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An analysis of the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and promoting the disrupted traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree:

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Department of Archaeology

Durham University

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ABSTRACT

Following the dissolution of the USSR (1988-1991), all Central Asian countries proclaimed their independence including Kazakhstan in 1991. With great freedom came great responsibility as the newly emerged countries had to rebuild and reinvent themselves to regain their political sovereignty and cultural identities. While much of the research into the role of cultural heritage in the postcolonial revival has been undertaken in the Africa and Commonwealth countries, comparatively little investigation has been carried out on the area of Central Asia. Representative of the region, Kazakhstan with its multifaceted history, intricate geopolitical position, disrupted heritage and contested demographics, is worthy of particular attention.

Before the Russian expansion (1731) the Kazakh people were nomads who peregrinated to the north in the summer and to the south in the winter with their herds of domesticated animals. However, Russian colonial and Soviet collectivisation policy disrupted not only the Kazakh nomadic lifestyle but also their traditional cultural heritage. In order to deepen understanding of this history of cultural loss, reconstruction and preservation, this research examines the main features of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people before and after the Russian/Soviet rule.

Two aims direct this research: to assess the impact of the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, and to analyse the roles and activities of identified stakeholders in reviving, preserving and promoting this heritage.

Efforts to protect and promote cultural heritage require the engagement of various stakeholders. However, no extensive research has concentrated on the role and activities of stakeholders in the preservation of cultural heritage in postcolonial

countries. Therefore, this research aims to examine the perceived roles of the government, international organisations (UNESCO), and non-governmental organisations in the protection of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. These stakeholders have significant but different perspectives concerning cultural heritage. The research shows that main motivation for the Government of Kazakhstan to revive and preserve its traditional cultural heritage is to build a national identity. The demographic composition of Kazakhstan posed a dilemma as the country's government had to choose how to ethnically, culturally and ethnolinguistically define Kazakh identity as paramount without alienating other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan.

This research adopts a qualitative method. Interviews and textual analysis are the main data sources, to which thematic analysis has been applied in order to identity common themes and concerns. A multi-sited ethnographic research takes place in Qyzylorda, Oral, Almaty and Astana/Nur-Sultan cities where the researcher includes representatives from practitioners, governmental organisations, international organisations and non-governmental organisations responsible for the development and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The present research applies several conceptual frameworks including Said's "Orientalism" (1978), collective memory, and Nora's (1989) concept of "sites of memory". This research contributes to the academic literature associated with the future work and policies of international organisations, NGOs and government authorities in developing mechanisms and frameworks to support the revival and development of identities and cultural heritage in Kazakhstan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIS	Community of Independent States
KazASSR	Kazakh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
KazSSR	Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UNWTO	World Tourism Organisation

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Gulzhan Karibayeva

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NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

Nowadays Kazakh is written in a modified Cyrillic script composed of the standard 33 letter Russian alphabet augmented with an extra 9 letters which designate phonemes present in Kazakh but absent in Russian. Although the Government of Kazakhstan officially declared a switch to the Latin Alphabet, no official Latin script for Kazakh has been released yet. Despite this, and considering this dissertation's institutional home in the West, the author of this research decided to transliterate Kazakh words into the Latin alphabet. The researcher has been guided by the 1979 BGN/PCGN system devised by the Board on Geographic Names (of the United States) together with the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (of the United Kingdom). It should be noted, however, that this is an old system, and one to a large degree modified by the ALA-LC (American Library Association-Library of Congress) standard. Yet, the ALA-LC transliteration system has not been revised for employment with the Kazakh alphabet. Therefore, as there are no reliable alternatives, the author had to utilise the BGN/PCGN system.

Number	Kazakh	Latin
1	а	a
2	ә	ae
3	б	b
4	в	v
5	г	g
6	ғ	gh
7	д	d
8	е	e
9	ё	yo
10	ж	zh
11	з	z

12	и	i
13	й	y
14	к	k
15	қ	q
16	л	l
17	м	m
18	н	n
19	ң	ng
20	о	o
21	ө	ö
22	п	p
23	р	r
24	с	s
25	т	t
26	у	ū
27	ұ	u
28	ү	ü
29	ф	f
30	х	kh
31	h	h
32	ц	ts
33	ч	ch
34	ш	sh
35	щ	shch
36	ъ	”
37	ы	y
38	і	i
39	ь	‘
40	э	ė
41	ю	yu
42	я	ya

