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## THE PLACE OF THE “MAMANIYA” SCHOOL IN EDUCATION IN THE EARLY XX CENTURY


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**Abstract. Introduction.** The article examines the formation and development of the Mamaniya school as one of the examples of the modernization of Kazakh education in the early XX century. Founded by Turysbek kazi Mamanuly and his descendants, the school became a symbol of intellectual revival, combining traditional Islamic values with new teaching methods. *Goals and Objectives.* To identify the significance and role of Mamaniya as a center for the formation of the national intelligentsia, which played an important role in the dissemination of the ideas of Jadidism. *Results.* The article describes the opening of the Mamaniya school, a secular educational center in the Zhetysu region, opened by the famous Turysbek kazi Mamanuly, and its place in history. The main focus of the Mamaniya school in the field of education was the revival of the religion of Islam while preserving historical values, as well as the development, modernization and democratization of the country by providing education to the people. Based on the change in the traditional education system, wisdom and creativity have raised a generation of young Muslims with a sense of national dignity, intellectually developed, spiritually pure, with the correct ideas about honor, duty and the Islamic faith. *Conclusions.* The study showed that the school played not only an educational but also a socio-cultural role, forming the national identity of the Kazakhs under colonial pressure. The school performed an important function in disseminating knowledge and strengthening cultural identity. Here, new views on the role of education in society were formed, issues of national development and social modernization were discussed. Graduates of the school actively participated in public life, were engaged in journalism, science and politics, which confirms the importance of “Mamaniya” not only as an educational institution, but also as the epicenter of cultural and social development, which makes it an important phenomenon in the history of Kazakhstan.

**Keywords:** Education, enlightenment, intellectual elite, intellectual, Jadidism, secular, school



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**Аңдатпа.** *Kіріспе.* Мақалада XX ғасырдың басындағы қазақ білімінің модернизациясының мысалдарының бірі ретінде Мамания мектебінің қалыптасуы мен дамуы қарастырылады. Тұрысбек қажы Маманұлы мен оның ұрпақтары негізін қалаған білім ордасы дәстүрлі ислам құндылықтарын оқытудың жаңа әдіс-тәсілдерімен ұштастырып, интеллектуалдық жаңғыру символына айналды. *Зерттеудің мақсаты мен міндеттері.* Зерттеудің мақсаты – жәдидизм идеяларын таратуда маңызды рөл атқарған «Маманияның» ұлттық интеллигенцияны қалыптастыру орталығы ретіндегі маңызы мен рөлін анықтау. *Нәтижелер.* Мақалада Жетісу ауданында атақты Тұрысбек қажы Маманұлы ашқан зайырлы білім ошағы «Мамания» мектебінің ашылуы, оның тарихтағы орны туралы талқыланады. Мамания мектебінің білім саласындағы негізгі бағыты – тарихи құндылықтарды сақтай отырып, ислам дінін жаңғырту, сонымен қатар халыққа білім беру арқылы елді дамыту, жаңғырту, демократияландыру болды. Дәстүрлі білім беру жүйесін парасаттылықпен, жасампаздықпен өзгерту негізінде ұлттық ізетті, ой-өрісі дамыған, рухани таза, ар-намыс, парыз, ислам діні туралы дұрыс ой-пікірлері бар жас мұсылман ұрпақ өсіп-жетілді. *Қорытындылар.* Зерттеу мектептің отаршылдық қысым кезіндегі қазақтардың ұлттық болмысын қалыптастырып, тәрбиелік қана емес, әлеуметтік-мәдени рөл атқарғанын көрсетті. Мектеп білімді таратуда және мәдени бірегейлікті нығайтуда маңызды қызмет атқарды. Мұнда білімнің қоғамдағы рөлі туралы жаңа көзқарастар қалыптасты, ұлттық даму мен әлеуметтік жаңғырту мәселелері талқыланды. Мектеп түлектері қоғамдық өмірге белсене араласты, журналистикамен, ғылыммен және саясатпен айналысты, бұл «Маманияның» тек оқу орны ретінде ғана емес, сонымен бірге мәдени және әлеуметтік дамудың эпицентрі ретіндегі маңызын дәлелдейді, бұл оны Қазақстан тарихындағы маңызды құбылысқа айналдырады.

**Түйін сөздер:** Білім беру, ағартушылық, интеллектуалдық элита, зиялы, жәдидшілдік, зайырлы, мектеп

**Алғыс.** Осы мақала XX ғасыр басындағы қазақ ұлттық интеллектуалдық элитаның еліміздің білім мен ғылымы саласындағы атқарған қызметтеріне зерттеу жүргізу аясында дайындалған.

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## МЕСТО ШКОЛЫ «МАМАНИЯ» В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ НАЧАЛА XX ВЕКА

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**Аннотация.** *Введение.* Статья рассматривает становление и развитие школы «Мамания» как одного из примеров модернизации казахского образования в начале XX века. Основанная Турысбеком кази Маманулы и его потомками, школа стала символом интеллектуального пробуждения, сочетая традиционные исламские ценности с новыми методами обучения. *Цель и задачи исследования.* Цель исследования заключается в выявлении значения и роли «Мамании» как центра формирования национальной интеллигенции, сыгравшую важную роль в распространении идей джадидизма. *Результаты.* В статье рассказывается об открытии школы «Мамания» – светского образовательного центра в Жетысуском районе, открытой знаменитым Турусбеком кажи Маманулы, и ее месте в истории. Основным направлением школы «Мамания» в сфере образования было возрождение религии ислама при сохранении исторических ценностей, а также развитие, модернизация и демократизация страны путем предоставления образования народу. На основе изменения традиционной системы образования мудростью и творчеством выросло поколение молодых мусульман с чувством национального достоинства, интеллектуально развитых, духовно чистых, с правильными представлениями о чести, долге и исламской вере. *Заключение.* Исследование показало, что школа играла не только образовательную, но и социально-культурную роль, формируя национальное самосознание казахов в условиях колониального давления. Школа выполняла важную функцию по распространению знаний и укреплению культурной идентичности. Здесь формировались новые взгляды на роль образования в обществе, обсуждались вопросы национального развития и социальной модернизации. Выпускники школы активно участвовали в общественной жизни, занимались журналистикой, наукой и политикой, что подтверждает значимость «Мамании» не только как учебного заведения, но и как эпицентра культурного и социального развития, что делает её важным явлением в истории Казахстана.

