

# Particular Qualities of Education in Kazakh Society

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**Abstract**—Most of the academics connect a theory of multiculturalism with globalization and limit it by last decades of 20th century. However, Kazakh society encountered with this problem when the Soviet's rule emerged. As a result of repression, the Second World War, development of virgin lands representatives of more than 100 nationalities lives in Kazakhstan. Communist ideology propagandized internationalism, which would defined principles of multicultural community but a common ideology demands a single culture. As a result multicultural society in the USSR developed under control of Russian culture. Education in the USSR was conducted in two departments: autochthonous and Russian. Autochthonous education narrowed student capabilities. Also because of soviet ideology science was conducted in Russian Universities provided education in Russian and all science literature were in Russian. Exceptions were humanitarian fields where Kazakh departments were admitted. Naturally non-Kazakhs studied in Russian departments, moreover Kazakhs preferred to study in Russian as most do nowadays preferring English. As a result Kazakh society consisted of Kazakhs, Kazakhs who recognized Russian as a mother tongue and other nationalities who were also Russian speakers. This aspect continues to distinguish particular qualities of multicultural community in Kazakhstan.

**Keywords**—Ideology, internationalism, multicultural society, Russian society.

## I. INTRODUCTION

MULTICULTURAL education is possible only in multicultural society, and distinctiveness of education will depend on special characteristics of multicultural society. Formation and content of multicultural society are interrelated with development of history of the country.

Most of the scientists connect a theory of multiculturalism with globalization and limit it by the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, multiculturalism can be considered as a final result of such events as colonization, migration and trade. As a result of such historical developments and national features of every country or nation, who experienced these processes, there are two approaches of multiculturalism: acculturation and dialogue.

The first approach results in formation of the “multicultural society - the result of regulated exchange of differences” [1]. The existence of regulation raises an assumption of intervention from the outside. That is why acculturation

borders with the concept of “melting pot”.

Kazakh society had been exposed to forced interaction of cultures during 19-20<sup>th</sup> centuries, when Russian empire moved Russian peasants to the territories of Kazakh people. This migration had gained a big scale since the emergence of the Soviet's rule. Nowadays Kazakhstan is populated by more than 100 representatives of different nationalities as a result of repressions during the governance of Stalin, the World War II, and the Virgin Lands Campaign during the period of Khrushchev and Brezhnev. It is important to note that for Russian peasants it was land acquisition as a property but for other ethnicities in the period of the repressions, The World War II Kazakh land was a place of exile and deportation. The reaction of the local population is quite predictable when someone makes them move out from the land they possessed or “awarding them with undesirable neighbors”. Moreover, the Virgin Lands Campaign in Kazakhstan after war periods which transformed pastures adapted for cattle breeding into fields planted with grain crop violated traditions of many centuries of Kazakhs, their everyday life, and life foundations. Consideration that from the beginning “cultures are opposed to each other” [2], horticulture was opposed to the culture of nomads rather before they even contacted. Assimilation of cultures always assumes humiliation of other culture in order to justify its domination and in every case “underdeveloped” and “advanced” cultures are interacted. In order to equalize these cultures not only recognition of the “underdeveloped” culture by the “advanced” culture is required but also recognition of the “advanced” by the “underdeveloped”.

In the times of Soviet Union this process had been regulated formally, more focused on external attributes. Totalitarian state was interested to conduct a process of acculturation only in one direction.

As a consequence representatives of different cultures of Kazakhstan were exposed to coexist because the government was interested to support stability in the region under a motto of internationalism. The coexistence happened in this way: population different from the local population kept themselves isolated so that relationships with other cultures were minimized. For example, Russian Cossacks and Germans in the North of Kazakhstan settled villages. Nationalities such as Chechen, Turkish, Kurd, and Uyghur made up different blocks in densely populated points. It would be natural if Kazakhs as representatives of the host country had been functioning as a connector nation. If that had taken place relationships in multicultural Kazakh society would be: Kazakhs - Russians, Kazakhs - Germans, Kazakhs - Chechens, Kazakhs - Koreans and so on. But it happened in the other way: Russians - Kazakhs, Russians - Germans, Russians - Koreans and etc.