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the significance of the research topic and to outline the problems addressed by the study of disrupted and reformed heritage in Kazakhstan. In aiming to analyse the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people following its disruption under Soviet rule, this research can be considered to fall within the general field of postcolonial studies. Understanding the current socio-political climate in Kazakhstan and the intricacies of its impact on cultural heritage would be incomplete without a degree of understanding of its history, especially in the recent past. The literature review has demonstrated a background understanding of the different issues and themes around the notion of reviving cultural heritage in postcolonial Kazakhstan. Thus, this chapter begins by providing background information on the Soviet past of the state when Kazakh cultural heritage was disrupted, enmeshed in, and shaped by the colonisers. Next, the chapter highlights a knowledge gap in understanding the roles and activities of NGOs and UNESCO in cultural heritage protection in Kazakhstan. Then, after detailing the research aims and questions, an outline is provided of the structure and contents of the thesis.

1.1 Background to the significance of this research

The twentieth century can, in some regards, be recognised as a period of great liberation during which many colonised states were able to reclaim their independence. World War I led to the breakup of the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian empires (Hirsch, 2005). The end of World War II then initiated an extensive process of decolonisation, through which a new category of third world countries was born following the dismantling of the British, French, Dutch, Japanese, Portuguese, Belgian, and Italian colonial empires (Van der Ree,

2014, a). Following the dissolution of the USSR (1988-1991), Fifteen Soviet Republics had declared their independence by the end of 1991.

With great freedom came great responsibility as the newly emerged countries had to rebuild and reinvent themselves to regain their political sovereignty and cultural identities. The concept of modern sovereignty is strongly underlined by European discourse representing the state as an efficient bureaucratic system and establishing it as a globally applicable norm (Van der Ree, 2014, a). Citizens of such a state become a universal category of its members, thus fostering an urge for homogeneity (Van der Ree, 2014, a). Appiah (1992, p.262) portrayed a postcolony as a "state looking for a nation". In their commitment to cultural renewal and the creation of new nations with new identities and new economies, postcolonial independent governments executed a strategy of heritage rhetoric (Meskell, 2009). Central to such an approach is the replacement of ethno-racially divisive narratives, typically present in the colonial policies of the recent past, with supposedly nationally unifying narratives of the more distant past (Winter, 2007). Thus, heritage acquires central role in political, economic, and ultimately cultural power. Giblin (2014), in his explanation of the heritage therapeutic turn, proposes a threefold model consisting of reappropriation, recycling and renewal. The first stage of Giblin's (2014) "re-triangle" model involves recovery of the distant past and reappropriation and repossession of old materials – tangible and intangible historic assets. The element of recycling implies creation of new meanings and historical justifications for contemporary and future goals. Cultural renewal is seen in the healing of economic and identity wounds that would eventually lead to the empowerment and transformation of the society.

Such a positioning of cultural heritage significantly differs from the more traditional conception which approaches it as relics of the past in need of preservation, denying its greater connection to the day-to-day use and wider

context (Siravo, 2014). Embedded in the 1972 UNESCO Convention, this materialistic perception of cultural and natural heritage, also framed as the " authorized heritage discourse", is still strongly prevalent around the world, especially in Europe (Ripp, 2018; Smith 2006). An interesting analogy is offered by Giblin (2014) who draws a parallel between colonisation and authorised heritage practices by means of purportedly objective interpretative scientific process. Thus, he observes that conquering takes place via practices of identification, listing, categorisation and cataloguing, while the act of dispossession can be recognised in the collection and conservation of resources and assets.

The associated implications in these heritage-related activities open a terrain that calls for an exploration of the processes and issues surrounding the phenomena. Researching questions of the role and involvement of communities and stakeholders in heritage-related processes is critical as cultural heritage is a locus of power in post-colonial states (Robertshaw, 1996). Appropriation of cultural assets of "others" is common political mechanism of social control and normalisation of power inequalities. Taking into account the pivotal role of cultural heritage in postcolonial revival and current socio-political processes, cultural heritage assumes a principal optic in the proposed research and analysis.

While many of the insights into the role of cultural heritage in the postcolonial revival have been made in African and Commonwealth countries (Eyerman, 2001; Veracini, 2020; Swigart, 1994), comparatively little investigation has been carried out on the area of Central Asia. Representative of the region, Kazakhstan with its multifaceted history, intricate geopolitical position, disrupted heritage and contested demographics, is worthy of particular attention.

