subjects completed by every graduate of secondary school or higher education (Art. 20).

If fully implemented, the 1989 language law would have gone a long way toward linking the identity of Kazakstan more closely with the Kazak language and the Kazak people. As a brief document, it naturally still left many thorny questions open to interpretation. For example, what did equal functioning [*ravnopravnoe funktsionirovanie*] in the mass media mean in practice? Was it supposed to mean that Kazakstan audiences should have equal numbers of hours of Russian and Kazak programming available to them over the airwaves? Would oblasts with only small Kazak minorities be obliged to produce an equal number of hours of local programming in Kazak and Russian? Or might it be proportional to the local population? In any case, the law's repeated references to the Russian language—almost in every article—and to other languages of peoples of Kazakstan (many with their own "titular" units elsewhere in the USSR) demonstrate that the republic leadership still tied Kazakstan's fate and its identity to the rest of the Soviet Union, and/or viewed Russian as an indispensable force uniting Kazakstan's population.

Kazakstan's language law was a compromise document that was unsatisfactory in significant ways both to those who wanted to reinforce the "international" character of their republic and their opponents who wanted to move Kazakstan in the direction of the "nation-state." The compromise, however, appears to have been bought at the cost of great ambiguity. This is apparent even in the name of the law. Prior to its acceptance, nationalists and multinationalists argued about whether the law's title should be something like "Law on Language" (singular) or rather "Law on Languages" (plural). In the end, the document adopted by the Kazakstan Supreme Soviet was called "Law on Languages" [*Zakon o iazykakh*] in Russian. However, thanks to the nature of the Kazak unmarked singular noun, the Kazak title of the law [*Til turaly zang*] left it unclear whether the law concerned one language or more. (It would have been possible to make the plural nature explicit by calling the document "*Tilder turaly zang*" in Kazak.)

The adoption of language laws was inextricably linked with the delimitation of political and linguistic space. Each republic's adoption of its own law contributed to a kind of psychological border emerging around it. Within these borders nation-state enthusiasts attempted to create protected space where republic languages would be cultivated and protected from the policies of the center. Civil statist, however, generally opposed the idea of attaching greater significance to republic borders.

Though Kazak nation-statists did not use such a term, they maintained that Kazak needed to be cultivated with a kind of "affirmative action" so that it might compete with the much more powerful and privileged Russian language. Although they also promoted greater Kazak use in areas of

concentrated Kazak population, some nation-statists were especially concerned with those oblasts and urban centers of Kazakstan where Kazaks were in a minority and where Kazak language was weakest.

These individuals rejected arguments that preference for Kazak was undemocratic in areas where other nationalities, particularly Russians, were concentrated. In their view, despite the artificiality of Kazakstan's current borders, all of Kazakstan should be part of the Kazak protected space. They rejected the idea that other languages needed particular consideration in Kazakstan, by pointing out that other ethnic groups had their "own" homelands (Russia, Ukraine, Germany, Uzbekistan, etc.) where their respective languages were also protected.

This battle to delimit "protected space" for the Kazak language occurred on many levels, including individual schools. This was, of course, a shift from earlier CPSU policy which, in accordance with the CPSU Central Committee February 1988 plenum on education, had endorsed mixing children studying in various languages in the same school. Almost everywhere where practiced, this kind of "shared community" had worked to the detriment of the protected linguistic space that Kazak nationalists sought to create. In "mixed" schools, where almost all pupils knew some Russian and many or most children in the Russian division lacked Kazak skills, the choice of language of communication among children from different divisions was almost never Kazak.⁵⁵ Naturally, this meant that school-sponsored meetings or extracurricular activities almost inevitably transpired in Russian.

As evident from the above discussion, Kazakstan's "Law on Languages" fundamentally differed from the March 1987 resolutions not only in substance, but also in the nature of the process which produced them. The March 1987 resolution on improving the instruction of Kazak, if not actually written in Moscow, was certainly created under the closest supervision of central party officials. Although it took into account popular sentiment for some increase in Kazak language status, the resolution was quite modest.

The political process which produced the 1989 language law was much less controlled by Moscow, and was open to input from the republic elites and even masses. As noted above, in the spring of 1989 the central party signaled that individual republics would be allowed to decide whether to give their titular nationality languages "state" status. (Of course this is not to say that Moscow would not influence these decisions behind the scenes.) Naturally, Nazarbayev's embracing of the informal opposition's more nationalist-sounding ideas soon after his ascension to the republic's top leadership position almost certainly had Moscow's blessing, but this was a dramatically different process from the power relations in the early Kolbin era.

In 1989, the broad republic-wide discussion played a key role in shaping the language law. Directly contradictory opinions clashed on the pages of the official press. Citizens were urged (and apparently convinced) to contact their deputies to the republic legislature and communicate their

opinions. Of course the legislature which adopted the law was not elected in anything resembling a democratic election. But the law which emerged did reflect organized pressures from below, articulated and aggregated in a very un-Soviet fashion. Individual political figures, writers, and scholars attempted to exploit this process for goals relating to their own personal political power. Nevertheless, the fact remains that diverse forces were permitted openly to present their cases and pull in opposing directions before intervention and mediation by the communist party leadership.

Language and Identity in Kazakstan's Declaration of Sovereignty

As noted above, despite the beginning of devolution of power to the republic in 1989, the seemingly enduring nature of the Soviet Union must have reassured those who opposed the declaration of a single state language. The assumption that Moscow would remain the political center of their political universe and that it would always be able to protect their linguistic rights and interests supported a sense of security among Kazakstan's population who lacked a knowledge of the state language.

The basis for such confidence would be shaken over the next year. By the middle of 1990, the political leadership of all Soviet republics viewed the bonds uniting them in the USSR and the division of powers between center and republic very differently than they had a year before. Everywhere outside the RSFSR political leaders demanded a looser political union less dominated by Russia. The center had no choice but to permit change. In his speech to the September 1989 party plenum on nationalities, Gorbachev had still rejected the federalization of the CPSU (which he said would be a grave political mistake), not to mention secession from the Soviet Union.⁵⁶ By February 1990, however, Gorbachev was already speaking of the need for a renewed union treaty, and in April a bill was passed explaining the mechanics (with, admittedly, onerous conditions) of secession.

Moscow's language policy at that time appeared to be an attempt to maintain a sense of linguistic coherence in the face of powers already asserted by the republics. This is reflected in an April 1990 law signed by President Gorbachev on the languages of peoples [*narodov*] of the USSR. Recognizing the rights of republics to pass legislation relative to language, the All-Union law nevertheless made Russian the Soviet Union's official [*ofitsial'nyi*] language and declared that it was to be used as the "language of inter-ethnic communication." Furthermore, this law made Russian an obligatory subject for study and said that office work [*deloproizvodstvo*], documentation, and information in various All-Union and union-republic organizations would be conducted "in the language of the corresponding union republics and in the official language of the USSR."⁵⁷

In June 1990 Gorbachev set up a working group to prepare a new union treaty and began to call for it to finish work by the end of the year; the following month Moscow was proceeding toward federalization of the CPSU itself.⁵⁸ Moreover, by the middle of 1990 all three Baltic republics had adopted declarations of independence or transition to independence. Perhaps most

critical was Russia's declaration of sovereignty in June 1990; it was quickly followed by analogous declarations in almost all republics which had not preceded it. Indeed, Kazakstan's declaration on October 25—with the exception of Kyrgyzstan—was at least two months behind all others.

Moscow's weakening grip on the national republics raised the prospect that borders between individual republics would take on unprecedented significance and that millions of citizens might soon find themselves as members of non-titular nationalities in suddenly "alien" republics. All of this focused the attention of leaders (and, often, of masses) on questions of territorial integrity: the growing importance of the once almost insignificant borders encouraged all interested parties to attempt to assure that at a minimum their units would not lose lands to other republics.

For Kazakstan, the issues of territorial integrity rose to high prominence in 1990 in connection with published articles of several Russian historians (and later author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn) who asserted that Russia and Russians had a greater historical right to part of Kazakstan's territory than did Kazakstan or the Kazak people.⁵⁹ A summer article by eight prominent Kazakstan intellectuals protested the Russian historians' interpretations. This article seemingly opened the way to a whole wave of essays in Kazakstan on the same subject. The authors of the collective article not only insisted that all disputed lands had belonged to Kazaks for centuries, but added that some lands within Russia's borders were also historically Kazak.⁶⁰ Solzhenitsyn's essay even provoked a special conference in Kazakstan that denounced the Russian authors' claims. Kazakstan communist party secretary U. Zhanibekov was among participants at the conference condemning Solzhenitsyn.⁶¹ The republic party's approach to the question of territorial change was also clear in its June 1990 platform which stated that the right of peoples to self-determination must not be used to promote separatism or anarchy.⁶²

The increasing political space between the center and Almaty heightened the salience of the republic identity and evoked debates over its nature. In the eyes of nation-state-minded Kazaks, sovereignty was above all an achievement for members of the Kazak nationality of Kazakstan, and not a phenomenon which all nationalities shared equally. In other republics with a more demographically dominant titular nationality, the power relations were such that the titular nationality's assertions of preeminence were more difficult to contest. In Kazakstan, however, the situation was ambiguous. The country's non-Kazaks were uneasy about the "Kazaks first" implications in the nation-statists' understanding of sovereignty; moreover, some Russians living in areas adjacent to Russia (often encouraged by forces across the border) raised questions directly threatening Kazakstan's territorial integrity. (These would become even more ominous with claims from Cossacks in the coming year.) Among the most menacing aspects was the fact that the contested areas were among the most economically integrated with Russia, and often had a majority of ethnic Russian inhabitants.

As the Soviet political system began to deteriorate and became less centralized, it became clearer that the republic faced serious consequences due to the lack of a widespread sense of republic identity. In a subsequent article discussing this fact, two Kazak historians noted that in the late Soviet era many of Kazakstan's Russians gained a stronger sense of patriotism towards Russia [chuvstvo rossiiskogo patriotizma] than towards Kazakstan [kazakhstanskii patriotizm]. Describing the results of this development in 1994, these authors drew the conclusion that forcing Kazakstan's Russian's to choose "either Kazakstan or Russia" was "short-sighted and even cruel."

The authors were recounting this history in 1994 in order to justify their support for President Nazarbayev's "Eurasian Union," which would integrate Kazakstan more closely with Russia and other states of the former Soviet Union. But the crux of their argument was that millions of Kazakstan's citizens needed a "union" of Kazakstan with Russia (or Eurasia more broadly) for their own sense of "personal well-being." Though perhaps no one described the situation quite in those terms, this same kind of dynamic was operative in 1990.⁶³

As noted above, Kazakstan's language law did not indicate specific measures required in order to implement the policies or the institutions responsible for this work; likewise, with the exception of a republic Supreme Soviet resolution specifying the date when individual articles of the law would become effective, the time frame for the work to carry out these policies was also left entirely open. All of this was to be part of a future "language program."

At the end of 1989 or in early 1990 a special commission was organized under the Kazakstan Council of Ministers and assigned the task of creating such a program. This program was to treat Kazak as well as other languages of peoples of the republic until the year 2000. Published July 1, 1990, much of this program details measures for the promotion of the Kazak language. However, it contains a balance which also makes it consistent with the vision of Kazakstan as a civil state protecting the interests of the population without Kazak skills, and one whose government is committed to the maintenance of a strong role for Russian and the protection and development of other languages.