**Ключевые слова:** Образование, просвещение, интеллектуальная элита, интеллигент, джадидизм, светское, школа

**Благодарность.** Данная статья подготовлена в рамках исследования деятельности казахской национальной интеллектуальной элиты в сфере образования и науки страны в начале XX века.

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## Introduction

Since the Renaissance, European nations have prioritized science and education, focusing on economic and social development. In this way, Western countries, which advanced in political governance and military arts, began to assert dominance over the Islamic world. The developed Western nations pursued policies aimed at weakening Islamic civilization by hindering Muslim unity. Recognizing this threat, religious leaders and national intellectuals in our country started searching for ways to counter the process of Westernization.

The 19th century saw global economic and social dynamism, including urbanization, which led to the spread of knowledge and scientific perspectives among peoples. This transformation was largely driven by historical events unfolding in Europe and Russia. In Western societies, the progress of natural sciences and technological innovation gradually displaced religious frameworks, paving the way for the rise of new, higher-order values. The rapid expansion of mechanical engineering, major geographical discoveries, and the growth of commodity-based economies led to widespread practices of global occupation and exploitation. Consequently, many countries became divided into two distinct groups: industrial producers and suppliers of raw materials. This global dynamic also had a significant impact on the Kazakh people, who at the time were living under Russian colonial rule.

A significant intellectual and social turning point for the country was marked by a new generation of reformers, educators, progressives, modernists, and Jadidists. Possessing a deep understanding of both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions, these figures sought to modernize their nation.

By the late 19th century, intellectual national figures were voicing diverse ideas as potential solutions to the challenges posed by the existing political system. One of the reformist Enlighteners' key proposals was the adoption of the Jadid educational system, aimed at achieving parity with the West. The Jadidists worked tirelessly to implement educational reforms. Among their major achievements were the introduction of secular subjects alongside religious instruction, and the establishment of co-educational classrooms for boys and girls in some schools. Given the high level of religious conservatism among the population at the time, these measures represented a truly revolutionary step. Dr. N. Nurtazina, Doctor of Historical Sciences, divides the development of the Jadidist movement in the country into two main phases:

1) 1883–1905 – a period of cultural and educational reform and the modernization of Muslim schools;

2) post-1905 – the emergence of a politically anti-colonial strand of Jadidism, focusing on democratization, social revival, political and legal relations, public education, women's equality, and other issues (Nurtazina, 2008, p. 166).

Jadidism is primarily regarded as a reform movement aimed at modernizing the Muslim educational system within the Turkic-Muslim regions of Tsarist Russia. It is important to note that most Jadidists were either reformers or modernizers of Islam. At the same time, it should not be overlooked that although Jadidism initially emerged in opposition to traditional Islamic education, it also represented a continuation and adaptation of that tradition to new historical and social conditions. The history of the development and establishment of Jadidism occupies a special place in the cultural heritage of the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Russia. This unique process of renewal and modernization of Muslim culture was carried out with respect for traditional values, moral principles, and the spiritual foundations of Islamic civilization. In madrasas, alongside Islamic disciplines, the Jadid method of education began to spread across Kazakh territories in the second half of the 19th century. This method introduced subjects such as geography, astronomy, mathematics, physics, history, and others. Among the first educational institutions in the country to adopt the Jadidist model were the school of Zhangir Khan in the Bukey Horde, the Khusainiya Madrasa in Orenburg, and the schools founded by Ybyrai Altynsarin in Turgay.

## Materials and Methods

This scholarly article explores the history of the “Mamaniya” school within the broader context of educational reforms in early 20th-century Kazakhstan. The research adopts an interdisciplinary

approach, drawing on historical, sociological, and cultural analyses. A historical-genetic method is employed to examine the emergence and development of the Mamaniya school in relation to Jadidist reforms, the modernization of the education system, and the colonial policies of the Russian Empire. Through comparative analysis, the article draws parallels between traditional Muslim madrasas and the new Jadidist schools. By comparing the Mamaniya school with similar educational institutions, the study identifies its unique features, the extent of Jadidist influence, and the levels of adaptation to new educational standards. A source-critical analysis forms a core part of the research, enabling the study of archival materials, newspaper publications, and contemporaneous memoirs. This approach allows for the reconstruction of the historical narrative surrounding the school's formation and its influence on the development of an intellectual elite, national consciousness, and social mobility within Kazakh society.

The article is based on a wide range of sources that ensure a comprehensive examination of the topic. Of particular importance are the works of N.D. Nurtazina, which investigate the historical background of the period, as well as the multi-volume *History of Kazakhstan from Ancient Times to the Present*, which provides foundational insights into the political and social processes in the region.

Archival materials from the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan are utilized, along with pre-revolutionary press publications such as *Russkiy Vestnik* and *Uralskiy Listok*, offering perspectives on official policies and public discourse of the time. The works of classical historians such as V.V. Bartold offer contextual information on the cultural life of Turkestan, while studies by Z.T. Sadvokasova provide a detailed examination of the Russian Empire's educational policy in Kazakhstan. Additionally, memoirs and recollections compiled by Zh. Kalievich, as well as materials from the Pedagogical Museum of Almaty, contribute valuable insights into the activities of the Mamaniya school.