In December 1991, in a hastily arranged meeting in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, eleven Communist Party officials signed a document declaring that "the USSR shall

henceforth cease to exist" (Gleason, 1997, p.1). Russia's President Vladimir Putin has since described the collapse of the Soviet Union as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe" of the twentieth century (Rosefielde, 2004, p.1). The world's largest country, a global superpower was broken down into 15 joyful, apprehensive, unclear, feuding, but at least independent states. After the five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) (Figure 1) became independent, they started to determine their futures by slowly beginning to unravel their respective identities.

Fig. 1 The map of the Central Asia



Source: Modified from the public domain map provided by the United Nations Geospatial Information Section, 2020.

In order to understand the complexities behind Kazakhstan's position at this point, it is necessary to examine its complex relationship with its powerful neighbour. More than 175 different ethnicities, including Kazakhs, had been brought forcibly under the control of the Russian Empire (Roudik, 2007). The Kazakhs were part of the Russian Empire from the eighteenth century. Under Russian/Soviet rule from eighteenth century, Kazakhstan went through several

administrative changes. From 1925-1936, Kazakhstan was designed an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (KazASSR) within the borders of the Russian Soviet Federation Socialist Republic. In 1936, the country became a full Soviet Socialist Republic, known as the KazSSR (Figure 2) (Olcott, 1995). Communist Party ideologists who made an effort to justify the Soviet Union's ethnicity policy experienced the challenging task of reconciling two dissimilar processes that were taking place simultaneously. On the one hand, the Soviet administrations stated that cultures of all the Soviet ethnic groups were "*rassvet* [flourishing]" (Abylkhozhin, 1991). On the other hand, the Communist Party had to determine that a "Soviet people" was established, that all Soviet ethnic groups shared a progressively common culture, and that eventually this would lead to a merging (*sliyanie*) of cultures (Shams-Ud-Din, 1999). Although the cultures of all ethnic groups were said to be benefiting from "mutual enrichment", in fact the Communist Party emphasised that the culture of the majority ethnic group comprising the Soviet people – the Russians – was the dominant element in the common culture, and that mutual enrichment involved more "giving" by Russians and more "borrowing" by all others (Winner, 1958, p.3). In other words, Russians were described as "the leading people" of the Soviet Union and were considered "the first among the equal members of the Soviet family of peoples" (Pierce, 1960, p.2).

The Kazakhs paid a high price for being part of the Russian and Soviet Empires. Nomadism was once the foremost social and economic way of life on the Kazakh steppe. The colonisers failed to appreciate how determined the Kazakhs were to preserve their nomadic way of life which naturally had strong social, cultural, political, and economic meanings for this people (Masanov, 2011). The Soviet administration aimed to establish a system in which all the nationalities and ethnicities were fully integrated into the Soviet system. In order to rebuild the economy and to strengthen their power, the Soviet administration was convinced

that the old order must be destroyed. As a result, three main strategic directions were pursued: mass education, scientific atheism, and an attack on customary practices (Privratsky, 2001). Consequently, the Kazakhs constantly struggled to preserve their threatened traditional cultural heritage. In order to deepen understanding of this history of cultural loss and preservation, this research examines the main features of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people before and after the Russian/Soviet rule.

Fig. 2 The map of the Soviet Union Republics, 1989



Source: Modified from the public domain map provided by the Library of Congress, 2020

After independence in 1991, one of the main issues for all five post-Soviet Central Asian countries was determining their national identities (Haugen, 2003). What would it mean, for instance, to be a Kazakh without the Soviet Union? For seven decades, the Central Asian countries were formed by the Kremlin. As stated by Levin (2017, p.267) "*at the moment of independence, the Stans found themselves within a cultural vacuum; no longer could Central Asians look to the once bright and shining red star of communist mythology. They needed new cultural icons to replace the hammer and sickle socialist realism of the bygone Soviet era*". For the

newly-independent Central Asian countries, there were several questions about their place in the region. Did they relate to the Asian world, the Islamic world, the Turkic world, or all three? Or would each country need to discover its own destiny and identity distinct from that of their neighbours?