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Communist ideology propagandized internationalism, principles of which were identical to the principles of multicultural society. It seems that multinational society should be guided by ideas of internationalism and united even being different from each other. But a common ideology demands a single culture. As a result multicultural society in the USSR developed under control of Russian culture.

Bogus wrote that most of the foreign researchers in the fields of acculturation approach align to opinion that multicultural education should be oriented towards culture of migrants. They consider that multicultural education have to include studies of traditions of native culture, process of conversion of these traditions framed by new culture because confrontation with changed conditions brings a necessity of an elaboration of new cultural orientations. Such formulation of tasks of multicultural education assumes a necessity of serious study of migrants' culture but avoids pedagogical stamps such as "mutual cultural enrichment" [3]. It is hard to determine Russians and other migrants during the Soviet rule, because territory of the USSR was considered as one country, and they were directed to Kazakhstan and other republics which were part of the USSR. They even did not preached but implanted Russian culture which excluded "interaction", claiming that other cultures were "underdeveloped". Of course, all of this was veiled with ideas of internationalism. History was rewritten mercilessly, and made a focus on that before the October revolution all nations were underdeveloped and thanks to the rule of soviets and Russian culture other nations got not only a freedom, they also perceived what culture is. Equality of cultures was applied relative to cultures of other nations. Russian culture was intermediary in dialogues of other nations' cultures of the USSR.

Education in the USSR was conducted in two departments: autochthonous and Russian. Schools, where studies were conducted in Russian and autochthonous languages, in the most of the cases were isolated from each other, as a consequence only in institutions of higher education Russian speaking students met students of Kazakh department and coexisted with each other. Also because of soviet ideology science was conducted in Russian Universities provided education in Russian and all science literature were in Russian. Exceptions were humanitarian fields where Kazakh departments were admitted. Naturally non-Kazakhs studied in Russian departments, moreover Kazakhs preferred to study in Russian as most do nowadays preferring English. As a result Kazakh society consisted of Kazakhs, Kazakhs who recognized Russian as a mother tongue and other nationalities who were also Russian speakers. This aspect continues to distinguish particular qualities of multicultural community in Kazakhstan. Eventually, Soviet-Russian culture was opposed to other nations' culture.

It seemed that after collapse of the USSR, soviet-Russian culture will lose its dominant position and all cultures will interact with each other on equal terms, precisely, autochthonous culture will take dominant place. However, due to oppression of Russian culture by western, in Kazakhstan western became dominant. It is reasonable to consider

influence of numerical ratio of the population on this process. Consider statistical data: "The ethnic Kazakhs represent 63.1% of the population and ethnic Russians 23.7%, with a rich array of other groups represented, including Tatars (1.3%), Ukrainians (2.1%), Uzbeks (2.8%), Belarusians, Uyghur (1.4%), Azerbaijanis, Poles, Lithuanians and etc." [4]. But one third of the native population studied in Russian language. Thus portion of native speakers comprises less than 20%. Taken to consideration that language is a mirror of the culture Kazakh culture cannot be a dominant as long as it has small numbers of native speakers. Tendency of acculturation is obvious. Any multicultural society, where the big variety in quantity of different nations in population takes place, will bent for ethno cultural pluralism.

The aim of multicultural education in high education is to building a character of a person, who has the worldwide thinking, who considers himself not only as representative of his national culture, but also as a global citizen, who is the subject of a cultural dialogue. This is the common definition that we will make link on. For Kazakhstani student, who knows only Russian, it was easier to have a global thinking, rather than being a representative of his national culture. According to Kapterev, teaching activity firstly done on the basics of national ideal, then it transforms into the activity of achieving overall human ideal [5]. But the experience of Kazakhstani student showed the different process. He was a subject of non-native culture, and he didn't have the right to have an intercultural dialogue. Ideology made him to think that his native culture is old fashioned, that's why learning Kazakh culture was considered as regress by him. There is a rethinking process nowadays, but the process overall on a mental level still needs a time. Same process is experienced by the representatives of other cultures. That's why most of the students understand national question as knowing or not knowing the Kazakh language.