### Discussion

By the early 20th century, the traditional schools and madrasas of the Kazakh steppe no longer met the evolving needs of society. In their place, schools based on a new methodological approach emerged, pioneered by the Jadidists. Jadidist schools became widespread among the Turkic-Muslim populations of Central Asia, including Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and others. Prominent figures in this movement included I. Gasprinsky, Sh. Marjani, A. Ibragimov, M. Abdurashidkhanov, M. Bekhbudiy, A. Fitrat, F. Khojayev, among others.

The Jadidist movement in the field of education strongly criticized the spiritual stagnation prevailing in society and sought to overcome it. Its representatives opposed the colonial policies of the Tsarist regime and envisioned Turkic-Muslim peoples as empowered and civilized. Some religious leaders feared that the Jadidists would undermine their authority in schools and madrasas, while the imperial administration viewed Central Asia and Kazakhstan as unstable regions posing a threat to its colonial agenda in the Turkic-Muslim world.

Most students of the Jadidist schools were young people from Turkic-Muslim backgrounds – including Tatars, Bashkirs, and Kazakhs – many of whom received their education in cities such as Kazan, Orenburg, and Ufa. Some were also graduates of educational institutions in Istanbul, Egypt, and Baghdad. Jadidists emphasized the importance of teaching mathematics, geography, natural sciences, history, and religious studies within the school curriculum. By 1913, there were 92 Jadidist schools-madrasas functioning across the Turkestan region. One of the largest Jadidist-oriented schools in Kazakhstan was the Mamaniya school (Qazaqstan: Ulttyq Entsiklopediya, 1998, p. 345). Schools of the new educational direction were also established in cities such as Aktobe, Zharkent, Verny (now Almaty), Kostanay, Perovsk, Semey, and Kazaly. A significant portion of the Kazakh intelligentsia received their education in these institutions.

Studies of the Jadidist movement explore its various dimensions – from the formation of Kazakh identity and national consciousness to its role in political and cultural mobilization, and its resistance to Tsarist rule in the early 20th century.

According to Adeeb Khalid (1998), Jadidism should be understood as a reformist and modernizing movement aimed at renewing Muslim education and social life. He argues that within



the context of the Russian Empire, Jadidism represented both a cultural and political response to imperial pressures and an attempt to preserve identity through education. Bustanov (2017) highlights the influence of Jadidist education in shaping a new cultural identity among Muslims, emphasizing the value placed on secular sciences and discipline in these schools.

Despite its historical significance, individual educational initiatives such as the Mamaniya school remain insufficiently studied. As Sherkhon Murtaza once noted, "...not everyone knows about Mamaniya – especially the younger generation" (Egemen Qazaqstan, 1999).

Although the school and the work of its founders did not receive widespread support due to political concerns (Khalid, 1998), the contributions of the Maman family can be regarded as a vital example of educational initiative and national service under colonial constraints. In 1999, to mark the school's centenary, a commemorative book was published, highlighting its historical importance (compiled by Kalievich, 1999). The volume includes rare archival documents, memoirs, scholarly articles, and poetic dedications, which illustrate the Maman family's commitment to enlightenment and the welfare of the local population, the challenges posed by harsh Soviet-era policies, and the lives of the school's distinguished alumni. With a history spanning over a century, the Mamaniya school remains a vital part of the region's cultural memory and a symbol of the enduring pursuit of knowledge and societal progress.

## Results

Despite the pressures of Russian imperial rule and the accompanying policy of Russification, colonial governance simultaneously facilitated the Kazakh steppe's exposure to European culture and the achievements of European civilization. As a result, the emerging national intelligentsia adopted Western educational and cultural principles. Many received formal education within institutions of the Russian Empire, and some even studied abroad. This intellectual environment catalyzed the development of political culture in Kazakh society, enabling greater involvement of the national intelligentsia in public movements in the early 20th century.

The relationship between Kazakhstan and the Russian Empire also contributed to the expansion of public education in the region throughout the 20th century. Notably, there was a rise in both primary and vocational education, particularly in schools with an agricultural focus, where students were trained in crafts and applied skills. According to the Ministry of Education, in 1901 there were 283 Russian and 207 Russian-Kazakh schools in Kazakhstan. By 1916, their numbers had grown significantly: 323 in Semipalatinsk, 231 in Zhetysay, 517 in Turgay, 455 in Ural, and 74 in the Inner Horde, totaling 2,448 schools – of which 562 were Russian-Kazakh (Russkiy Vestnik, 1886: 476).

There were no formal restrictions on the operation of Muslim or Jadidist educational institutions, which led to greater autonomy and a rapid increase in the number of Muslim schools. For instance, in 1907 in the Semirechye region, while 222 students were enrolled in "Russian-native" schools, as many as 6,076 students were being educated in 243 Muslim schools. This disparity raised concern within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and among local authorities. A confidential directive was subsequently issued, instructing district heads across the Turkestan region, as well as local school inspectors, to collect data on public sentiment, religious practices, and attitudes toward the new-method schools (Uralskiy Listok, No. 122).

The Tsarist regime viewed Muslim educational institutions in the Kazakh steppe as a potential political force capable of uniting Turkic peoples. According to the Governor-General of Turkestan, K.P. von Kaufman, the separate education of Russian and indigenous children would eventually undermine the Empire's policy of "brotherhood." As a result, he advocated for the suppression of widely practiced Muslim schooling. Kaufman's first action in this regard was to evaluate the Russian-Kyrgyz school established in Perovsk in 1868. He reported to the military governor of Syr Darya that the school was underperforming and proposed that, in the future, Russian and indigenous children should be educated together. He suggested that rather than emphasizing religious differences, unified educational principles should be applied, thereby transforming both Orthodox and Muslim children into equally useful citizens of the Russian Empire (CSA RK. F. 90, Inv. 1, C. 373, Pp. 14–23).