In the process of determining the national identity of Kazakhstan, the actions of several countries had a decisive influence, of which perhaps the most prominent was Turkey with its notion of Pan-Turkic identity (Yemelianova, 2014). However, due to the heavy political influence of neighbouring Russia, this idea did not take root. As well as Turkey, other countries like Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan proposed the revival of Islamic identity in Kazakhstan (Akbarzadeh, 1997). However, these identities were totally different to those that had been known on the Kazakh steppe before the Russian conquest. As a result, the Government of Kazakhstan, with the support of its own political élite, rejected these proposed identities and decided to develop an identity inherited from their nomadic ancestors (Weller, 2013). Consequently, Kazakhstan placed its nomadic heritage at the core of its national identity.

The question of the Kazakh language has attracted special attention from cultural experts (Dave, 2007; Kolstø, 2003; Smagulova, 2006). In the 1980s, and as in other Soviet countries, the Kazakhs experienced a national renaissance when the status of the Kazakh language was hotly debated. Consequently, Kazakh was officially recognised as the state language while Russian was given the status of the language of inter-ethnic communication. After independence, Kazakh even became the language of emotion, the means of building informal relationships between the rulers and the ruled. In September 2019, the new President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, stated the need to strengthen the role of the Kazakh language as the state language and also to promote it as the language of inter-ethnic communication (Official Site of the President of the

Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019, a). According to the President, the state language has the same level of symbolism as the national flag, emblem and anthem. It should unite all citizens of any given country. In this political context, it is thus important for this research to examine how the Government of Kazakhstan revived and promotes Kazakh traditional cultural heritage in a multinational cultural environment.

Although in 1992 Kazakhs made up only 40 percent of the total population, the building of the independent Republic of Kazakhstan became, to a large extent, a Kazakh affair, as other ethnic groups were considered to be ethnic sub-groups with accompanying rights (Peruashev, 1994). It should be noted that the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan guarantees equal rights to all ethnic groups. The document supports multinationalism but at the same time prioritizes the Kazakhs' historical claim to their present territory. The Constitution underlines the Republic of Kazakhstan as "primordial Kazakh territory" (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2020, a). In his 1992 "Strategy for Creating and Developing Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State", the first President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev stated it was:

…quite appropriate even if the principle of equality of opportunities for all and equality before the law is valid, if in particular cases special provision is made for the interests of the native nation, the Kazakhs, as happens in many other states (Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbasy, 2021).

However, it was a challenging task for the Government of Kazakhstan to build its new national identity and revive its traditional cultural heritage. The main challenge here was, and remains, that Kazakhstan's two largest ethnic groups, the Russo-Slavs and the Kazakhs, perceive their status in antithetical ways. The Kazakhs perceive Kazakhstan as the territory of their own ancestors, their homeland, which the Russians invaded and long ruled but to which Russians no

longer have rights (Olcott, 1995). To the Kazakhs, all of the various ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan have their own respective homelands, where their ethnic culture exists. Therefore, they believe that these ethnic groups, especially the Russians, have to either accept the process of legitimising Kazakh cultural heritage or return to their own historic homelands (Svanberg, 1999). However, the Russians wish to be accorded the same status as the Kazakhs. Moreover, they claim that the Russian language has to be equal to the Kazakh language and that ethnicity must play no role in the state's public life (Olcott, 1995). To the Russians, Kazakhstan is a multi-ethnic country, and the homeland of the *Kazakhstancy* (the citizens of Kazakhstan), and that there must be no ethnic privilege in such a country.

After more than 70 years of having been a part of the Soviet Union, the Kazakhs expected to establish a specific Kazakh culture with an accompanying history to legitimatise their new status as a nation state. In order to achieve this aim, the Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage was to be revived and reintroduced. Although much attention has been paid to national construction in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, the role of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people in terms of the construction of a national identity has yet to be fully acknowledged and examined. This research was designed to fill this gap.

However, the government's efforts to celebrate nomadism and to establish it as the foundation of the nation's identity and the cornerstone of its branding programme have been criticised. According to Ferret (2016), nomadic pastoralism exists today only to a very limited extent since the people of Kazakhstan are no longer nomads. Thus, the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is only relevant to the period before the 1917 Russian revolution. Laruelle (2008) argues that the rebuilding of national folklore plays a central role in reviving and promoting the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakhs. In

addition, Isaacs (2016) states that the nomadic past of the Kazakhs can be seen mostly in film productions. It is certainly of relevant to note here that the Government of Kazakhstan utilises Kazakh film industry to promote the nomadic past of the Kazakh people and its national identity in order to stir up patriotic feelings. Moreover, as Werner (2003) points out, key features of Kazakh nomadic cultural heritage, such as constructing yurts, hunting with birds of prey, milking horses, and national costume, can often be seen in government advertisements. By promoting this kind of image, the Kazakhstan Government entices tourists to experience the lifestyle of nomads. Werner (2003) emphases that this image of Kazakhstan does not always present reality. This research therefore particularly examines the process of the patrimonialisation of nomadism in Kazakhstan in the context of modern world.