The title and structure of the program reflects this approach. It is titled "The State Program on the Development of the Kazak Language and Other National [natsional'nye] languages in the Kazak SSR in the Period Up Until 1990." It is divided into five sections; besides the introduction and a short section on financial and logistical matters, the other three deal with Kazak, Russian, and "languages of national groups [natsional'nykh grupp] living compactly in the republic." True, the section on Kazak is the longest and by far the most detailed, and the section on Russian deals (as its title implies) mainly with "the enriched study of Russian--the language of inter-ethnic communication." However, the latter section begins with a reference to the fact that the enriched study of Russian is an "equally important aspect of the state program." (Perhaps intentionally, the

reference to "language of inter-ethnic communication" is vague about whether this refers to the USSR as a whole, or to Kazakstan.)

The program was apparently accompanied by two addenda, one which consists of the names of rayons and cities, each of which is listed under a deadline by which office work [deloproizvodstvo] should be conducted in the "state language." All were to have reached this stage by January 1, 1995. This addendum, however, was in effect nullified by a September 1990 resolution of the Kazakstan Council of Ministers amending the Program. The amendment delayed introduction of the state language into office work into the indefinite future, leaving it to the discretion of the local administration executive committees to do this "taking into account the specific social-economic conditions and demographic situation in the region."⁶⁴ Part of the reason for the change was the utter unreality of the measures laid out in the state program. Perhaps equally important, though, was the need to reassure those segments of the population who feared "kazakization" of the republic, and might thus be inclined to support separatist ideas.

Another change in the program seems to support this kind of interpretation. The second addendum to the program, unlike the first described above, was apparently not published in any major newspapers.⁶⁵ The September resolution, however, annuls a key feature of that unpublished addendum, stating that beginning in 1995, a conversation [sobesedovanie] on Kazak language and literature (the form of the conversation to be selected by the rector's office) [should] gradually [be] introduce[d] for secondary school graduates prior to entrance exams for non-Kazak fakul'tety of higher educational institutions." Whatever the full text of the June addendum might have said, this amendment was clearly a major concession to parents of children with weak or no Kazak skills who worried that in Kazakstan their children's path to advancement would be blocked by insuperable obstacles.

As for the Declaration of Sovereignty (henceforth DS) itself, both its September 1990 draft and final version published in late October affirm that the "people" [narod] of Kazakstan consists of "citizens of the republic of all nationalities" and that they are the sole bearers of sovereignty and source of state power" (Arts. 2 and 4, respectively).⁶⁶ Likewise, the preambles of both documents affirmed that the Supreme Soviet had prepared this document expressing "the will of the people [narod] of Kazakstan."

An analysis of the draft and final versions of Kazakstan's DS suggests a pattern of backpedaling on some particularly sensitive points in the summer and fall of 1990; however, in a broader philosophical sense one detects movement toward a closer identification of Kazakstan with the Kazak nation and thus in the direction of a nation-state model.

One of the most striking "retreats" concerns a phrase in the draft which raises the specter of a state linked to race. Although ostensibly about ecological matters, Art. 7 of the draft refers to preserving the "gene pool" [genofond] of the people living on the territory of Kazakstan. Even

though this is couched in language linking it to the entire population living of the republic, this language smacked of racism, and thus it is likely that it was patently unacceptable to a large segment of the republic's inhabitants. Perhaps not surprisingly, the final text of the DS omits any reference to a "gene pool."

In addition, in its final form the DS includes a point which provides a continuing legal basis for inhabitants of Kazakstan to continue to consider themselves "Soviets;" the new Article 5 specifically guarantees every citizen of Kazakstan "the right to preserve USSR citizenship." Perhaps most important in terms of concessions to the civil state model is a modification concerning the conditions for possible secession from the USSR. One of the points in the draft declaration which provoked the most heated debate was the Art. 11 text which reads "The Kazak SSR reserves the right to secede from the USSR in established procedure, taking into account the interests of the indigenous nation [koreennaia natsiia]" (Art. 11) (emphasis mine, WF). Given the historical link between ethnic group and nation, and the close tie between nation and land, such wording raised the specter of non-Kazaks' becoming second-class citizens in sovereign Kazakstan, since such a major decision as possible secession from the USSR could seemingly be decided without their participation or even consideration of their interests.

Some supporters of this rendition attempted to allay non-Kazaks' fears by explaining that long terms of residence had transformed many of the non-Kazaks into "indigenous" inhabitants; this, however, was not very convincing to those who may well have felt that such subtleties would not be recognized in a republic rapidly distancing itself from Russia and whose leaders might include nation-statists with a very different interpretation.⁶⁷ In the final version of the DS, this sentence was replaced by a shorter and nationality-neutral statement that "The Kazak SSR reserves the right to secede freely from the Union" (Art. 1). This kind of concession, however, must be viewed in the context of the summer and fall of 1990, i.e., the time when Solzhenitsyn and other Russians were advancing claims to parts of Kazakstan's territory.

The fact that the link between secession and the interests of "indigenous nation" [koreennaia natsiia] was deleted seems to have been more than balanced out by the fact that the remaining part of this proposition on secession was moved from Art. 11 of the declaration to Art. 1. Moreover, as a whole, the final version generally refers to the "Kazak nation" [kazakhskaia natsiia] instead of the draft's formulation of the "Kazak people" [kazakhskii narod]. This is significant given the Soviet definition of "natsiia." Already in the preamble (where, as noted above, both versions contain the phrase "will of the people of Kazakstan" [volia naroda Kazakhstana]) the final version introduces the concept of "responsibility for the fate of the Kazak nation" [otvetstvennost' za sud'bu kazakhskoi natsii].

This same kind of shift was reflected in the treatment of culture. Article 8 of the draft DS contains the following statement: "The Kazak SSR is independent in resolving questions of

scholarship, education, and cultural and spiritual development of the people [narod] of Kazakstan. The republic guarantees [obespechivaet] the right of the Kazak people [kazakhskii narod] to rebirth and preservation of their national-cultural uniqueness, language, historical memory, and natural environment." In the final version of the declaration the reference to rebirth and development of culture is briefer than in the draft, but it is inserted already in Art. 2, and its reference to Kazaks refers specifically to the nation: "One of the most important tasks of statehood of the Kazak SSR is the rebirth and development of the distinctiveness of the culture, traditions, language, and national dignity of the Kazak nation and other ethnic groups [natsional'nogo dostoinstva kazakhskoi natsii i drugikh natsional'nostei] living in Kazakstan." Thus, in contrast to Kazaks, non-Kazaks are relegated merely to the category of "ethnic groups" within the context of Kazakstan.

Significantly, this does not seem to mean that the DS's authors viewed other ethnic groups as lacking affiliation with other nations. Rather, the declaration seemingly classifies non-Kazaks as representatives of ethnic groups whose homelands lie elsewhere. In Art. 12 of the adopted declaration, legal equality and equal opportunities in all spheres of public life are guaranteed to "representatives of nations and nationalities [natsii i narodnosti]" living in the Kazak SSR, beyond the borders of their own political formations or lacking such in the USSR.

The question of Kazaks living beyond Kazakstan's borders has been an especially complex one in terms of its implications for the tie between land and nation or ethnic group. On the one hand, Kazak nationalists seem inclined to view the irridenta and diaspora communities as part of world "Kazakdom" and so are eager to underline the ties between these communities and the territory of Kazakstan. In part this may be because they considered that the large number of Kazaks living outside the republic resulted from Russian tsarist and (especially) Soviet misguided policies. Consequently, both the draft and the final version of the DS state that "The Kazak SSR undertakes efforts [proiavliaet zabotu; more literally, "demonstrates efforts"] to satisfy the national-cultural, spiritual, and linguistic needs of Kazaks living beyond the republic borders" (Art. 8 in draft; Art. 12 in final).

In the long term, however, close ties between the Kazakstan and "expatriot" Kazaks have troubling implications if an analogous tie is presumed to exist between Russia and those Russians living in other areas of the USSR, particularly Kazakstan. The clear (and often expressed) hope of Kazak nationalists has been that their Kazak "brethren" will return to the Kazak homeland; indeed, many of these same nationalists would probably not be saddened by a parallel movement of Russians to "their" homeland. If, however, one assumes that a significant proportion of these Russians would not "return home," the implied close tie between co-ethnics and historic homeland carries implications of continued strong ties between Kazakstan's ethnic Russians and Russia itself; this idea is abhorrent to most proponents of Kazakstan as a Kazak nation-state.

The issue of language was apparently so sensitive that the final DS omits text on this issue which had been part of the published draft. The first version of the DS states that "In the Kazak SSR the state language is the Kazak language, and Russian is the official language." Kazak nation-statists, naturally, were offended by the reference to Russian as the "official language" of their republic Kazakstan. A somewhat milder rendition on this point was proposed in an "alternative draft" prepared by a Supreme Soviet deputies group calling itself "Democratic Kazakstan." It stated, "As official [languages] in the Kazak SSR, Kazak is used as the state language of the republic and Russian as the state language of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."⁶⁸ This text, however, was also not adopted. Kazak nationalists must have been pleased that the final version of the DS omits references to Russian as an "official" language; however, they must have been most unhappy with the other half of the compromise. Apparently the only solution to the impasse was to omit mention of any state or official languages in the final version, including Kazak!

One suspects that the authors of the draft included references to both a "state" and an "official" language precisely because of the vagueness of these categories, and as a way to square the circle. Perhaps Kazakstan's political leadership hoped that Kazak nationalists would be content with Kazak as the only "state" language in Kazakstan, and that the fears of the rest of the population would be assuaged by the word "official." The very ambiguity which may have recommended this formulation, however, was also perhaps one reason that some demanded its elimination. A number of commentators on the draft law objected to the "official" category precisely because in their view it could not be differentiated from "state."⁶⁹ It can be argued, of course, that it is not the task of a declaration of sovereignty to give a particular language "state" status. In the case of Kazakstan, however, it does not seem that the reason for the omission was simply lack of relevance. Indeed, this was certainly not the view of the authors of the draft version. Its omission in the adopted proclamation suggests that the only acceptable compromise here was silence.

Curiously, there are striking parallels between elements of the final draft's image of Kazakstan and that which theoretically existed on a larger scale within the USSR. On the broader scale the CPSU documents described a "Soviet people" consisting of many ethnic groups living in the USSR, though with the Russians playing a special kind of core role. On the Kazakstan republic level, the DS suggests that Kazakstan's population belongs to a single people [narod] who, among other ways, are bound together by living in a single territory. At the same time, the Kazaks emerge as the sole "nation" within Kazakstan, with members of other ethnic groups being relegated to the category of representatives of other nations which exist beyond Kazakstan's borders.

In passing we might also note a seemingly minuscule shift which also suggests a growing consciousness of the implications of sovereignty. In the draft version of the Declaration of Sovereignty Kazakstan is repeatedly referred to as a "republic" (beginning with a lower case "r").