The imperial policy of the Russian Empire regarded Islam as a principal obstacle to the realization of its political objectives in the region. One of the primary tools in the effort to Russify the Kazakh people was the suppression of the traditional script used by Muslim populations, namely the Arabic-based alphabet. In this context, S. Gramenitsky, in his article *Public Education in the Turkic Region*, addressed the history of Muslim education and characterized Islam similarly to Christianity as being "hostile to science," claiming that it provided no benefit to education or intellectual progress (CSA RK. F. 90, Inv. 1, C. 373, Pp. 14–23).

Alongside S. Gramenitsky, a number of missionary scholars played an active role in discrediting Islam and advocating for the replacement of the Arabic script with Cyrillic among the Kazakh population. Notable figures in this movement included N.I. Ilminsky, N.P. Ostroumov, and Nalivkin. Due to the influence of these missionary scholars, the Russian Ministry of Public Education issued a special decree on March 16, 1870. That same year, the Ministry passed legislation titled *On Measures for the Education of the Indigenous Peoples of Russia*. This law adopted Ilminsky's missionary pedagogical model, explicitly designed to facilitate Russification, and classified non-Russian populations into three distinct categories:

- First category: Lessons were given in the native language of each ethnic group but exclusively using the Russian (Cyrillic) alphabet.
- Second category: Classes were conducted entirely in Russian, with use of the native language permitted only in cases of misunderstanding.
- Third category: Classes were conducted solely in Russian, with the use of native languages strictly prohibited (Bartold, 1963: 106).

In 1874, a government decree officially removed educational and pedagogical affairs from the jurisdiction of Muslim religious institutions and transferred them to the oversight of the colonial administration. A special decision by the Tsarist government strictly prohibited the establishment of rural Muslim schools and urban boarding schools without the explicit permission of local authorities. As a result, many Kazakh schools operated covertly.

Year after year, general-governors introduced new amendments to regulations concerning Muslim educational institutions. The intent behind these measures was to systematically restrict and eventually dismantle Muslim schooling.

Local administrations increasingly perceived Muslim schools as a spiritual force capable of uniting the peoples of Turkestan along religious lines, and thus took steps to suppress their influence. Viewing Islamic education with suspicion and recognizing it as a potential counterforce to colonial rule, the Tsarist regime implemented various initiatives aimed at eradicating Muslim institutions. One such measure was the imposition of mandatory Russian language instruction in Muslim schools throughout Zhetysay and other Muslim-populated regions. If schools failed to comply, they faced closure.

The imperial authorities' primary aim in establishing schools for non-Russian peoples was not to enlighten or educate them in the sciences and humanities, but rather to cultivate individuals who would serve the everyday political and social interests of the empire. In 1884, the prominent Crimean Tatar reformer, educator, writer, and translator Ismail Gasprinsky developed a new instructional method based on the European phonetic system. He published a primer, or "booklet," which demonstrated that in just forty days, students could learn to read and write, as well as study Qur'anic surahs, arithmetic, geography, and Islamic history. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, this method had gained widespread popularity among Turkic peoples of Russia and within the Kazakh steppe (Sadvokasova, 2005: 115).

Gasprinsky's new method was introduced in schools and madrasas, providing students with basic literacy and encouraging adherence to elementary norms of behavior. Talented and gifted pupils often continued their studies at advanced madrasas in Bukhara, Samarkand, and Ufa, and some even traveled to Arab countries, where they became prominent scholars.

The success of the new educational system, particularly among young Tatars in the Syr-Darya region of the Turkestan Governorate-General in the early 20th century, further alarmed the Tsarist authorities. During summer holidays, many of these students visited Kazakh households, established

temporary schools, and taught without seeking approval from local officials. This form of grassroots education was soon prohibited, as it did not align with the interests of the imperial administration. Teachers enjoyed such high regard among the local population that many Kazakhs followed them to Ufa, where they enrolled in the renowned “Galia” madrasa and significantly raised their level of education.

In 1891, Ahmet and Ghani Khusainov founded the “Huseyniya” madrasa in Orenburg, which later became a model for further educational initiatives in the region. On June 17, 1895, the Governor-General of Turkestan issued a new law specifically regulating the establishment of madrasas in the Fergana, Samarkand, and Syr-Darya regions. The legislation focused on two main requirements: first, that madrasas be self-financed and pay taxes to the Governor-General, and second, that the Russian language and its history be incorporated into their curricula.

General Kondratovich, in a report to the Russian Ministry of Public Education, stressed the need to bring madrasas under strict state control. To that end, he proposed the creation of an oversight committee and emphasized the necessity of reforming Muslim educational institutions. Kondratovich believed that this committee should include teachers from mixed Russian-native correctional schools who were fluent in local languages and familiar with indigenous educational materials. His proposal was supported by the administration of the Turkestan Governor-General, which proceeded to draft new regulations for Muslim schools (CSA RK F. 90, Inv. 1, C. 373, Pp. 14–23).

One notable example of such institutions was the Mamaniya School, founded in 1899 by the prominent figure Turysbek Hajji Mamanuly in the Semirechye region. The school’s primary mission was to educate the youth of Zhetysu, Aksu, and the Sarkan area. Turysbek Hajji and his descendants recognized the importance of combining secular knowledge with Islamic values in response to the demands of a changing world. The first three-grade school, established in Ordabai near Karagash, initially followed a traditional theological curriculum rooted in the Kadim method, focusing on religious texts such as the Sharia and Qur’anic surahs. The original three-year program expanded over time — becoming a six-year program in 1904 and an eight-year program by 1909 — accommodating more than 200 students, up from its initial 60.