Heritage has acquired a central role around the world, one that is expected to resolve many contemporary issues. This significance, to an extent, can be explained by the new connections that have taken place between, on one hand, the formation of identities and economies and, on the other, new methods of globalised capital production (Winter and Daly, 2012). Global transformations and socio-political complexities also challenge traditional approaches to heritage governance and protection, including role and activities of stakeholders (Stolton and Dudley, 1999; Throsby, 2012). Scholars note that efforts to protect and promote cultural heritage require the engagement of various stakeholders (Góral, 2018; Throsby, 2012). However, no extensive research has concentrated on the role and activities of stakeholders in the preservation of cultural heritage in postcolonial countries. Kalman (2014) identified the main stakeholders in cultural heritage preservation by their position in the hierarchy: government, non-governmental organisations, communities and international organisations such as UNESCO. This research, however, mainly applied to Western countries. That the

functioning of such a hierarchy of stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation might be dissimilar in non-Western countries was not explored.

Government participation in cultural heritage preservation is strongly tied to ideas of national revival. However, Kazakhstan's cultural, economic and political situation since independence, along with major political events such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Summit in Astana (2010), the Asian Winter Games (2011), the 28th World Winter Universiade (2017), and the World EXPO-2017, have encouraged the Kazakhstan Government to look more closely at the development of its tourism industry. During the 18th General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in the country's capital city, then called Astana, in September 2009, the Minister of Tourism and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan declared that "*today tourists seek new ideas and travel destinations, and are interested in the history of nomad civilizations as well as ecological and active tourism*" (Kantarci *et al.*, 2015, p. 50). As a result, among other potential paths toward the development of a national heritage tourism sector, much attention has been paid to the notion of the Silk Roads[1]. The territory of modern Kazakhstan is located in the middle of the Silk Road's ancient corridors (Mantayeva *et al.*, 2015). Thus, this research also examines how the Kazakhstan Government is trying to revive Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage and encourage romantic views of nomadic culture and the Silk Road to entice potential tourists to visit and thus boost the national economy.

[1] The Silk Roads were network of routes that connected the ancient societies of the Subcontinent, the Near East, Asia, Central Asia and Western Asia and were considered to be one of the world's most outstanding long-distance communication networks spreading as the crow flies over 7,500 kilometres but extending to in excess of 35,000 kilometres along specific routes. The expansion of the Silk Roads not only connected societies commercially, but they also functioned as a bridge between the cultures of various civilizations. The extension of these Silk Roads had a significant impact on people and ideas: the spread of languages, religions, traditions, politics, scientific knowledge and technological innovations (Christian, 2000).

1.1.1 NGOs as a stakeholder

In a world built by shifting interdependencies among political actors, globalisation of capitalism and power, and the shrinkage of the state, an increasing variety of groups generally identified as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have engaged in numerous activities that range from promoting human rights to protesting against environmental degradation (Thomson, 1992). Such activities were previously ignored or left to government agencies. Economists and development planners now acknowledge the role of NGOs in alleviating local poverty and contributing to local communities adopting modernisation (Bongartz *et al.,* 1992; Semboja & Therkildsen, 1995; Thomson, 1992) while political scholars have evaluated the impact of NGOs in building civic societies and promoting human rights (Barghouti, 1994; Chazan, 1992; Sanyal, 1994). Environmental scientists have begun to analyse the power of NGOs in protesting against environmental degradation (Farmer and Farmer, 2001; Soltys, 2013; Weinthal and Luong, 2002). However, there have been relatively few studies of the roles and activities of NGOs in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage.