By the final version, however, this lower case constituent part of a larger country had become a full-fledged "Republic" with a capital letter.

Although Kazakstan's political elite—with Nursultan Nazarbayev at the helm—played a critical role in the previously described greater recognition of Kazakstan's closer attachment to the Kazak nation, the kind of politics which produced these changes was fundamentally different from the political process of 1987; it was, however, similar to that of 1989. Once again, large segments of the republic's population were permitted to articulate their views; over time, however, greater opportunities were opening for informal organizations to aggregate interests. Consequently, these organizations' input was perhaps even more important than in the creation of the language law.

One particularly interesting aspect of the language status question repeatedly emerged in the discourse of 1989 and 1990 but was not reflected in any fashion in the Law on Languages or the Declaration of Sovereignty. This was the idea of differential requirements for language seemingly based on nationality. This had practical aspects, particularly with regard to salary supplements which might be offered to those with particular language skills. When discussing this issue in the late summer of 1990, Aleksandr Shtopel', deputy head of the ideology department of the Kazakstan Communist Party Central Committee, suggested that such bonuses would be paid only in cases of skills in a language other than the "native language." Moreover, he said, considering the high level of knowledge of Russian by non-Russians, no one would receive supplemental pay for Russian proficiency.⁷⁰

Although in recent decades many urban Kazaks grew up in Russian-language home environments with little or no exposure to the Kazak language, on ethnic grounds alone Shtopel' (and virtually everyone else writing on the topic) seems to have assumed that such individuals were nevertheless "native" Kazak speakers. If so, this means that the only ones eligible for job bonuses would have been ethnic Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, etc. This practice was never introduced, but its discussion in terms of what appears to be "nationality" reflects an assumption about language that those labeled Kazaks by society "ought to" know "their" language (even if never exposed to it), and that therefore they should not be entitled to special incentives; on the other hand, members of other nationalities might require a special stimulus.

Paradoxically, some Kazak authors expressed such discrimination in even more blatant form. In their published articles and letters to newspapers, many recommended that employment in managerial posts in Kazakstan require a knowledge of Kazak. A good share of these proponents, moreover, advocated such requirements only in the case of ethnic Kazak personnel. They justified this position saying that non-Kazak speaking Kazaks in leadership positions set a bad example and provoked indignation. On the other hand, many of the same proponents of this view claimed that it was more a matter of individual choice for members of other nationalities whether to learn Kazak or not.⁷¹ The belief that some sort of natural relation to the Kazak language was based more on

accident of parentage than upbringing was also reflected in the serious attention given the question of children raised in orphanages. Numerous letters and articles complained about Kazak children raised in orphanages in Russian-language environments. They generally suggested the organization of separate Kazak orphanages so that these children could learn their "native" language.⁷²

As we have described above, by the summer of 1990, the decline of Moscow's power over the republics of the USSR had made it increasingly necessary for Kazakstan to attempt to define its unique identity within the Soviet Union. Both the Law on Languages and the DS contain compromises and vague phrases which give an ambiguous picture about the extent to which Kazakstan might be moving toward a civil or nation-state. This permitted opposing sides to interpret these fundamental codes in different ways. As we will see in the remainder of this study, the same ambivalence continued as questions of identity remained on Kazakstan's agenda during the next six years. As Kazakstan became a *de jure* independent country, its leaders presided over a process which produced a new series of fundamental state documents (the Declaration of Independence and two constitutions) which at least obliquely again had to address fundamental questions of identity. Our analysis below will suggest that the answers to these questions in these documents were no clearer than the definitions offered in 1989 and 1990.

The Declaration of Independence and Two Constitutions

As discussed above, Kazakstan's Declaration of Sovereignty in 1990 stressed the special role of the Kazakstan nation within the Kazak SSR. Although at that time the discussions of a new consensus-based union treaty were already under way, the republic still proclaimed its uniqueness within a community of sovereign republics voluntarily united. As of 1990, though to a lesser extent than five years previously, laws of the central government still formally regulated many spheres of public activity in Kazakstan. Indeed, even after 1991, Moscow's influence throughout the former empire remained strong. Nevertheless, the collapse of the USSR was a watershed event: after 1991 there was no "center" with legal authority over Kazakstan's territory. This meant that the stakes in the definition of Kazakstan's identity became even greater.

The formulation of Kazakstan identity reflected in the Declaration of Independence repeats the basic outline set forth in the Declaration of Sovereignty.⁷³ That is, on one level it reaffirms the equality of individuals of all nationalities: the declaration preamble announces that the Supreme Soviet is claiming sovereignty on behalf of the "people narod of Kazakstan." Likewise, Art. 6 defines the "united people of Kazakstan" as the "sole bearer of sovereignty and state power" (Art. 6).

Despite this treatment of all groups as part of one whole, the same article of the Declaration also distinguishes between Kazaks as "the nation" in the republic and other nationalities in Kazakstan simply as "nationalities:" article 6 begins with the words "The citizens of all nationalities, united by

a community of historical fate with the Kazak nation, constitute along with it the united people of Kazakstan" The special place of the Kazaks is also underlined in the preamble, which refers to the Supreme Soviet's Declaration of Independence "reaffirming the right of the Kazak nation to self-determination."

Kazaks' special status is also emphasized in the treatment of migration and citizenship, and other special attention to ethnic Kazaks living outside the republic. Article 7 states that the Republic of Kazakstan creates conditions for the return to its territory of individuals and their descendants who were forced to leave the republic "during the period of mass repressions, forced collectivization, and as a result of inhumane actions." No nationality is mentioned, so in theory this applies to everyone. In practice, of course, the majority of such people are Kazaks. More significantly, the republic declares its readiness to provide such help to all Kazaks living in the republics of the former Soviet Union. Moreover, the same article announces the privilege of Kazakstan citizenship for Kazaks who were forced to leave the republic and whose current country of citizenship does not prohibit them from simultaneously holding Kazakstan citizenship. The declaration also promises republic efforts to satisfy cultural and linguistic needs of Kazaks living outside of Kazakstan.

Kazakstan's Declaration of Independence does not mention any state language. Moreover, its only (fairly minor) reference to language does not link the state much closer to Kazak (which, because of the law of 1989, still remained the state language) than to other languages. Article 8 states that "one of the most important obligations of the state is the rebirth and development of culture, traditions, and language, and the fortification of the national dignity of the Kazak nation [natsiia] and of representatives of other nationalities [natsional'nosti] living in Kazakstan."

Less than six months after Kazakstan's Declaration of Independence, its major newspapers carried the draft version of its first constitution. The debate over the draft, however, was very prolonged, and so it was not until the end of January 1993 that the republic's Supreme Soviet adopted the final version. In composing this document the legislature was obliged to revisit the thorny questions of republic identity, including some related to language.

Despite the more prolonged and open discussion, the "resolution" of identity questions in Kazakstan's first constitution is equally ambiguous as that in the Declaration. The preamble to the first constitution reads as follows:

We, the people [narod] of Kazakstan, as an inalienable part of the world community, proceeding from the unshakable nature of Kazak statehood [nezyblemost' kazakhskoi gosudarstvennosti], recognizing the priority of human rights and freedoms, with full determination to create a democratic society and a state of law [pravovoe gosudarstvo], desiring to assure civil peace and harmony among the nationalities [mezhnatsional'noe soglasie], a worthy life for ourselves and our descendants, adopt the present Constitution and declare the following:

As we see here, the 1993 constitution is also adopted in the name of "the people [narod] of Kazakstan." Moreover, the first of nine "Fundamentals of Constitutional structure"⁷⁴ guarantees

"equal rights to all citizens," while Article 1 fleshes this out somewhat with guarantees of equal rights and liberty regardless of race, nationality, sex, and language, and certain other criteria. (It might be noted here that the formulation "people of Kazakhstan" provoked considerable debate. Some participants in the public discussion objected to this phrase, and proposed that it be changed to "Kazak people and citizens of other ethnic groups" or "the Kazak people and all other peoples . . ." ⁷⁵)

At the same time, the Constitution also contains points that seem intentionally vague or perhaps concessions (even if less than explicit) to Kazak nationalists. Thus, the preamble to the constitution contains a reference to "Kazak statehood" [*kazakhskaiia gosudarstvennost'*]. In this way it explicitly links the establishment of an independent Kazakhstan to ethnic Kazaks. In similar fashion, the first of the nine "Fundamentals" refers to Kazakhstan as the form of statehood of the Kazak nation [*natsiia*] which has achieved self determination [*samoopredelivshaiiaisia*].

Although more "international" than analogous points in the Declaration of Independence, the constitution's provisions concerning citizenship also give certain Kazaks living outside Kazakhstan privileges not enjoyed by other nationalities. Thus, whereas the constitution provides the option of citizenship to individuals of all nationalities who had been forced to abandon the republic, this same right is offered to Kazaks living outside Kazakhstan (even if they had not been forced to leave) (Art. 4).

The compromise of "nation-state" and "civil state" images of Kazakhstan are also evident in the constitution's provisions concerning language. Like the 1989 law, the first constitution of Kazakhstan names only Kazak as the state language and grants Russian the special status of "language of inter-ethnic communication."⁷⁶ Moreover, the constitution stipulates that "the state guarantees the preservation of the sphere of use of the language of inter-ethnic communication and of other languages, and looks after their free development." It also forbids "any restrictions of rights and freedoms of citizens due to a lack of mastery of the state language or the language of inter-ethnic communication" (Art. 8).

This formulation seems extremely ambiguous, since it leaves many key questions unanswered. What, for example, does it mean for the state to "guarantee" the preservation of Russian and other languages? After all, implementing the letter or spirit of the 1989 language law would have automatically brought about a diminution of the role of Russian. In such a case, how could the government observe the constitution but still carry out the Law on Languages? Moreover, the prohibition on restriction of citizen rights might be construed as contradicting Article 114 of the constitution, which mandates that eligible candidates for president of Kazakhstan must have a "complete mastery" of the Kazak language, and that candidates for vice president must have "a mastery." Here, too, the constitution seems to raise more new questions than it provides answers. What might a "complete mastery" mean? what might be the difference between a "mastery" and a

"complete mastery"? Who determines the "mastery" level? Do these requirements also not contradict the prohibition on restriction of rights guaranteed in Art. 8?