Social transformation and economic development across towns such as Arasan, Kapal, Aksu, Bakaly, Sarkan, Lepsy, and Tasbeket fueled a strong public demand for formal education. Maman (1810–1901), who lived in the Aksu District of what is now Almaty Region, had undertaken a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1868 from the Kapal District, after which he returned as a hajji. A respected local bi (judge), Maman served as a village leader and later as the supreme bi of Kapal District. His descendants foresaw the cultural shift in society and took proactive steps to establish a modern educational institution based on the existing three-year madrasa. In 1904, Yesenkul and his cousin Kudaybergen traveled to Ufa to obtain the architectural blueprints, curriculum, instructional materials, and school policies from the renowned Galia madrasa. A local architect from Kapal designed the layout for the mosque and madrasa, while construction was overseen by Seitbattal Hajji. The mosque, made of wood, and the school, constructed with fired brick, were completed and inaugurated in 1907. Reconstruction and expansion efforts were led by Yesenkul.

To fund these ambitious educational and infrastructure projects, Turysbek Hajji had for many years conducted trade in the cities of Shaueshak and Urumqi and organized caravans along the Great Silk Road to Tashkent, Bukhara, Namangan, Andijan, and Samarkand. He established commercial outlets not only in major cities such as Samarkand, Aksu, Kapal, Koyandy, Kyzyljar, Semey, and Zharkent, but even in remote villages. A substantial portion of the wealth generated through trade was invested in the construction of the Mamaniya School and the development of the Karagash estate.

“The late Turysbek Hajji Mamanov was regarded among Kazakhs as a man of genius who spared no effort for the good of the people,” wrote Zhakyp Akbaev (compiled by Kalievich, 1999: 37). Given that the majority of the school’s students came from impoverished backgrounds, they were provided with free meals, clothing, educational materials, and dormitory accommodations. Teachers were also offered favorable living and working conditions. The reputation of the Mamaniya School spread across the Russian Empire.

The Mamanovs emphasized the importance of inclusive education: “Despite religious, ethnic, and linguistic differences, we live under the same sky with Russians, Tatars, and other peoples,” they stated, insisting that no distinctions – whether religious, linguistic, or racial – should hinder access to education. Students were admitted regardless of nationality, gender, social class, or tribal affiliation.

The Mamaniya School remained the only institution in Zhetysu to be continuously funded for two decades from the private capital of Turysbek Hajji and his sons.

A successful entrepreneur, Turysbek Hajji also developed livestock farming, especially horse breeding. In his memoirs, academician Zhurymbek Sydykov recalled: “I received my primary education at the renowned Mamaniya School, located 12 kilometers south of the village of Aksu, which had more than 100 selected horses, 150–200 head of cattle, and all necessary facilities and equipment.”

Turysbek Hajji passed away in 1904, shortly after founding the mosque and madrasa named after the small town of Karagash. His children and relatives continued his legacy.

In 1905, his son, Seyitbattal Hajji (1862–1913), the bi of the Arasan volost, expanded the initial three-grade school into a four-year institution, implementing the “tote” method – a new pedagogical approach that included secular subjects alongside religious education.

Gabdukhaziz Musagaliyev described Seyitbattal Hajji Mamanov as not just the leader of a village or volost, but a senior elder of nine Matay volosts within the Kapal region. He entered trade at a young age, acquiring a share from his father and amassing wealth estimated at 150,000 rubles. His younger brother Yesenkul, the wealthiest of Maman’s children, enthusiastically supported the school project, contributing the majority of the funding. He also organized a literary contest that marked a new development in Kazakh literary studies (Kalieyevich, 1999: 65).

Kudaybergen Turysbekuly, born in 1871 in the village of Aksu, was actively involved in the construction of the school and the Karagash estate from the very beginning. He graduated from a higher Muslim school in Samarkand and later from a teaching seminary in Orenburg. Prior to the Soviet regime, he served as the bi of the Arasan volost. During the final stages of the school’s construction, local clan leaders opposed its opening, claiming that “children learning in Russian would become infidels.” Disillusioned, Yesenkul left the assembly with the words, “If the clan leaders do not need a modern school, the descendants of Turysbek Maman do.”

Kudaybergen wrote to the education inspector of the Zhetysu province requesting permission to teach the Russian language at the school. The inspector forwarded the request to Pavel Pavlov, head of the Kapal district, who generally opposed the establishment of a national Kazakh school. With the help of Governor’s Office staff members Barlybek and Turlybek Syrttanov, the Mamanovs secured permission stipulating that “a Russian teacher may teach the Russian language.” As a result, Zakhar Nazarov from the village of Sarkan taught both Kazakh and Russian. An evening Russian language course was introduced, attended even by adults from Karagash. In 1909, Kudaybergen transitioned the school to an eight-year secular education program.

However, in 1918, during the Bolshevik uprising, Karagash was set on fire, and the Mamaniya School and surrounding homes were destroyed. Kudaybergen fled to China but returned in 1920 to resume his educational work. Amid the political repression of the 1930s – known as Goloshchekin’s “Little October” – he was again forced into exile in 1932 and died in 1949 in Ghulja, China. During this time, the Maman family was accused of links to the *Alash* movement and subjected to persecution. The burnt school was later restored and, between 1924 and 1935, operated as the Karagash Commune and Aksu Children’s Boarding School. In 1935, the district school center was moved to Aksu and renamed “Aksu Secondary School,” later becoming the “Altynsarin Secondary School.” In 1998, by resolution of the Akimat of Almaty Region, the school was renamed Mamaniya School once again. It has since educated thousands of students.