NGOs can be considered as major stakeholders in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, especially in Western countries. Both international and local NGOs work on very individual projects, and are frequently the key actors who engage in the fundraising, promotion, and empowerment processes to support the involvement of the local communities in the protection and management of their cultural and natural heritage (Mozaffari, 2015). On the whole, NGOs stimulate the implementation of small-scale programmes focused on the improvement of sustainable tourist practices, often related to environmental/cultural preservation, and, more recently, highlighting the need for climate change adaptation and the recognition of migration practices in relation to tourism and the management of

the country's natural heritage (Magnani, 2017). Several scholars (De Kadt, 1980; Harrison, 1992; Magnani, 2017; Mozaffari, 2015) have stated that the activities of NGOs are crucial for developing countries to achieve tourism growth and sustainable development targets and thus enhance their socio-economic conditions for the long term. Such scholars also point out that the activities of NGOs are important in reviving and promoting the disrupted cultural heritage of postcolonial countries.

Kazakh activists and élites have been engaged in reviving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, both as individuals and as part of NGOs that coordinate their activities (Nazarbayev, 2003). These local NGOs are mostly concerned with reviving Kazakh language, oral literature, costumes, traditions, traditional music, sport games and handicrafts. Commonly, the leaders of these NGOs are very patriotic, wishing to build a sense of Kazakh national identity, and are skilled practitioners of their specialism. The majority of heritage NGOs in Kazakhstan perceive the nomadic heritage of the Kazakh people as the main component of the national identity of contemporary Kazakhstan. While the promotion of Kazakh heritage has been used to assert the titular ethnicities legitimacy and hegemony over the territory of Kazakhstan, other ethnic groups have created NGOs to develop their own culture and traditions. The creation of local NGOs with the aim of reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has, however, provoked some discontent from other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan (Moldabekov, 2003). This is because, during the first few years following independence, the Kazakhstan Government rejected the registration of some NGOs which were focused on the promotion of the culture of minor ethnic groups in Kazakhstan (Ivanova, 2014). These were mostly Russian- and Cossack-focused NGOs which aimed to promote the continuation of Russian- and Soviet-style politics. Since 1991, the number of organisations within the non-profit sector is increasing. The creation and development of local

NGOs concerned with safeguarding and advancing the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups is not only encouraged by the Kazakhstan Government but also sometimes financially supported by it in the form of grants. Western scholars, however, have criticised the emergence of NGOs promoting the interests of minor ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan as no more than a government's tool to project Kazakhstan as a multinational country (Davenel, 2009; Diener, 2004; Eitzen, 1999).

Chechi (2015) broadly divides the roles and activities of NGOs in the field of cultural heritage into two categories. In the first category, NGOs provide services through their involvement in various specific projects. In the second category, NGOs contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage by engaging in the development of laws and policies, influencing governments and international communities, or by raising public awareness via lobbying, campaigns, and protests (Chechi, 2015). Such NGOs can also have a key function as monitoring and law-enforcement agents (Ryngaert, 2011). These entities are able to implement specific programmes, either on their own or in collaboration with other bodies. NGOs can also operate directly against governments by bringing claims to the national courts or international tribunals (Ryngaert, 2011). However, these features of the functioning of NGOs are primarily associated with Western countries. In Central Asian countries, particularly due to a lack of democracy, NGOs operate very differently from those in the West. Democratic rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of political activity, and free elections have been routinely repealed in Central Asian countries (Adamson, 2002; Mendelson and Glenn, 2002; Schatz, 2000, a). In these countries, both international and local NGOs are almost entirely controlled by the government. Moreover, many local NGOs are financially supported by the state. Consequently, some scholars have oncluded that the effectiveness and success of these organisations are questionable in Central Asia (Adamson, 2002; Mendelson and

Glenn, 2002; Schatz, 2000, b). It is therefore important for this research to evaluate the effectiveness and success of local and international NGOs, in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

1.1.2 UNESCO as a stakeholder

As part of the United Nations (UN) family, UNESCO is an intergovernmental agency that is the most important body in the world with regard to the preservation of cultural heritage (Barrin, 2009). The main purpose of this intergovernmental organisation is to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture (UNESCO, 2016). After the collapse of the Soviet Union (1990), the newly independent Central Asian countries began to integrate into the international arena. Kazakhstan became a member of UNESCO on 22 May 1992, the first of the five post-Soviet Central Asian states to do so (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a). Since then, Kazakhstan has pursued a dynamic policy of strengthening its cooperation with UNESCO and intensifying its collaboration within its framework with other countries. As a result of cooperation with the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty, various projects regarding the preservation and promotion of the cultural and natural heritage of Kazakhstan have been realised. Since 1992, having properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List has been a top priority for Kazakhstan (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a).