Perhaps it is not necessary for a constitution to provide such answers. However, in such a state as Kazakhstan, it is also likely that any attempts to make things more explicit would have fueled new battles over constitutional provisions. As it was, debates over language issues were among the most divisive questions during the discussion of the constitution draft, and appear to have been a major reason that the Supreme Soviet could not adopt a final version until early 1993. At least to some extent, the provision requiring language competence was already a toned down version of the position taken by some of the nation-state-minded Kazak intelligentsia: a member of Kazakhstan's Supreme Court proposed that candidates for president not only be required to have fluency in Kazak, but also to be ethnic Kazaks!⁷⁷

The constitution which the Supreme Soviet debated for much of 1992 did not, however, remain in effect very long. Less than a year and a half after its adoption, the draft of another one was presented. It was adopted without the public debate which preceded the 1993 document; the legislature did not discuss it since that body had been dissolved; nor did the press become a forum for the scale of open discussion that had occurred in 1992-93. The population was asked to approve this document in a referendum held at the end of August 1995. In results somewhat reminiscent of the Soviet days, over 90 percent of eligible voters participated in the referendum, with 89 percent of those participating voting "yes."⁷⁸

The 1995 constitution introduces some changes relevant to the state identity of Kazakhstan. On balance, they seem to represent a move away from the concept of the nation-state model and toward the civil state. Nevertheless, the formulations are still vague enough to allow contradictory interpretations. For example, like the previous constitution, the 1995 document also begins with a proclamation in the name of the "Kazak people." However, unlike the previous constitution, which refers specifically to "Kazak statehood," the preamble in the new document refers to statehood being created on "primordial Kazak land." Another way in which the 1995 constitution links Kazakhstan less to the Kazak people than the 1993 document is the elimination of the possibility for members of the Kazak diaspora to maintain Kazakhstan citizenship. This is the effect of a clause in Art. 10 stating that Kazakhstan does not recognize its own citizens' citizenship in any other state. For Kazaks living outside the republic who maintain citizenship in their place of residence, this effectively eliminates the possibility of Kazakhstan citizenship.

The slight shift toward the civil state model is also reflected in the rejection of one of the proposals which had been offered by nation-statists. The original draft of the 1995 constitution, like the final version, gave "Republic of Kazakhstan" as the name of the country equally with "Kazakhstan." Apparently under pressure from nation-statists, at an intermediate stage this name was changed to "Kazak Republic." This, however, evoked objections because of its overly close

association of the republic with the Kazak nation, and so the original version of the name was returned.⁷⁹

Naturally, the most sensitive language issues related to identity in the 1995 Constitution were the treatment of Kazak and Russian. Here the new law marks something of a shift from the previous law, though it does not clear up its ambiguity. Article 7 of the 1995 Constitution does declare Kazak the only "state language," but omits all references to a "language of inter-ethnic communication." Instead, it states that "The Russian language is used on a par with [naravne s] Kazak in state organizations and organs of local self-government." Perhaps because the word "state" figures in this formulation, many citizens of Kazakhstan see this as recognition of Russian in all but name as the second "state language."⁸⁰ However, many others, especially among the nation-statists, deny this, instead maintaining that this clause simply allows citizens to use Russian officially on occasion, but that (as knowledge of Kazak expands) Kazak will remain the only mandatory language for use in state organizations.⁸¹

In a sense the wording here represents a return to the formulation of the 1989 language law which had also mentioned Russian being used "on a par" with Kazak. However, neither in 1989 nor in 1995 was there any consensus on the meaning of this term, and no authoritative interpretation of this formulation has been issued to clear up the confusion. In the fall of 1995 and spring of 1996, numerous scholars and government officials who worked on such problems admitted that the clause was intentionally left vague so as not to provoke a strong negative reaction from any group opposed to it.⁸²

The 1995 constitution also introduces a minor change on the question of language proficiency by the country's leaders. Art. 41 of the new document maintains the requirement that the president of Kazakhstan should have a "complete mastery" of the state language; because the 1995 constitution drops the office of vice president, of course no language provisions for this post are listed. However, it does introduce a bicameral legislature, and mandates that the chairmen of both chambers also have a complete mastery. At one level this may be considered a concession to the nation-statists, but given the lack of clarity on who is to measure language competency, what standards are to be applied, and what kinds of appeals may be made on such questions, perhaps this is a point on which proponents of the civil state felt they had little to lose.

Nazarbayev on Issues of State Identity

As discussed in the early parts of this paper, for many reasons the identity of Kazaks and Kazakhstan are inextricably intertwined with the republic's relation to Russia. Moreover, this has remained true despite the collapse of the USSR. It is, of course, beyond the scope of this study to explore the complex links between inter-republic relations and the formation of Kazakhstan's identity. Nevertheless, as we turn to some of President Nursultan Nazarbayev's statements relevant to identity

and language, we should note that his acute awareness of the sensitivities and power of the colossus to the north have profoundly affected his public utterances about his own republic's identity and language problems.

Like many segments of Kazakhstan's own population, Russia has attempted to urge its southern neighbor to define itself as a civil rather than nation-state. Nazarbayev has consistently sought to balance the wishes of both domestic and outside civil-statists with those of their opponents who have sought to make Kazakhstan more "national." He has also sought to urge moderation and compromise, alluding to the dangers that ethnic tension poses to civil peace in Kazakhstan; without civil peace, Nazarbayev argues, there can be no economic stability or progress. Thus, when he has spoken of "friendship of the peoples" of Kazakhstan as the achievement, faith, and hope for the republic,⁸³ he has probably had in mind something much more concrete than a philosophical argument. On one occasion, he directly criticized overzealous oblast level organizations of the Kazak Language Society, warning that their actions could disrupt civil peace; and in such case it would "be problematic not only to speak of the state language, but the future of the republic itself."⁸⁴

Nazarbayev's inclination to cling to the USSR/Russia is evident in the tempering of his policy statements during the period that movement toward sovereignty began to accelerate. For example, about two months after Kazakhstan's declaration of sovereignty the president gave a speech in which he pointed to what he felt was "perhaps one of the most hopeful events in these days of ours which are so far from happy." His reference was to the signing of bilateral agreements among the republics of the USSR which signified, among other things, "direct economic ties are being established and the [respective] sides' interests are being coordinated."⁸⁵ A few months later, in a television interview, Nazarbayev referred to all citizens of the USSR wanting their republics to sign a new Union treaty because "after all, with our mothers' milk we absorbed the [feeling] that we are the children of one country."⁸⁶ And when de jure independence was practically on the horizon, Nazarbayev still warned about hasty decisions which might be made by certain "zealots of unlimited sovereignty." Nazarbayev emphasized that it was unwise "to take decentralization to an absurd level."⁸⁷

In the same manner as the documents analyzed above, in his speeches and articles Nursultan Nazarbayev has also emphasized the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan and criticized opponents (especially among political figures in Russia) who have hinted or even demanded that the borders be changed in Russia's favor.⁸⁸ He has also stressed that though Kazakhstan citizens of all nationalities have equal rights, Kazaks have a special historical claim to the territory of today's republic, and that this land is the only place on earth where their culture and language can be fostered. Speaking in February 1995, Nazarbayev said, "Everyone in this country should respect the fact of living in the ancient land of the Kazaks. The Kazaks have no other ethnic homeland anywhere in the world. They have lived only here for thousands of years."⁸⁹

Nevertheless, Nazarbayev has declared his willingness to support the rights of all groups to develop their cultures within Kazakstan, even (with certain conditions) Cossacks. Just prior to the collapse of the USSR he supported the Cossacks' right to establish their own organization if it would be "peaceful." However, he added, "if, figuratively speaking sabres and a desire to rattle them are added to this, then I am opposed to such a rebirth."⁹⁰ Nazarbayev has asserted that a "mononational model of development" for multiethnic Kazakstan would carry the "embers of a new Karabakh or Trans-Dniestria."⁹¹ On occasion he has even expressed this criticism among audiences likely to contain a high proportion of "nation-statists." Despite his audience's certain preference to hear something different from the president, at the first World Congress of Kazaks in the fall of 1992, Nazarbayev did not miss the opportunity to point out that Kazakstan has many ethnic groups living in it, and he warned against one ethnic group seeking to flourish at the expense of others.⁹²

As Kazakstan was declaring its sovereignty in 1990, Nazarbayev defended the idea of "nation statehood" for his republic, but criticized attempts to divide up its land according to nationality.⁹³ Half a year earlier Nazarbayev had been critical of debates in the USSR Supreme Soviet over ownership of land and natural resources which he maintained were framed in the context of claims by the entire Soviet Union or by the titular nationality of each republic. According to Nazarbayev, neither of these approaches was appropriate, since the rights to land and natural resources should belong to "republics. . . expressing the will of their citizens regardless of their nationality" (emphasis mine, WF).⁹⁴

Nazarbayev has explained the seeming contradictions in these statements with reference to the "complex ethnopolitical and legal nature" of Kazakstan's sovereignty. Thus, according to Nazarbayev, Kazakstan's sovereignty is a "sort of synthesis of the national [natsional'nogo] sovereignty of the Kazaks (as the leading link), bringing them back to their national origins and traditions, along with the sovereignty of the people of Kazakstan [narod Kazakhstana] as a single ethnopolitical community." Nazarbayev's critics (especially nation-statists) condemn this idea of dividing sovereignty into two categories. A professor who criticized Nazarbayev by name and the embodiment of this idea in the draft of the 1992 constitution asserted that "Sovereignty is indivisible in a single unitary state; in [such a state] (even if less than explicit) the sovereignty of the nation coincides with the sovereignty of the state."⁹⁵

Nazarbayev appears to have recognized the importance of precedent in policies affecting ties between "home republics" and diasporas or irridenta populations. In speaking to the 1992 international congress of Kazaks Nazarbayev stressed that "Everyone must understand that Kazakstan, as a civilized state recognizing international agreements and supporting a policy of non-interference, is able to satisfy all the needs and requests of its compatriots [sootechestvennikov] only on the basis of treaties with those independent states in which they live" (emphasis mine, WF). Given the great optimism in 1992 that ties between Kazakstan and Kazaks abroad would increase,

this was an extraordinarily frank statement to deliver to this audience.⁹⁶ Such a position with regard to Kazaks has almost certainly been formulated with the "other side of the coin" in mind, namely the Russians in Kazakstan. Thus, Nazarbayev has been able to reject the idea that Kazakstan's ethnic Russians are somehow part of Russia and more easily reject the demands from Russia that Kazakstan permit its citizens to acquire dual citizenship.⁹⁷

Although much less relevant to language than the issues of nation and ethnic group analyzed above, it should be noted that Nazarbayev has also emphasized the need for consolidation within the Kazak ethnic group, not just consolidation between Kazaks and others. Thus, in a 1994 interview he described tribalism [*rushyldyq*] as a great danger for Kazaks, a phenomenon which could lead to the loss of peace and calm, and raise the possibility of Kazaks becoming prey of some more powerful group.⁹⁸

The mix of balance, vagueness, and contradiction that have been characteristic of Nazarbayev's statements on the issues just described are also manifest with regard to language. On some key questions concerning language Nazarbayev has taken positions which likely please the nation-statists. He has long expressed his agreement with the centrality of language to a people's existence; in his words, "There can be no people [*narod*] if there is no language."⁹⁹ Moreover, from his very first months in office as republic leader he has recognized that Kazak is in need of special help because of decades of misdirected Soviet policies. In an interview with an *Izvestiia* correspondent as Kazakstan's draft language law was being debated, Nazarbayev remarked that "Kazak writers are justifiably worried that soon there will be no one around to read their works [in Kazak]."¹⁰⁰

At the same time, however, Kazakstan's leader has constantly urged that opposing sides compromise on their differences and realize that change is inevitable but takes time. He has argued, for example, that Kazak will have a consolidating function in binding the country's multiethnic population. But this is clearly in the distant future. Only five or ten years after the turn of the new century does Nazarbayev anticipate that "people may be obliged to learn Kazak."¹⁰¹ Consistent with this extended time frame, he has labeled as illegal any attempts to force people to learn Kazak quickly; furthermore he has insisted that resources and energy to teach Kazak be concentrated on the younger generation rather than adults. Efforts to teach the latter, Nazarbayev has said, are not likely to bring positive results, but rather just increase tension.¹⁰²

Nazarbayev has also been credited as the force behind compromise on some of the most contentious language issues. As described in an earlier section of this study, a clause in the draft of the 1989 language law would have required a level of linguistic skill among various categories of employees, especially those whose work involved contact with the public. Nazarbayev supported a compromise (eventually adopted) which gave citizens the right to deal with state employees in their own (i.e., citizens') language of choice, but not require all employees of a particular category to know particular languages.¹⁰³ (Naturally, this was especially controversial because it could have

been used to force a turnover of personnel.) Likewise, Nazarbayev himself (though supporting only one state language) advocated that the 1989 law refer to Russian as being used "on a par with [naravne s] Kazak" rather than merely "side by side with" it [nariadu s].¹⁰⁴ This, too, was incorporated into the law.