By the end of the 19th century, Jadid schools in Kazakhstan and Central Asia began to displace the traditional Qadim institutions. The Russian imperial authorities favored the Qadim education system because it aligned with the interests of the feudal elite and posed less threat to the colonial order. In contrast, the Jadid movement had a bourgeois orientation that aimed to modernize Muslim society through secular education. Imperial administrators often supported Qadim adherents in their



opposition to the Jadid reformers, turning this conflict into a struggle between tradition and modernity. E.B. Bendrikov referred to the Madrasa of Turysbek Hajji Mamanuly, opened in 1899 in the Karagash region of the Kapal district in the Zhetysu province, as “one of the best Jadid schools opened in Kazakhstan” (Bendrikov, 1956: 37). The Mamaniya School established a five-year educational program. By 1913, it had enrolled 102 students. The curriculum and class schedule were modeled after the esteemed Galia Madrasa. In addition to religious instruction, the school incorporated natural sciences and humanities using the “tote” method — a phonetic approach to literacy. Subjects included arithmetic, geography, zoology, history, Kazakh, Russian, and Arabic languages and literature, religion, and Islamic history. The breadth of its curriculum placed the Mamaniya School on par with contemporary global educational standards.

Among its notable alumni was Mukhamedzhan Tynyshbaev. His grandson, Wakhit Turysbekov, recalled that Tynyshbaev “studied under my grandfather Turysbek with his own money” during his youth. Other prominent graduates included Ilyas Zhansugurov; Bilal Suleyev, a leading figure in education in Kazakhstan and Karakalpakstan; the democratic educator Meirman Yermektasov; academician Zhurymbek Sadykov; public figures Zheken Kalievich and Kakimzhan Kazybayev, among others.

Teachers were recruited through formal contracts for four to five years from educational centers such as Orenburg, Tashkent, Ufa, and Chelyabinsk. In addition to school subjects, the school offered competitive compensation – 2,500 rubles annually per teacher, excluding substantial expenses allocated for constructing school buildings, workshops, dormitories, and boarding houses. As Zhakyp Akbaev stated: “Thank God, the sons – Kudaybergen and Tanirbergen – and the brothers – Seyitbattal Hajji and Yesenkul – followed the blessed path of their glorious father and brother. They built the Mamaniya School, spending between 20,000 and 30,000 rubles, hired six honest teachers who earn 2,500 rubles a year and live in fine housing – all of this funded by the wealthy locals” (Kazakh newspaper, No. 63).

Since many of the contracted teachers returned home at the end of their term, the best graduates of Mamaniya were sent to cities such as Ufa and Orenburg to continue their studies. The Mamanovs often financed their higher education, aiming to prepare future educators. They also supported Kazakh students studying in major urban centers.

Recruitment announcements were published in the *Aykap* journal and the *Kazakh* newspaper, attracting qualified Kazakh teachers to the school.

In 1909, construction of the main school building was completed. In August of that year, a grand celebratory feast marked its opening, attended by esteemed guests from across the region. Among the invitees was the renowned poet Asset Naimanbayuly from the city of Shaueshek. Although he was unable to attend due to illness, he sent a heartfelt letter of gratitude, now preserved in the Central Pedagogical Museum of Almaty. In his poetic message, he wrote:

*O, my dear ones, I extend heartfelt congratulations on the opening of the madrasa.*

*From noble seeds grow noble harvests—your efforts will yield generations of knowledge and virtue.*

*The grandchildren shall thrive in wisdom and learning, and through them, my spirit finds peace.*

*Had it opened sooner, I would have joined your celebration in person—how I mourn that illness held me back.*

*Can my voice reach you from distant Shaueshek?*

*Be assured, the future will reward your deeds in abundance.*

*May the Almighty grant that your descendants reap and flourish from the seeds of good you have sown.*

*With fervent regards, Asset Naimanbayuly. August 9, 1909, Shaueshek City (Republican Pedagogical Museum, F. 126).*

The pedagogical foundations of madrasa education were laid by the seminal lecture notes, instructional treatises, and scientific works of eminent scholars such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al-Biruni, Al-Khwarizmi, Al-Kindi, Rumi, Omar Khayyam, and Ulugh Beg. These thinkers were among the first to establish a methodological framework for education, character

development, and structured instruction within Islamic educational institutions. Contemporary researchers of Central Asian cultural history emphasize that cities such as Khwarazm, Bukhara, Samarkand, and Otrar — located in present-day Central Asia and Kazakhstan — served as key centers of science and learning. These cities fostered the intellectual pursuits of prominent thinkers who made lasting contributions to the development of four major disciplines: arithmetic, algebra, geometry, astronomy, and history.

Al-Farabi’s *Treatise on Ideal Learning* outlines the qualities of a madrasa teacher and the pedagogical dynamics between teacher and student. His *Treatise on Consciousness* explores instructional strategies and teaching techniques, while his *Social Treatise* elaborates on the fundamental principles of education. Ibn Sina’s contributions to pedagogy also hold a significant place in Islamic educational thought. His treatise *On Household Management* includes extensive reflections on the upbringing of students within the madrasa system. He discussed the importance of collective education, the rationale behind teaching, student behavior and aptitude, and the educator’s role in recognizing and nurturing individual talents.

Under the Jadid educational movement, history lectures were structured with greater rigor and pedagogical clarity. Historical textbooks used in Kazakh madrasas are currently preserved in the Central Scientific Library of the state enterprise “Gylym Ordasy” (formerly the Central Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences of Kazakhstan). These texts reveal that both the content and academic quality of history instruction within the Islamic educational system had reached a notably advanced level. However, debates persist regarding the extent to which history was formally included in madrasa curricula.

From the early 20th century, the Mamaniya Madrasa began incorporating historical works such as *Tatar History* and *Yakoviyah* by E. Battalov, *Tatar History* by H. Ubaydulin, and *Turkic History* by the Toykin brothers. These texts offer valuable insights into the historical development of Kazakhstan, covering topics such as the Turkic tribes that inhabited the region, the establishment of Turkic states, Kazakhstan during the Chinggisid era, the period of the Golden Horde, and the political, social, and cultural life of Turkic peoples.