A wide range of literature attests to UNESCO's role as a stakeholder in reviving and protecting cultural and natural heritage. For instance, Strasser's (2002) view on UNESCO's critical role on cultural heritage protection has already been cited (see p.227). He noted that the World Heritage List can be considered as having an exceptional influence on the protection of the world's shared history in the form of cultural and natural heritage. Similarly, Cleere (2011) argued that being included on the List generates greater attention and, as a result, enhanced

preservation is obtained. Any potential addition on to the World Heritage List draws the attention of a global audience, prospective donors, for-profit companies, public decision makers, and the media (Cleere, 2011). Such attraction, consequently, stimulates greater levels of funding directed towards safeguarding cultural heritage sites. Furthermore, the prestige and publicity gained from site nomination often leads to a significant increase in the number of tourists, since a visiting a World Heritage Site is one of the main reasons why for people travel (Menor-Campos *et al.*, 2020). In turn, increased tourist revenues stimulate economic growth and help improve social welfare (Cleere, 2011). Therefore, the World Heritage List can, in one sense, be considered as a remarkable contribution to the protection of some of the most significant common public goods on our planet.

Nevertheless, the Convention has been the subject of strong criticism from scholars, such as De Cesari (2010), Labadi (2013) Meskell (2002) Steiner (2011), and Terrill (2014), who argue that the selection criteria of sites for the World Heritage List are not objective. A number of studies have found that, given the strong political and economic dominance of developed countries, their influence over the inscription of sites on the World Heritage List has been growing which has raised the issue of political bias throughout the selection procedures (Battini, 2011; Bertacchini *et al.*, 2015; Frey and Steiner, 2011). Battini (2011) reached the conclusion that certain developing countries that have grown and expanded their power quickly, thus adding to the number of dominant performers, have misused the benefits of World Heritage designation by pursuing their own national interests. Economic benefit is one of the main incentives for members of the World Heritage Committee to attempt to remedy their favouring of their own national interests beyond ethical boundaries. Bertacchini *et al.* (2015) have examined the decision-making process at the World Heritage Committee, and evaluated the contest between different blocs and the function of leading

countries, with specific reference to the USA. Although the World Heritage Convention affirms that decisions have to be made in compliance with ethical norms, Bertacchini *et al.* (2015) have argued that politically and economically established countries are able to impose greater political pressure to inscribe their sites on the World Heritage List.

De Cesari (2010), Labadi (2013), Meskell (2002) and Steiner (2011) have argued that wealthy countries profit the most from the Convention. The World Commission on Culture and Development highlighted how the World Heritage List "*was conceived, supported and nurtured by the industrially developed societies, reflecting concern for a type of heritage that was highly valued in those countries"* (Olmland, 1997, p.58). According to the Convention, any country nominating a cultural heritage site must go through certain documentation processes by identifying and describing the property, in order to guarantee its safeguarding and transformation for future generations (Olmland, 1997). It should be noted that such preparations require considerable amounts of state or other local government bodies' investment. As a consequence, in order to avoid financial loss as a result of unsuccessful decisions, many less developed countries often countermand a nomination so lack of sufficient funding to prepare successful nomination presents a significant barrier.

Some scholars criticise UNESCO and its World Heritage List for stimulating conflicts (Ariel, 2012; Aykan, 2016; Hall and Stefan, 2016). Frost and Hall (2009) in their research into national parks, national identity and tourism, claimed that nations try to monopolise control and "ownership" of what they embrace as their national heritage and identity. Consequently, this can lead to conflict among countries over both tangible and intangible cultural heritage which some researchers have called "heritage wars" (Aykan, 2016). Thus, this research examines the circumstances under which UNESCO operates and to what extent

it contributes to, or undermines, the protection of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

1.2 Research aim and questions

The overall aim of this study is to identify the main stakeholders and to analyse their roles and activities in reviving, preserving and promoting the disrupted traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people in the current climate of economic and socio-political complexities, shaped by colonial past.

The foregoing literature review has demonstrated a background understanding of the different issues and themes around the notion of reviving cultural heritage in post-colonial countries. This has helped to inform the following main research aims and related questions:

1. To assess the impact of the Russian colonisation (1731-1991) of the Kazakh steppe on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

a. What were the main features of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people prior to the Russian colonisation?
b. How was Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage perceived by politicians and scholars belonging to the Russian Empire, and later, by the Soviet Union?
c. To what extent were various aspects of the traditional heritage of the Kazakh nomads disrupted as a consequence of the Russian colonisation and colonial policy?
d. To what extent did the Soviet Russification policy achieve its aim in Kazakhstan?