Nazarbayev also recommended use of this term during the discussion of the draft of the 1993 constitution. He suggested adopting it and eliminating the term "language of interethnic communication" in reference to Russian.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps because Nazarbayev's influence over the parliament was sufficiently weak at that time, his recommendation was ignored. By 1995, he had amassed greater personal power, which may explain why his recommendation was finally adopted.¹⁰⁶

Reflecting his fear that ethnic questions might disturb civil peace, in early 1995 Nazarbayev warned that any attempt to make Russian the second state language would "most surely" be opposed by over half of the republic's eight million Kazaks, and that this would produce "an explosive situation."¹⁰⁷ On occasion Nazarbayev has tried to convince those who want greater official recognition of the role of Russian in Kazakstan that in fact Russian fares better in Kazakstan than elsewhere in the former Soviet Union. At a broadcast news conference for foreign and domestic media in the spring of 1995, the president pointedly noted that Kazakstan was already the only republic in the CIS or Baltic whose constitution still gave Russian the status of "Language of inter-ethnic communication."¹⁰⁸

At other times, Nazarbayev has publicly given an unrealistically optimistic picture of the language situation in Kazakstan in order to promote his own positions or maintain peace. As the debate on the 1989 language law draft was drawing to a close, Nazarbayev clearly exaggerated when he said that "practically the entire multiethnic population of Kazakstan reacted with understanding and support for the idea of giving Kazak the status of state [language]" (Emphasis mine, WF)..¹⁰⁹

As noted above, Kazakstan's 1995 constitution contains a formulation about language which refers to Russian being "officially used" but which stops short of referring to Russian as an "official language." Curiously, despite the (seemingly intentional) ambiguity and strong passions surrounding this issue, on at least one occasion shortly after the referendum on the constitution, President Nazarbayev himself mentioned that the Russian language had been granted "official status" in Kazakstan.¹¹⁰ Perhaps this was merely a "slip" on Nazarbayev's part; however, given the president's appreciation of public sensitivities on this question; it may also have represented his personal preference to call Russian "official" without defining the difference between an "official" and a "state" language.

Not surprisingly, Nazarbayev has sought to emphasize the benefits of widespread knowledge of the Russian language for all of Kazakstan's population, in particular the Kazaks. In the president's

words, Kazaks "need Russian like the air they breathe, like their daily bread;"¹¹¹ therefore, he says, no one need be concerned about the fate of the Russian language in Kazakstan.¹¹²

Place Names and Identity

Although this study's analysis of language issues relevant to identity has focused on language status, it is worth noting that the official approach to other linguistic problems has also reflected the difficulty in achieving a broadly acceptable definition of republic identity. Many of the contentious language corpus issues have been of concern primarily to Kazak-speakers, such as sources of new vocabulary being developed or changed. In some specialized fields with their own terminology, Kazak had not been used during the Soviet era at all or was used very little; in other cases, "Kazak" terms had been borrowed wholesale from Russian. In both cases the most controversial question has been whether Kazak should use "international" words (identical or similar to those in Russian and/or other major languages of Europe), or whether new words based on internal Kazak language resources (primarily Turkic) should be tapped.

Closely related to this--and more amenable to an analytical overview in a short space--is the issue of geographic names. As we will see, place names demonstrate the close link between corpus and status questions. Moreover, geographic names are an especially sensitive area because of the way they suggest ways of thinking about rights to territory. A particular group's name for a geographic location in some ways prepares the ground for the "nation" of that group to assert its claim to a certain piece of land.

As most other issues supported by Kazakstan's nation-statists, the question of changing place names, too, emerged publicly elsewhere in the USSR before it was discussed in Kazakstan. In the summer of 1988, a group of prominent Soviet scholars claimed in Izvestiia that historical names were a kind of "historical monument," and that they should be protected by law. As a first step, they suggested that former names be returned to such cities as Gorkii, Kuibyshev, Zhdanov, Kirov, Petergof, and Giandzha.¹¹³ Within a few months, the Kazak literary weekly carried an article on an analogous subject. The article, introduced by a note from the editors explicitly citing the Izvestiia feature, proposed that place names in Kazakstan be examined in the same light. Among other things, the article suggested changing the name of Tselinograd back to Akmola, and reconsidering in a similar fashion such names as Petropavlovsk and Pavlodar.¹¹⁴

These questions were, of course, obviously related to the historical reassessment of tsarist colonial and Soviet era policy in Kazakstan, both of which were undergoing intense scrutiny at this time. Some of the place name controversies which were closely linked to identity were much more subtle. For example, even when there was general agreement that the basis of the name was correct, opposing sides stridently debated the appropriate spelling. This most frequently concerned Russian orthography, especially the degree to which the Russian spelling of Kazak place names should reflect

Kazak or Russian phonetic rules. Some authors (especially nation-state-minded Kazaks) insisted that Russian should adopt the Kazak spelling of such names as Almaty (rather than Alma-Ata) and Shymkent (rather than Chimkent). After all, they argued, even though the usual Kazak pronunciation of Russia's capital was closer to "Maskeu" than the Russian "Moskva," Kazak orthography maintained the Russian original.¹¹⁵ Opponents maintained that it was not Kazakstan's business to dictate the appropriate Russian spelling of anything, including place names in Kazakstan.

The proponents of "kazakization" of Russian spelling expressed special disdain for those cases where modifications in the original Kazak name yielded a Russian "meaning" that was alien to the original Kazak, or when Russian names were retranscribed into Kazak, thus distorting the original. A frequently cited example of the former was the name of the resort area in northern Kazakstan which in Kazak is called "Burabay," derived from the Kazak word "bura," meaning "male camel." Perhaps because it is an area with forests, Russians found it convenient to refer to the place as "Borovoe," which sounds like it comes from the Russian word for coniferous forest, "bor."

Nation-statists expressed special concern for those cases in which the "wrong" Russian name was projected back into the Kazak language. One of the most commonly cited examples was the "Kazak" name Mangghyshlaq (at one time the name of an oblast in western Kazakstan). Some scholars claim that when the oblast was formed in 1973, local specialists had urged rejection of "Mangghyshlaq" (because it had no historical roots) and instead proposed "Mangqystau." Authorities, however, allegedly rejected this idea because it did not sound right in Russian; therefore the respective forms "Mangyshlaq" (Russian) and "Mangghyshlaq" (Kazak) were adopted. Although the oblast which bore this name did not exist at the time the onomastic debate was heating up, the decision was still relevant because "Mangghyshlaq" remained a part of many names of other local places and objects.¹¹⁶

In earlier sections of this study we considered policies regarding Kazak diaspora and irridenta populations as reflections of images of identity. The appropriate form of names of places inhabited by Kazaks beyond the republic borders provides a kind of parallel to consider views about "Kazakdom." Thus, Kazak writers often defended the practice of calling cities in Russia historically inhabited by Kazaks with traditional Kazak names not in conformance with Russian orthography. Among the most common examples were "Omby" (for Russian "Omsk") and "Orynbor" (for Russian Orenburg). Oddly, these were sometimes the very people who demanded that Russian names of places in Kazakstan be written in as close conformity as possible with the Kazak original. They explained their seeming double standard by noting that the Russian spellings of names such as "Borovoe" distorted the original meaning, whereas "Omby" and "Orynbor" did not.¹¹⁷

Although the 1989 language law did not address the issue of place names outside of Kazakstan, Art. 27 did articulate the principle that within the republic "every populated area . . . has one traditional name, primarily in Kazak, which is reproduced in other languages according to the

operating rules." Although as early as 1990 and 1991 there was considerable discussion of the need to change certain city names, not until the summer and fall of 1991 did much official movement occur on this front. Only in late June or early July did the oblast soviet of recently reconstituted Mangqystau Oblast adopt a resolution calling for the return of the name "Aqtau" to its administrative center. (This city had been given the name "Shevchenko" in honor of the Ukrainian poet in 1964.)¹¹⁸ In early July 1992 Tselinograd Oblast and city received their former names, Akmola.¹¹⁹ Another symbolically important change was the modification of the official Russian spelling of Kazakstan's capital to conform with the Kazak spelling, "Almaty." This was written into Kazakstan's constitution adopted at the end of January 1993. In accordance with this, Kazakhstanskaia Pravda (the Russian-language newspaper of the Kazakstan Cabinet of Ministers) began to use the spelling "Almaty" in official announcements in its issue of 11 February 1993. This same period witnessed the beginning of widespread renaming of streets, squares, and other geographical points.

Despite these signs of kazakization of geographical names, the process has been greatly slowed down because of opposition, especially from Russians, to the kind of rejection of Russia's role in Kazak history which seems implicit in this process. Thus, although there have been numerous attempts to replace "Pavlodar" and "Petrovavlovsk" with Kazak names, to date these efforts have been unsuccessful. One of the reasons, of course, is that cities (and their respective oblasts) are inhabited largely by Russians. Naturally, any kazakization would be opposed by a substantial majority of the local population. And the republic government is reluctant to push for a particular resolution at this time.

The 1989 Law Revisited: Draft Revision in 1996

The persisting difficulty in coping with the language-related issues of identity is confirmed by a recent attempt to rewrite Kazakstan's 1989 language law. In late 1995 or early 1996 a draft of such a revision was circulated to ministries, departments, and oblast governors for comment, and by the spring of 1996 a further revised draft had been created.¹²⁰ (We will refer to these drafts in the following discussion as "D1" and "D2.") To judge from the two versions of the draft and their fate, it appears that the same issues that have been discussed over the last seven years remain as divisive now as ever. Indeed, although there was widespread expectation among scholars and officials in early May 1996 that D2 would quickly be submitted to Kazakstan's parliament for discussion, action on this front was frozen on the recommendation of Deputy Premier Nagashbay Shaykenov.

The recent drafts contain many of the same ambiguous phrases and compromises noted in the analysis of other documents above; furthermore, changes between the two drafts also strongly suggest continuing disagreement on many of the same issues. As a whole, the changes from the 1989 law (as well as the 1995 constitution) to the 1996 drafts seem to represent a slight shift toward

greater identification of Kazakhstan with the Kazak people and Kazak language. But the changes between the two drafts seem to suggest that there was tugging and pulling in both directions, with the result being that the second draft in some cases is more "nation-state" oriented than the first, and in other cases more "civil state." In any case, as of July 1996, no action had been taken.