The significance of history instruction is closely tied to the publication of the first dedicated history textbook in the region. This foundational work was authored by renowned public intellectual Mannan Turganbaev and published in 1913 by the Khusainov publishing house in Orenburg under the title *The Times of the Prophets*. The preface to the textbook explicitly states that it was created in response to the acute shortage of instructional materials available to madrasas. *The Times of the Prophets* is thus recognized as the first history textbook in the pedagogical history of Kazakhstan.

The eight-year madrasa, which included reading halls and comprehensive educational facilities, was named Mamaniya in honor of its founder, Maman. The institution offered a structured curriculum that reflected both religious and secular educational goals. The following subjects were officially included and approved in the madrasa’s academic program:

1. Kazakh language (reading and writing) – beginning in grade 1
2. Mathematics (arithmetic) – beginning in grade 1
3. Pillars of Faith (Arkan al-Iman) – from grade 2
4. Qur’an – from grade 2
5. Russian language – from grade 3
6. History of the Prophets – from grade 3
7. Geography – from grade 3
8. Zoology – from grade 4
9. History of Islam – from grade 5
10. History of the Tatars – from grade 5
11. Hadith (Sayings of the Prophet) – from grade 5
12. Advanced Russian language – from grade 5 (compiled by Kalievich, 1999, p. 70)

This educational structure reveals that the madrasa operated along two principal tracks: religious studies and secular subjects. Initially, the duration of study was established at five years. Between 1913 and 1915, the Mamaniya School enrolled approximately 200 students and employed a

faculty of 16 to 17 teachers. These educators were contracted for four to five years and came from various regions, including Turkey, Kazan, Ufa, Semey, and Orenburg.

The teaching staff was deeply dedicated to their pedagogical mission. They invested their intellectual and professional resources into the education of the youth of Karagash, many of whom lacked access to formal learning opportunities. The tireless efforts of these instructors significantly contributed to the intellectual foundation and social advancement of the local population.

Within a short time, the Mamaniya School gained widespread recognition across the Kazakh steppes. Many of its graduates continued their studies at major institutions of higher education, underscoring the school's success in preparing students for advanced academic pursuits. This outcome attests to the teachers' innovative approaches and their effective transmission of knowledge. The founders, particularly the descendants of Maman, were known for their rigorous selection of teaching personnel, ensuring that only highly qualified educators joined the institution. Unlike traditional Qadim schools – where rote memorization of Suras, Qur'anic verses, and Sharia law prevailed – the Mamaniya School offered a structured curriculum, emphasizing foundational education in the native Kazakh language. Furthermore, the school prioritized character development and moral instruction as integral parts of the educational experience.

The teaching staff of the Mamaniya School included a number of distinguished intellectuals and educators who made significant contributions to the development of modern education in Kazakhstan. Among them was Fayzrahman Dzhihandarov, a graduate of the Higher Religious Seminary in Istanbul and later of Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Another prominent figure was Gabdulghaziz Musagaliyev (also known as Musin), a legal scholar and enlightened democrat fluent in eight languages. Fatima Yesengeldina, a graduate of the Galiya Madrasa in Ufa, also played an important role in the institution, particularly in the education of young girls in domestic crafts. Alongside these educators, the Mamaniya School also employed the following teachers:

*Nauar Abishov* – an ethnic Tatar from the Alabuga district of the Yelabuga Governorate (modern-day Tatarstan). He taught at the school from 1909 to 1911.

*Gabit Akhmetkerey* – an ethnic Tatar from Ufa, who taught the 1st and 2nd grades.

*Nurmukhammed Islyamov* – an ethnic Tatar who taught 3rd and 4th grades from 1912 to 1914.

*Akhmetkerey Batyrshinov* – an ethnic Tatar from Semey, who taught natural sciences and geography between 1913 and 1916.

*Fayzrahman Dzhihandarov* – a Tatar from Chelyabinsk and alumnus of Istanbul, who taught mathematics and physics from 1912 to 1916.

*Mukhametkali Yesengeldin* – from Semipalatinsk region, taught history and geography between 1911 and 1914.

*Fatima Yesengeldina* – a Tatar woman from Ufa, member of the Yesengeldin family, who trained girls in crafts and practical skills.

*Gabdulghaziz Musagaliyev* – a legal scholar and notable democrat-educator, follower of Akhmet Baitursynov and graduate of Cairo University. In 1911, he served as head of the school and lectured from 1914 to 1915 on the history of Kazakhs, Tatars, Islam, the Qur'an, and Hadith studies.

*Mustakim Maldybayev* – a well-known writer, publicist, and democratic educator from the Karakesek clan (Kereku), also a disciple of Akhmet Baitursynov. He lectured on arithmetic and physics from 1914 to 1916.

*Aymanbet Aynazharikov* – taught Kazakh language from 1913 to 1917.

*Meirman Yermektasov* – a local native and graduate of the Galia Madrasa in Ufa. He taught Kazakh language and history from 1913 to 1918.

*Abubakir Zhaishybekov* – also a local graduate of the Galia Madrasa, who taught arithmetic and physics from 1913 to 1919.

*Zakhar Nikolaevich Nazarov* – a Russian Cossack from Sarkan, taught Russian language from 1911 to 1915.

*Proshunin* – from Sarkan, taught Russian from 1915 to 1918.

*Khasen Mullah* – an ethnic Tatar and mosque imam.

*Yeraly Bayarystanov* – a local graduate of the Mamaniya School who taught in the primary grades.

*Seifulla Kopzhasarov* – a local graduate of the school who also worked as a primary teacher.

*Abusagit Kurmanbekov* – another local alumnus of Mamaniya who taught in the early grades (Kalievich, 1999: 210–211).

Graduating from the Imperial Institute of Railway Engineering in Saint Petersburg, Mukhamedzhan Tynyshbaev — an active member of the Alash party, a public figure, and initiator of the Turkestan-Siberian Railway project — served as an educational consultant for the Mamaniya School.

