

EXPLORING OWN ORIGINS

Any Kazakh who has ever visited Hungary, could have noticed how close our cultures are and that they have a lot in common, especially in relation to Kazakh and Hungarian languages. It is peculiar, that such words as “pepper”, “apple”, “axe”, “beard” and many others, sound in speech absolutely identically. The name of Hungarian nation is Magyar, while there is a clan, bearing the same name in Kazakh tribe Kipchak. Since XIX it is believed that Hungarians are Finno-Ugric nation, nevertheless over the past years representatives of this nation claim about their affiliation to Turkic world. This tendency became the theme of the magazine interview with Imre Laslotsky, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Hungarian Republic in the Republic of Kazakhstan

M.E.- Dear Mr. Laslotsky, it is believed, that History is in the service of Politics! when it is advantageous to some countries, they start to search for common roots. Motivation in such cases is purely political. Is it possible to say that this process currently goes on in relations between Kazakhstan and Hungary?

- Not being a historian, I am unable to make scientific conclusions, still I should say our ancestors' roots have something in common, it is doubtless. In short, we believe that Attila was our common ancestor. It was the Vth A.D. Every Hungarian realizes in heart, that we are nomads. In VII-VIII A.D. our ancestors moved from Kazakhstan territory to the West in search of new pastures; also it is a well-known fact that our common ancestor Attila was buried on the contemporary Hungary territory. In VIII A.D. seven Magyar tribes settled on the territory of Hungary, it is natural that with time representatives of other nations started to outnumber Magyars, but landlord class stayed Magyar, i.e. Turkic. Wars and revolutions became the reason of losing vast territories, but still if to judge by toponymy, Turkic names have remained in some European countries of this region.

M.E.- Can you say that today a tendency to consider themselves Turks' descendants, prevails in Hungarian society?

- I would rather say, that Turkic self-awareness has been getting revived by leaps and bounds in Hungarian society. A striking example of this process is annual national assembly

Kurultay. Last year it gathered 150 thousand people which is the evidence that people want and must know their history. We seriously approach the problem of studying our history and preserving the culture: there are twenty yurta manufacturers in Hungary represented by small firms searching for historical descriptions and making very accurate reconstruction. Our scientific expeditions regularly go to Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan to study yurta history.

M.E.- Your embassy holds a great amount of events for making our nations' relations closer in cultural and humanitarian spheres. What are the future plans for cultural collaboration development?

- There are quite a few cultural events which we have already planned! your ambassador in Budapest is an energetic person and a very reliable partner, he has

been doing a lot in this sphere. A two-year plan of collaboration in humanitarian sphere had been signed in the capital of Hungary during a visit of Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Idrissov. This year Days of Kazakh culture will be held in Hungary, and next year Days of Hungarian culture will be held in Kazakhstan.

M.E. — Dear mister Laslotsky, what kind of partnership is waiting Kazakhstan and Hungary in future?

- Things look very promising! I believe that partnership will be further developed. The first time I came to Kazakhstan, I noticed many Kazakhstan students chose Hungary for obtaining their degrees, some of our students study in Karaganda and Almaty. Grants were unavailable back then, but this problem was solved when our Ministries of education signed an important agreement: this year 45 Kazakhstan students will receive Hungarian grants, and 45 Hungarians will receive grants for studying in Kazakhstan.

M.E. — Would you like to wish anything to “Mangilik El” readers?

- You should be proud of your history and origin; every nation should know its past, because national spirit is supported by knowledge of its history. Study and learn as much as possible. Certainly, I would like to wish all Kazakhstan people happiness and prosperity.

Interview by Daniyar Kassymov