First let us turn to the compromises shared by both drafts which seem in harmony with the 1989 law and the 1995 constitution: the new draft maintains the compromise on the name of the law, with the Russian text explicitly stating "languages" in the plural, and the Kazak version leaving this ambiguous. Moreover, both D1 and D2 maintain Kazak as the single "state" language (D1 and D2, art. 1); like the constitution, they also announce that "The Russian language is used on a par with [naravne s] Kazak in state organizations and organs of local self-government" (D1 and D2, Arts. 1 and 2). Likewise, both of the 1996 drafts include Kazak and Russian as obligatory subjects in school curricula (D1 and D2, Art. 17) and mandate that names of all government organizations and their subdivisions be rendered both in Kazak and Russian (D1, Art. 21; D2, Art. 20). The special role of Russian articulated in the 1989 text is also maintained in such clauses as requirements that tags, labels, and instructions for goods produced abroad carry information in both Kazak and Russian (D1, Art. 23; D2, Art. 22), and that visual information (e.g., billboards) be written with Kazak and Russian texts with letters of equal size, though with the Kazak version either to the left or above the Russian (D1, Art. 23; D2, Art. 22). In similar fashion, articles in the 1996 drafts give Russian (but no other languages) a special role alongside Kazak in such areas as statistical and financial documents in government organizations, as a language for response to petitions from citizens, and in the area of science (D1 and D2, Arts 10, 11, and 18); Art. 11 of both provides for various organizations to respond to petitions from citizens "in the state and Russian languages."

One of the vaguest formulations in the drafts of the revised law is the one-sentence Art. 9 which reads, "The state language is obligatory for official [sluzhebnyi] communication and office work [deloproizvodstvo] of Kazakhstan Republic organizations, enterprises, and institutions, [and] the Russian language is used officially on a par with [nariadu s] the state language." On the one hand this text seems to imply that Kazak must be used in all cases, including local bodies in areas where Kazaks are a small minority; this, obviously is totally unrealistic in practice. On the other hand, though, the article does not water down the role of Russian with anything like "when necessary" or "as needed." Indeed, linking the two parts of the sentence with a comma seems to leave open the possible interpretation that Russian is also close to obligatory. In any case, the vagueness seems very much in the spirit of the 1989 law, which had simply stated that "The language of internal office work of enterprises, institutions, and organizations is Kazak, Russian, or a local official language" (Art. 10).

In some articles, besides specifically naming Kazak and Russian, the new drafts also mention the broad category "other languages;" thus, while they still give Russian a special status, the

reference to "other languages" puts Russian in a less exclusive category (as the only one besides Kazak). Art. 17 of both drafts states that the government is to assure publication of educational and certain other types of literature in Kazak, "Russian, and other national languages." Likewise, legal proceedings on cases concerning administrative violations [administrativnye pravonarusheniia] are to be held "in the state language, in Russian, and when necessary in other languages as well" (D1 and D2, Art. 13) and "Acts of republic and local organs are to be adopted in the state language and are translated into Russian, and into other languages when necessary" (D1 and D2, art 8). All of these are also in the spirit of the 1989 law.

As noted above, however, the 1996 drafts contain some clauses which signify a shift toward the nation-state model. For example, Art. 1 of both drafts tells that "[Kazak's] status of state language obliges each citizen of the republic to acquire a mastery of the Kazak language, perceiving it as a most important factor of consolidation of the entire society." It is remarkable that Kazak language here is put forward as a consolidating force for the entire republic. The strength of the "obligation" is, however, somewhat weakened by the word "ovladienie" in reference to "acquiring a mastery;" this seems to stress the process of learning rather than the result itself. Moreover, it bears noting that the clause lacks anything which gives Kazak a label such as "language of inter-ethnic communication," which, of course, had earlier been used. . . in reference to Russian. The state's commitment specifically to Kazak is also embodied in Art. 16, which mandates that state and private organizations are materially to encourage and stimulate through government allocations and their own resources the study of the Kazak language by individuals who are successfully acquiring a mastery of [ovladevaiushchikh] the state language.

Although removed before the second draft was issued, the preamble of D1 contains a statement implying a very close link between the territory of Kazakhstan and the Kazak people and language. It states that "Kazakhstan is the only ethnic homeland in the world which the Kazak nation [natsiia] inhabits. Its rebirth is linked with the development of the Kazak language and the broadening of its social-community [sotsial'no-obshchestvennye] functions." Article 21 of D1 is another "nation-state" sounding clause asserting that "Every populated area, street, square, or other territorial object has a traditional historically derived Kazak name which is reproduced in other languages according to the rules of transliteration."

Undoubtedly such statements evoked strong reactions from "civil statist." The entire paragraph of the preamble cited above was lacking in D2,¹²¹ and the reference to place names was modified in a way which linked the territory of Kazakhstan much less exclusively to the Kazak people. The second draft simply states that "traditional historically derived Kazak names of populated areas, streets, squares, and other physical-territorial objects are reproduced in other languages according to rules of transliteration (Art. 20). This new formulation, of course, means that other

languages should still follow the Kazak lead in cases where a traditional Kazak name exists, but it no longer implies that such a name exists in all cases.

Perhaps some of the nation-statists were mollified and convinced to accept this modification because of compensation in other stipulations. For example, Art. 2 of the first draft concludes with a statement about the government introducing an "approximate list of positions" for which a knowledge of Kazak or Russian would be necessary. The second draft, however, makes an important change here: the clause dealing with this matter is moved up from Art. 2 to Art. 1, and instead of mentioning Kazak and Russian, the second draft refers to a list of jobs requiring language skills only in the case of Kazak.¹²²

If this was indeed the "compensation" for dropping the text from the preamble cited above, there were nevertheless other concessions which the nation-statists were forced to accept in the second draft. For example, the Kazak people and territory are "decoupled" by dropping a clause in Art. 1 of D1 which states that "The government of Kazakstan. . . provides help to the Kazak diaspora in the preservation and development of [their] native language." Likewise, Art. 8 in D1 stipulates that "The acts of republic and local organs are adopted in the state language and translated into Russian, and when necessary into other languages." The same article of D2, however, changes this to read "The acts of government organs are composed and adopted in the state language; when necessary they may be composed in the Russian language and a translation may be provided into other languages." Although the latter version omits explicit confirmation of the translation into Russian (which is likely in most cases anyway), this seems outweighed by the open recognition that they might be composed in something other than the state language.

Article 7 in the first draft presents something of a puzzle. Along with the not very surprising statement that the head of the state must have a "complete mastery of the state language," it also requires the chairmen of both houses of the legislature to have a "mastery of the state and Russian languages." The former, of course, is in accordance with the 1995 constitution; likewise, so is the requirement that the chairmen of the parliamentary chambers have a mastery of Kazak. However, it is incomprehensible how a draft text was produced which explicitly mandated the knowledge of Russian. In practice, of course, no politician without a knowledge of Russian seems likely to gain enough power in the foreseeable future to be a serious contender for such a post as head of the Majlis or Senate. In any case, D2 entirely omits the sections on linguistic capabilities for top political leaders, thus also eliminating the possible contradictions with the constitution.

Given Russian's defacto dominant role in Kazakstan, the changes in treatment of Kazak and Russian are obviously the most important ones relevant to the republic's identity. It is worth noting, however, that the 1996 drafts substantially decrease the status of all other languages (i.e., besides Kazak and Russian) from their level of recognition in the 1989 law. True, the 1996 drafts promise state efforts to create conditions for the "development and study of languages represented in

Kazakstan" (D1 and D2, Art. 3), and prohibit discrimination against "the state or any other language on the territory of Kazakstan" (D1 and D2, Art. 3). They also promise protection for "the state language and all other languages" in the republic and assure their development through a state program (D1, Art. 25, D2, Art. 24).

Despite these vague assurances, the new drafts fall short of giving the "other" languages the status they had in 1989. The version of the law adopted at that time contains references to "local official languages," a term used in reference to the language of office work (Art. 11) and to the language of response by various institutions to petitions from citizens (Art. 12). The 1989 law holds open the possibility of "local official" status for all ethnic groups living "compactly" (Art. 4). By contrast, the 1996 drafts carry no references to "local official languages;" moreover, references to the use of "other" languages has a much less official character than that for Russian and Kazak. Whereas the drafts repeatedly refer to Russian being used "on a par with" [naravne s] Kazak, the use of the "others" (in appropriate locations) is merely "side by side" [nariadu] with the state language.

Given that in 1989 so much attention had been focused on the distinction between the two expressions "naravne s" and "nariadu s", it is certain that the seeming demotion of the "other" languages is not an accident. In the case of some languages (e.g., Ukrainian and Uzbek), this may partly be a form of recognition that for all of its diversity, Kazakstan is no longer politically attached to the territorial homelands of the other nationalities; but inasmuch as it also concerns languages such as German and Polish, it also implies that although the state promises to "assure a respectful attitude toward all languages used in the republic without any exception" (Preamble) it does not set aside territories where other languages have official status.

Perhaps the most important implication of this concerns not any of the "minor" languages in Kazakstan, but Russian. Excluding the possibility of local official languages may above all be intended to undermine movements for autonomy based on language in the oblasts with the greatest ethnic Russian concentrations.

With regard to "other" languages, their de-emphasis is also manifest in Art. 5. In D1 this article includes a provision for the state to provide for the creation of "a wide network of pre-school institutions, and schools with training and education in the Kazak, Russian, and other languages." The analogous article in D2 maintains D1's assurance that every citizen has the right to choose his/her language of education; however, it drops the state's commitment to support this.

Although not directly related to identity, two additional significant changes between the two drafts should be noted. In particular, Art. 27 of D1 reads, "The social-economic protection of languages is assured through the requisite annual financing of the State Language Program." This article is omitted in D2. Likewise, D1 carries an article about the government creating commissions dealing with problems of onomastics and terminology. No such article exists in D2. The first change seems to be a result of Kazakstan's economic straits, which may have helped convince the law's

authors that it was best not to make annual promises which would often be broken. An analogous reason may lie behind the second change.

Conclusion

Despite the ambiguity in all of the documents examined above, it is clear that at least in terms of official policy the status of the Kazak language has been elevated far above its level of ten years ago. Of course many of the measures implicit in the documents examined here (not to mention others, such as the 1990 State program on language) have not been implemented due to lack of resources, especially financial ones. For example, although much of the country's office work is supposed to be carried out in parallel fashion in Kazak (even if accompanied by Russian), this is often ignored because of lack of personnel proficient in Kazak, and shortages of everything from paper to typewriters to translators. In 1991, the deputy prime minister of Kazakstan announced that an official list of job categories requiring knowledge of particular languages was already compiled and would soon be announced by the Cabinet of Ministers. Moreover, in early 1992 the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a resolution calling for incentive measures quickly to be drawn up in order to encourage non-Kazaks to acquire job-related Kazak language skills. However, according to officials in the Kazakstan State Committee on Nationality affairs, as of the spring of 1996, none of this had been implemented.¹²³

Despite the great differences in ethnic composition and linguistic knowledge in different oblasts, Kazakstan remains a unitary state and in a formal sense only limited powers have been delegated to the oblasts regarding application of the language law. This is not to say that compliance with the language law is uniform across the country. The variance is in part due to the demographic composition and linguistic repertoires of the population in different areas. Indeed, in the spring of 1996 some significant initiatives surfaced which give evidence of oblast administration efforts to gain power over decisions concerning nationality policy and particularly language. This followed the elimination in late 1995 or early 1996 of the structures below the republic level that replicated on a smaller scale the republic's "State Committee on Nationality Policy." This cut may have been devised primarily as a measure to save money, but it seems also to offer republic-level administration more direct control over the oblasts. In early April 1996, however, the Semei (Semipalatinsk) Oblast governor signed a decree creating a new oblast "language department" [upravlenie po iazykam] with a staff of ten individuals to assume some of the functions of the liquidated oblast committee on nationality policy. The decree also mandates that rayon and city heads each hire a person to work on analogous matters.¹²⁴ Some similar organizational changes have also been decreed in at least one other oblast, South Kazakstan.