Nowadays to the terms which describe the diversity of the national content we add a term "multi-confessional". According to official data Kazakhstan is a secular state. It is considering the fact, that the majority of population is Sunni Muslims. Russian Orthodox Church is the main Christian religion. Also there are Protestants, Catholics, and other religions in the republic. Kazakhs are not the active practitioners of their religion, because Kazakhstan, being located far away from Muslim world, is in the intersection of European, Chinese, and central-Asian civilizations. Kazakhstan is a secular state and Islam doesn't have any influence on governmental politics. There are no big religious organizations in the country. Muslims are 47%, Christian Orthodox 44%, Protestants are 2%, and Catholics are 2-3 %, mostly Russian and Korean Buddhists 0, 3 %, and so on.

Under the impact of foreign Muslims, who instill to Kazakhs that they are "wrong Muslims", some conflicts could be felt between the followers of traditional and new wave "right Islam". Since the governmental politics based on tolerance of religion, this conflicts show the isolation of "foreign Muslims", as an expression of refusal for cooperation. But these conflicts didn't touch the other

religious groups. For Kazakhs learning and acknowledgment with other religions are restricted by outside factors, as well as the representatives of other religions try to protect themselves. In nowadays Kazakhstan society we can see the aggression, or to be more concrete—unacceptance of atheism. Evidently atheists are considered as a rudiment of totalitarian rule. It is not common among the students to ask each other's religion; here we can see the usage of second approach of multicultural society – dialogue. This approach helps to cooperate with the representatives of different confessions and to integrate into global cultural-educational space.

Nowadays we can say that Kazakhstan's society is – multicultural, it is when an individual has an equal access to different cultures and can form his own position. But considering the historical making of this society, we can allow another vectorial direction of advantages of multicultural education, which is shown by Ameny-Dixon in her article [6]. There is always a danger of getting over the line of acceptable. This danger could be seen as an advantage, but a random association in national reading could negate all achievements. We will try to show every advantage and his possible course on the example of Kazakhstan:

1. Multicultural education increases productivity because a variety of mental resources are available for completing the same tasks and it promotes cognitive and moral growth among all people.

Unfortunately, original hostility of cultures allows fulfilling only cognitive aspects, tolerance though pressures the representatives of various cultures and psychological tension leads to insularity of some culture's representatives. Tolerance always considers compliance in some aspects; therefore there could be an opposite vector of considered moral growth. Different system of values could be an obstacle in the dialogue, which certainly makes the dialogue harder, and because of that some cultures do not interact with other cultures. In order to escape this in education dialogue of the cultures should be regulated by the dominant culture in the country.

2. Multicultural education increases creative problem-solving skills through the different perspectives applied to same problems to reach solutions.

This statement finds its confirmation in Kazakhstani education, but not in the society. Different points of view in solving the problem can lead to endless discussions, when everyone is pulling the blanket to their side. "The dialogue between the two cultures is only possible at the certain convergence of their cultural codes, in presence and happening of common mentality" [2]. Comparing to society students are equal in intellectual developing and their mentality is in the shaping condition, which means understanding the different points of view without interpretation in cultural aspect.

3. Multicultural education increases positive relationships through achievement of common goals, respect, appreciation, and commitment to equality among the intellectuals at institutions of higher education.

A student by fostering tolerance may lose himself as an individual. Such individual is ready to accept everything

without analysis. Commitment to equality, which in essence, is relative, leads to egalitarianism. Even a positive attitude can be interpreted in the opposite direction.

4. Multicultural education decreases stereotyping and prejudice through direct contact and interactions among diverse individuals.

Namely this point reveals the importance of a multicultural society. But in order to realize this advantage, we need close contact, focused on breaking stereotypes and prejudices

5. Multicultural education renews vitality of society through the richness of the different cultures of its members and fosters development of a broader and more sophisticated view of the world.

This is the advantage which determined the need for multicultural education. But it can turn into an endless maze of knowledge of different cultures. Student enriches but at the same time is forced to compare, confronting cultures together, where the objectivity of these procedures is questionable. A member of a multicultural society will always look for dominant culture of his time.

Based on this information several features of Kazakh society can be distinguished. First, the history of the formation of Kazakh society as the foundation will always be the basic direction of multicultural education. Second, in the Kazakh society national question will always be critical. In order to avoid this autochthonous culture is forced to play a role of an intermediary using Kazakh and Russian language. As long as the government will call for the secular education religious questions will not be in an official position to influence education. Interactions between religions will be kept to a minimum. All of this will be the basis of tolerance in Kazakh society.

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