Despite initial opposition from Hasan Mullah and Imam Akhmet Mullah of Aksu, girls were admitted to the Mamaniya Madrasa under the direct intervention of Yesenkul. The madrasa, initially accessible only to boys, became open to girls as well. Recognizing the profound impact of education, the Mamanov family personally funded the education of three of their children in the gymnasiums of Verny (now Almaty) and Semipalatinsk. Yesenkul also sent his two daughters, both under ten years old, to the Sarkan school. Tanirbergen Khadji, together with his children, also sent his wife to study (Kul-Mukhammed, 1995: 113). A girls' class was opened by Mrs. Fatima, the wife of Mukhammadkali Esengeldin, who had been invited from Ufa. After the lessons, women, girls, and daughters-in-law participated in a handicraft club. There is evidence that Mayra taught girls sewing in this same club.

As time passed and hired teachers left, the best students were sent abroad to further their education. Upon their return, they became teachers at the madrasa.

The academic year at the school began on September 1 and ended on May 15. At the end of the school year, final exams were conducted in the form of a ceremonial gathering, attended by prominent figures from Kapal, Sarkan, and Aksu, as well as members of the Kazakh intelligentsia, religious leaders, and distinguished citizens. During this meeting, students who passed their exams were awarded printed certificates: *afarīn* (five), *imtiyaz* (four), and *makbul* (three) (Kalievich, 1999: 50).

The Mamaniya Madrasa became a shining beacon of knowledge, spreading light on both religious and contemporary teachings in the Zhetysu region at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The sons of Maman not only built a Jadid school in Karagash, but also became part of the national intelligentsia, regularly sponsoring the *Qazaq* newspaper and *Aikap* magazine, as well as launching a competition for the first Kazakh novel. M. Seralin wrote: “Yesenkul Mamanov offered a prize to the author of the best-written novel. Thank God we have wealthy Kazakhs who value science, knowledge, and invest their wealth in the development of science” (*Qazaq* newspaper, No. 117). This was a chronicle of the life of the sons of Maman, filled with knowledge.

The representatives of the Mamanov dynasty and the founder of the madrasa, which became a model for the entire Kazakh nation, received positive recognition during this period. Articles were published in newspapers and journals by intellectuals. In particular, in the 15th issue of *Qazaq* newspaper in August 1913, it was noted that the Mamanov family had kindled the light of knowledge among the population, having opened schools not only in Zhetysu but also in other cities. Their financial support and their exemplary contributions to the Kazakh nation were also highlighted.

Shyrkhan Murtaza wrote: “Among the Kazakhs, there were many wealthy individuals. No one could take their wealth with them to the afterlife. No one erected a golden monument in their honor. The name of Bai Maman has been resurrected. The work of Bai Maman serves as a lesson for others. The world is fleeting. But if you want to immortalize your name like Maman, help the villages in need. Help repair the dilapidated schools...” As the saying goes, the name of a good person and the writings of a scholar do not die. By these words, it is always understood that one must preach good and kind deeds. The work that many wealthy individuals of that time could not accomplish was achieved by the descendants of Maman and continues to bear fruit today.

Over the course of 29 years, from 1935 to 1964, the madrasa was managed by 17 directors. It is noteworthy that regardless of who held the position, the focus was always on the education and upbringing of future generations, with leaders working diligently and with care. When the madrasa transformed into a secondary school, special attention was given to vocational education. In 1936-



1937, a park was established next to the school, where trees were planted over several dozen hectares. This park remains a place of recreation for the residents of the village of Aksu (Kaliyevich, 1999: 201). Thus, the school, with its centuries-old history, which graduated many poets, writers, academicians, statesmen, and prominent citizens, holds a special place in the history of Kazakhstan.

The descendants of Maman were true supporters of the Kazakh nation, deeply devoted to the development of Kazakh literature and culture, and preached morality.

### Conclusion

At the beginning of the 20th century, alternative schools such as Montessori, Waldorf, and others emerged worldwide, choosing unconventional paths of development. These schools not only differed in their philosophy but also in their unique methods of operation. Although the Mamaniya School was not equivalent to these alternative institutions, it surpassed traditional schools. As a private institution, it was the only school that, for nearly two decades, operated entirely through its own funds, solving all challenges independently, such as school construction, curriculum development, teacher training, establishing workshops, providing learning materials, and creating living accommodations. This approach to education aligned with global practices.

In conclusion, it is important to recognize that the Mamaniya Madrasa represents a significant chapter in Kazakh history for the current generation. We must remember that the socio-political situation on Kazakh lands led to the radicalization of Jadidism, a movement focused on the idea that the nation's intellectuals should fundamentally change the country's cultural, social, and political landscape. The primary goal of the Mamaniya School was to revitalize Islam while preserving historical values, promoting prosperity, modernization, and the democratization of the country through public education. Based on their wise and constructive transformation of the traditional education system, a generation of Muslim youth emerged, characterized by national virtues, intellectual advancement, spiritual purity, and a sound understanding of honor, duty, and Islamic ethics. This is evident from the efforts of the national intellectual elite in the early 20th century to secure the nation's prosperity and independence.

The legacy of Mamaniya underscores the capacity of indigenous educational initiatives to resist assimilationist policies and foster national identity. Despite subsequent repression and the eventual closure of the school, its alumni continued to contribute meaningfully to the intellectual and educational development of Kazakhstan. The school itself remains a vital milestone in the evolution of Kazakh educational history.

Within the framework of contemporary educational reform in Kazakhstan, the case of Mamaniya offers a valuable paradigm for the integration of national cultural traditions with modern pedagogical strategies. The recovery and scholarly examination of such institutions enrich our understanding of the historical processes that shaped the intellectual foundations of the Kazakh nation, and underscore the enduring relevance of culturally grounded educational models.

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