It seems particularly likely that the action by Semei Oblast's governor was part of an assertion of more oblast or local control over language policy. Just two months earlier, the mayor of Semei

city had signed a decree on one of the most sensitive language issues. His decree mandated attestation of workers in city organizations and designated bonuses for those with Kazak skills.¹²⁵

At first glance an obvious part of the solution to Kazakhstan's identity problem might seem to be a federal system which would allow each oblast greater discretion to make its own rules. This, however, might involve great risks. Some of Kazakhstan's oblasts would be faced with the same dilemmas, only on a smaller scale. More importantly, however, a devolution of greater authority to oblasts might open the door to separatist ambitions, especially on the part of those who are dissatisfied with what they perceive as "kazakization" of the country.

As described in the early part of this essay, questions of identity are important to Kazakhstan's development because of their close link to the legitimacy of the country's political leaders. Their efforts to maintain political legitimacy are undoubtedly a critical reason that the president's statements and those in official documents leave so much ambiguity and reflect efforts to walk an "identity tightrope."

Legitimacy, of course, is not based solely on identity. Indeed, most of Kazakhstan's citizens today certainly judge their government more by its economic performance than by its language policies. Moreover, economic factors lie behind the poor implementation of language policy in Kazakhstan, and the leaders' realization of the economic limitations also affects the kinds of policies which are proposed or adopted. Implementation of the policies already on the books would require enormous resources, including personnel (e.g., teachers, interpreters, administrators and clerks with sophisticated language skills), equipment (e.g., typewriters and simultaneous interpretation devices), greater paper supplies, and a system for testing language skills and adjudicating disputes. Kazakhstan's leaders, acutely aware of the country's difficult economic situation, are careful not to promise too much more than their resources will allow them to deliver. Despite the importance of the more tangible economic factors which can be sources of legitimacy (not to mention others, such as the nature of the political process), citizens' perceptions of the coincidence (or lack of coincidence) of the identity of their government and of their society's broader population may be a critical force disposing them toward behavior compatible with civil peace or unrest.

In the Soviet era, borders between republics of the USSR were relatively unimportant. The Communist Party attempted to cultivate a single "Soviet identity" incorporating the country's myriad ethnic and linguistic groups. Russian was the "linguistic glue" which was supposed to bind all of these groups together. For decades the political leaders who ruled over this vast Soviet space promoted only a limited identification of the territory of each republic with the ethnic group that provided its name. For demographic and political reasons this process proceeded even less in Kazakhstan than in other Soviet republics. Unlike the decades preceding Nazarbayev's accession to the leadership of Kazakhstan, today Kazak nation-statists are permitted to articulate the view that Kazakhstan is above all the homeland of the Kazaks, and to press for the transformation of linguistic

and other aspects of society based on this view. One of the greatest challenges to the country's leadership in the coming decades will be to satisfy what currently seem irreconcilable aspirations of different segments of the country's population. To date President Nazarbayev seems to be finessing the problem through ambiguity in order to maintain social peace. For the moment, this may indeed be his only option in order to maintain legitimacy among as broad a segment of the population as possible. Over the longer term, however, Kazakhstan's leadership will be obliged either to develop more creative solutions to very complex problems or to attempt to impose a particular image of Kazakstani identity with greater force. The former type of solution, though problematic, seems to offer a better chance of success. In any case, as today, language policy in Kazakhstan will remain a central element in the policy to create an identity to hold the country together.

NOTES

1. For stylistic reasons, the English terms "ethnic group" and "nationality" will be used interchangeably as equivalents for the Russian word *natsional'nost'*. Because Russian-language terminology is much more standardized than Kazak, and because the more authoritative nature of Russian texts of documents both in the late and even post-Soviet era, I have chosen to use Russian terminology and to cite Russian-language (rather than Kazak-language) versions of official documents and speeches.
2. As we will discuss below, individuals who share affiliation with the same "nationality" might not live in the same place, speak the same language, etc. Nevertheless, historical roots (real or imagined) could be traced back to a population generally sharing these elements.
3. Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1966), p. 188.
4. See, for example, Harold Isaacs, *Idols of the Tribe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1989), p. 100.
5. See, for example, Paul Brass, "Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among the Muslims of South Asia," pp. 69-108.
6. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell, 1983), p. 111.
7. *Kratkii politicheskii slovar'*, 6th ed., (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989), p. 358.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Kratkii slovar' po nauchnomu kommunizmu* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989) p. 51.
10. *Sovremennaia ideologicheskaia bor'ba. Slovar'*. (Moscow: Politizdat, 1988), p. 357. The Russian word *narodnost'* in such formulations is used as a synonym for *natsional'nost'*, particularly in reference to groups which had not matured to the status of *natsii*. (See S. I. Ozhegov, *Slovar' russkogo iazyka*, 5th ed., [Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo inostrannykh i natsional'nykh slovarei, 1963], pp. 378 and 386. At this time, the official formulation "*natsii i narodnosti*" was a boiler plate in official writings to describe all ethnic groups in the USSR, whether they had developed into *natsii* or not.
11. In Central Asia, for example, as the states bordering Uzbekistan have sought to define their respective republic identities, they have certainly been cognizant of their Uzbek ethnic minorities and Uzbekistan's great power.
12. Although such issues as the use of language to promote social or economic mobility, the relation between language policy and economic factors, and the implementation of language policy all merit closer examination, for the most part they lie beyond the scope of this study.
13. As a rule I will use a transliteration from Kazak of geographical names in Kazakhstan to render an English equivalent. For those which are derived from a Russian name or are more likely familiar to the English-language reader in a latinized form derived from the Russian spelling, I will give this spelling the first time that the name is mentioned.

14. Massanov made this statement on the television channel "Totem." For a reference to it, see Turkistan, 20 Mar. 1996. For a sample of reactions to Massanov, see Turkistan, 3 Apr. 1996, and Zaman, 26 Apr. 1996.
15. Literaturnaia gazeta, 19 Aug. 1992.
16. Vestnik Kazakstana, 8 June 1994.
17. For the English-language text of the treaty see Rossiiskaia gazeta, 2 Apr. 1996, repr. in FBIS-SOV-96-064, pp. 11-14.
18. N. Nazarbaev, "Vse to, o chem mechtalo . . .," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 25 Oct. 1994.
19. Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Results of the All-Union 1989 Census (Minneapolis: East View Publications), vol. 7, p. 376.
20. Data provided by the Kazakstan Ministry of Education.
21. "Vybor tseli," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 27 Aug. 1989.
22. At the same time, of course, it provides them a potentially powerful plank in an opposition political platform.
23. Among most other ethnic groups in Kazakstan, a miniscule number of non-Kazaks had such skills.
24. In April 1988, the republic Supreme Soviet set up an analogous commission (Radio Liberty Research Bulletin, RL 167/88, 15 Apr. 1988, p. 4).
25. "Ob uluchshenii izuchenii kazakhskogo iazyka v respublike," and "Ob uluchshenii izuchenii russkogo iazyka v respublike," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 5 Mar. 1987.
26. "O zadachakh respublikanskoii partiinoi organizatsii po vypolneniiu reshenii ianvar'skogo (1987 g.) plenuma TsK KPSS 'O perestrike i kadrovoi politike partii,'" Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 17 Mar. 1987.
27. "Tsentral'nyi Komitet prinial postanovlenie 'O rabote respublikanskoii partiinoi organizatsii po international'nomu i patrioticheskomu vospitaniiu trudiakhshikhsia,'" Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 16 July 1987.
28. "O perestroike v kadrovoi politike partii," in Spravochnik partiinogo rabotnika (vyp. 28 [1988]) (Moscow: Politizdat, 1988), p. 22.
29. Unlike the resolution on Kazak, the RoISRusL specifically targeted members of "other" nationalities who already had a knowledge of the target language (not just those without any skills) for language study.
30. "Umnozhat' potentsial kazakhstanskoii literatury," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 28 May 1987.
31. "O sostoianii izuchenii v respublike nemetskogo iazyka kak rodnogo," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 3 June 1987.
32. "Umnozhat' potentsial . . ." Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 28 May 1987; Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 14 July 1988. At least to judge from the press, Ukrainians, who constituted almost as large a group as the Germans, and much larger than any others, received little attention for "their" language. This would appear to be because many of Kazakstan's Ukrainians had themselves blended in linguistically with the republic's Russians.
33. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 6 Sep. 1988.
34. Gorbachev's remarks are cited in Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 2 Aug. 1989.
35. Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, Soviet Disunion. A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR (New York: The Free Press, 1990) pp. 312-313.
36. The Brezhnev-era constitutions of the three Transcaucasus republics had already given "state" status to the titular nationality language. Turkmenistan, the last republic to adopt a law on language, did not act until May 1990.
37. Pravda Vostoka, 15 Mar. 1989.
38. Pravda, 9 Mar. 1989 as cited in Report on the USSR, Mar. 17, 1989, p. 35.
39. Pravda Vostoka, 17 June 1989.
40. "Natsional'naia politika partii v sovremennykh usloviiakh (Platforma KPSS)," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 26 Sep. 1989.
41. Ibid.
42. Ana tili, 20 Sep. 1990, (No. 27). The interview in Pravda appeared on 27 Jan. 1989, and was reprinted in Kazakhstanskaia Pravda and Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 29 Jan. 1989.
43. Qaydarov refers to this argument by his opponents in a speech published in Qazaq adabietii, 27 Oct. 1989.
44. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 13 Mar. 1989.

45. "Til taghdryr--el taghdryr," Qazaq adebieti, 26 May 1989.
46. S. Kenesbaev, "Dumat' o edinstve," Krasnaia zvezda 22 Aug. 1989
47. Dulat Isabekov, "Kemeldenu kezengi," Leninshil zhas, 4 Aug. 1989.
48. Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 13 July 1989.
49. L. Vaidman, "Kak zhe nam doletet' do zvezd?" Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 2 Sep. 1989.
50. A. Qaydarov, "Memlekettik til zhane oghan baylanysty maseleler turaly oy-tolghau," Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 3 Aug. 1989.
51. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 21 Sep. 1989.
52. Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 15 Sep. 1989.
53. See Qazaq adebieti, 22 Sep. 1989 and Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 3 Aug. 1989.
54. M. Shakhanov, however, had proposed that this requirement only be imposed on ethnic Kazaks ("Ultyq problemalargha--tapytq pozitsiialardan," Leninshil zhas 5 Apr. 88).
55. See, for example, Qazaq adebieti, 24 Mar. 1989 and 5 May 1989.
56. Nahaylo and Swoboda, p. 333.
57. "O iazykakh narodov SSSR," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 6 May 1990.
58. Ann Sheehy, "The State of the Multinational Union," Report on the USSR vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 16-19.
59. Literaturnaia gazeta, 18 Sep. 1990. For Kazaks, among the most alarming of the historians' interpretations was V. Kozlov's "Natsional'nyi vopros, paradigm, teoriia i politika," Voprosy storii SSSR, no. 1, 1990.
60. M. Kozybaev, M. Mukhanov, A. Akishev, Iu. Romanov, N. Alimbaev, I. Erofeeva, K. Pishchulina, B. Kumekov, "Real'nost. O nekotorykh 'ideiakh' peresmotra granits respubliki," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 30 June 1990.
61. See "K voprosu o territorial'noi tselostnosti Kazkhstana," Kazakhstanskaia pravda 2 Oct. 1990.
62. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 20 June 1990.
63. Burkutbai Aiaganov and Natal'ia Loginova, "Russkie v Kazakhstane: Problemy adaptatsii v usloviakh suverniteta," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 28 June 1994.
64. "O nekotorykh izmeneniakh i dopolneniakh k Gosudarstvennoi programme razvitiia kazakhskogo iazyka i drugikh natsional'nykh iazykov v Kazakhskoi SSR na period do 2000 goda," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 29 Sep. 1990.
65. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, this amendment was not published anywhere at all.
66. "Deklaratsiia o gosudarstvennom suvernitete Kazakhskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki. Proekt." Kazakhstanskaia Pravda 16 Sep. 1990 and "Deklaratsiia o gosudarstvennom suvernitete Kazakhskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki. Priniata Verkhovnom Sovetom Kazakhskoi SSR 25 oktiabria 1990 goda," Kazakhstanskaia Pravda, 28 Oct. 1990.
67. Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 16 Oct. 1990.
68. "Deklaratsiia o gosudarstvennom suvernitete Kazakhskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki. Al'ternativnyi proekt," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 13 Oct. 1990.
69. Myrzatay Zholdasbekov, "Namysyng kele me, kelmeyme?" Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 3 Oct. 1990; Qazaq adebieti 28 Sep. 1990.
70. "Skol'ko iazykov--stol'ko druzei," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 6 Sep. 1990.
71. See, for example, letters in Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 16 June 1989 and 13 July 1989 and Smaghul Elubaev, "Til--ult uytqysy," Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 4 Mar. 1990.
72. Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 7 Feb. 199 and 3 July 1990; Ana tili, 12 Apr. 1990.
73. The declaration was published in Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 18 Dec. 1991.
74. These nine principles precede the body of the constitution.
75. See, for example, the discussion in Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 21 July 1992 and 4 Aug. 1992. The author of the first opinion justified his position, saying that in Kazakstan there is only one Kazak nation [kazakaskaia natsiia] who live among with representatives of other ethnoses [etnosy]. The author of the second opinion, along with the formulation cited in the

text, also proposed that the name of the republic be changed from "Republic of Kazakstan" to "Kazak (sic, not Kazakstan) Republic.

76. Significantly, although this was the formulation in the original draft of the Constitution, at one stage it was replaced with wording to the effect that Russian "served on a par" with Kazak (Izvestiia, 15 Dec. 1992, repr. in FBIS-SOV-92-242, p. 44). However, the final version returned to the original text.

77. Shaymergen Qaymoldauly Ospan tegi, "'Kieli zharghy' desek..." Qazaq adebiyeti, 14 Aug. 1992.

78. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 5 Sep. 1995.

79. Moskovskaia pravda, 9 Aug. 1995.

80. On occasion, even Nazarbayev's comments on this seem to have added to the confusion. See section on Nazarbayev below.

81. I base this judgment on many personal conversations and interviews with citizens of Kazakstan in the spring of 1996.

82. Personal communications in Almaty during trips in November 1995 and April-May 1996.

83. "Vystuplenie N. A. Nazarbaeva na vstreche s izbirateliami v Alma-Aty," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 19 Nov. 1991.

84. N. Nazarbaev, "Esli my razrushim. . . ," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 28 Nov. 1992.

85. "Vystuplenie N. A. Nazarbaeva," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 20 Dec. 1990.

86. "Dialog Prezidenta respubliki so stranoi," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 7 Mar. 1991.

87. Vystuplenie N. A. Nazarbaeva. . . Dniu respubliki," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 14 May 1992.
Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 10 Oct. 1991.

88. "Vystuplenie N. A. Nazarbaeva na torzhestvennom sobranii obshchestvennosti Almaty, posviashchennom Dniu respubliki," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 14 May 1992.

89. Interfax, 23 Feb. 1995, repr. in FBIS-SOV-95-037, p. 59. These references, of course, are (respectively) to violent crises in the Transcaucasus and Moldova.

90. N. Nazarbaev, "Ne mogu vas obmanyvat'," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 23 Nov. 1991.

91. Cited in T. Tret'iakova, "Vsemu svoe vremia," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 19 Sep. 1992.

92. "Rech' na torzhestvennom zasedanii kurultaia kazakhov," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 2 Oct. 1992.

93. "Za edinstvo i konsolidatsiiu," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 12 Sep. 1990 and "Deklaratsiia o suvernitete: razmyshleniia prezidenta," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 19 Oct. 1990.

94. "Vystuplenie deputata N. A. Nazarbaeva," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 14 Mar. 1990.

95. S. Sabikenov, "Teoriia gosudarstvennogo suverniteta," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 25 Sep. 1992.

96. "Rech' na torzhestvennom. . . ," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 2 Oct. 1992.

97. For examples of Nazarbayev's rejection of the idea that "any place Russians live is Russia," see Pravda, 10 Dec. 1992, repr. in FBIS-SOV-92-240, p. 14.

98. Nursultan Nazarbayev, "Sizder--Elbasynyng eldegi qulaghy men kozisizder," Egemen Qazaqstan, 27 Dec. 1994.

99. "Vystupleniia N. A. Nazarbaeva na Alma-Atinskoi oblastnoi partiinnoi konferentsii," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 23 May 1990.

100. "Vybor tseli," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 27 Aug. 1989.

101. Interfax in English, 6 May 1995, repr. in FBIS-SOV-95-088, p. 68.

102. "Otchet TsK Kompartii Kazakhstana XVII s'ezdu 'Za edinstvo partii i sotsialisticheskii vybor, za real'nyi suvernitet Kazakhstana v obnovennom Soiuzhe SSR," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 8 June 1990 and "Vystuplenie Prezidenta N. A. Nazarbaeva po Kazakhskomu teledeniuiu 22 oktiabria," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 24 Oct. 1992.

103. "Zakonotvorchesto deputatov--voleiz'iavlenie naroda," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 23 Sep. 1989.

104. Ibid.

105. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 11 Nov. 1992, repr. in FBIS-USR-93-005, 13 Jan. 1993, p. 95.

106. Kazak Television First Program, 30 Apr. 1995, repr. in FBIS-SOV-95-083, p. 71. As noted in the section on the 1995 constitution above, however, this status soon ended.

107. N. Nazarbaev, "Nasha politika--uglubliat' vzaimoponimanie. . . ," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 25 Feb. 1995.
108. Kazakh Television First Program, 30 Apr. 1995, repr. in FBIS-SOV-95-083, p. 70.
109. Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 14 Sep. 1989.
110. His reference was in an address delivered in connection with the fifth anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence (Nursultan Nazarbayev, "Ukrepnenie nezavisimosti--cherez ustoichivoe razvitie," Kazakhstanskaia pravda 16 Dec. 1995). Reflecting her assessment of developments, Bhavna Dave (a Syracuse University Ph.D. candidate working as research analyst at OMRI-Prague) begins her recent article about language in Kazakhstan with the following sentence: "The new constitution of Kazakhstan has elevated the status of Russian from the 'language of inter-ethnic communication' to an 'official' language of the state" ("National Revival in Kazakhstan: Language Shift and Identity Change," Post-Soviet Affairs, vol 12, no. 1 (1996), p. 51.
111. Kazakh Television First Program, 30 Apr. 1995, repr. in FBIS-SOV-95-083, p. 71.
112. N. A. Nazarbaev, "Osmyslenie proidennogo i dal'neishee demokraticeskoe reformirovanie obshchestva," Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 1 July 1995.
113. D. Likhachev, T. Gamkrelidze, V. Nervoznak, "Istoricheskie nazvaniia--tozhe pamiatniki kul'tury," Izvestiia, 4 Aug. 1988.
114. Umetsbay Uaydin, "'Myshkin', 'Myshkino . . . ' zhane taghy basqalar," Qazaq adabietii, 16 Dec. 1988.
115. Baybota Serikbayev, "Nemquraydylyqty qalay tusinemiz?" Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 21 July 1989.
116. Qaraghulov, Abduali "Ayqyndyq qazhet," Qazaq adabietii, 14 July 1989.
117. Abduali Qaydarov and Telqozha Zhanuzaqov "Atameken atauyndaghy 'aqtandaqtar,'" Sotsialistiq Qazaqstan, 15 Sep. 1990.
118. Temirkhan Medetbek, "Aqtau atalady," Egemen Qazaqstan, 3 July 1991.
119. "Zhoghary kenges toralqasynyng mazhlisi," Ana tili, 9 July 1992.
120. According to a brief article in Kazakhstanskaia pravda (21 Sep. 1995), a working group had been created to revise the language law. I was given a copies of both drafts when I was in Almaty in April 1996. I do not know exactly when the first revised draft was completed and circulated, nor when the subsequent version was written.
121. This paragraph had accounted for a full third of D1's preamble!
122. In practice, of course, this is not a big change, since as noted before the large majority of Kazakhstan's population does have a knowledge of Russian, but not Kazak.
123. This state of affairs was reported by Georgii Vladimirovich Kim (Chair of the State Committee on Nationality Policy) in an interview in Almaty November 1995, and confirmed in interviews with other officials of the Committee in April-May 1996.
124. Akim Sempalatinskoi oblasti, "Reshenie No. 45, 'Ob oblastnom upravlenii po iazykam,'" 9 Apr. 1995. The oblast center, the city of Semipalatinsk, was to hire two workers.
125. Akim goroda Semiplatinska, "Reshenie No. 136 'O merakh material'nogo pooshchreniia za znaniia gosudarstvennogo iazyka,'" 15 Feb. 1996. The regulations accompanying the decree establish categories of knowledge which entitle workers to bonuses up to 15 percent of salary. Curiously, a separate (lower) scale of bonuses is established for workers for whom the state language is "native." According to an interview with the oblast governor, the initiative for such measures came from the city administration, which the governor agreed to support on the condition that the differentiation in bonus according to nationality was introduced (Kazakhstanskaia pravda, 18 May 1996).

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