2. To analyse the roles and activities of the identified stakeholders in reviving, preserving and promoting the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

a. What part have diverse stakeholders played in the revival of Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage?

b. What are the motivations and implications of the participation of international and non-governmental organisations, as well as the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in reviving and preserving Kazakh traditional cultural heritage?

c. Who is the main and most powerful stakeholder in reviving and promoting the disrupted traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people?

d. Whose heritage is it? Who decides which aspects of cultural heritage have to be revived and promoted or not?

1.3 Concepts & Definitions

The following list of heritage-related terminology, developed by key players in the field, is intended to avoid a long theoretical debate on largely epistemological issues that are outside of the scope of this research.

Culture:

the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyle, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001).

Cultural heritage:

the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group of society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations (UNESCO, 2019, a).

Conservation:

all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its Natural, Indigenous and Cultural significance. It includes protection, maintenance and monitoring. According to circumstance it may involve preservation, restoration, reconstruction, reinstatement or adaptation and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these. For Indigenous communities, it can include conserving relationships between people and place that embrace spiritual as well as historical values, and protecting Aboriginal Sites in order to protect their significance to people (Australia Centennial Parklands Conservation Management Plan, 2003).

Preservation:

all actions taken to retard deterioration of, or to prevent damage to, cultural property. Preservation involves management of the environment and of the conditions of use, and may include treatment in order to maintain a cultural property, as nearly as possible, in a stable physical condition. With respect to material valued exclusively for its information content, for example some archival material, preservation may include reformatting (The Canadian Association for Conservation of Cultural Property and the Canadian Association of Professional Conservators, 2000).

Safeguarding:

measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation,

protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage (UNESCO, 2003).

Protection:

the adoption of measures aimed at the preservation, safeguarding and enhancement of the diversity of cultural expressions. "Protect" means to adopt such measures (UNESCO, 2005).

The Kazakh people/Kazakhs

Ethnic group that evolved from the Turkic and Mongol nomads of the central Eurasian steppes (Olcott, 1995).

The people of Kazakhstan

all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan (Olcott, 1995).

1.4 Organisation of the thesis

Chapter 2 critically analyses the relevant secondary literature, as well as evaluating its importance for the present study and explaining its various influences. The secondary literature has been grouped into several categories: Soviet historiography, Western historiography, and constructions of Kazakh history after independence. The chapter starts by critically analysing the Soviet literature since Soviet researchers have generated substantial historical and anthropological works on the Kazakh people. As in Said's *Orientalism* (1978), Soviet Russian scholars often promoted stereotypical perceptions of the Kazakhs to defend their country's interests on the Kazakh steppe. Confident in their own European identity, these Russians generally viewed the Kazakhs with haughty disdain. Both Russian and Kazakh scholars generally believed that the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakhs made

them and their economy backward. Next follows with a critical evaluation of the Western literature. During the Soviet period, Kazakhstan was closed to Western researchers and travellers. Consequently, only very few studies were published about Kazakh culture and history by non-Soviet researchers before 1991, whereas the history of the Kazakhs has been discussed in Western literature more widely since the collapse of the Soviet Union. After gaining independence, Kazakh scholars started to reappropriate their past and re-write a vanished chapter in their national history with considerable ideological motivation. Their main aim was to prove that Kazakhstan is a country with a rich history dating back millennia and that its ancestors were not " barbarian nomads" but rather nomads who contributed towards a rich civilisation. The chapter then critically examines the work of those Kazakh scholars who have attempted to develop the country's collective memory, who are sometimes accused of creating myths, stimulating group narcissism, and inspiring a degree of ethnic arrogance and conceit.

Chapter 3 presents the research design and details the methods used in the study. The chapter begins by introducing the research framework and the main reasons for employing a primary qualitative research design. The discussion then concentrates on the relevance of employing the case study methodology as a suitable research technique for examining the roles and activities of various stakeholders in reviving and promoting the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. This is then followed by an overview of the data collection procedures and the criteria utilised to recruit the research participants. The multiple sources of data include semi-structured interviews with representatives from identified stakeholder organisations (government, international and non-governmental) who are both professional practitioners and responsible for the development and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Kazak people. A detailed description of the various stages and contexts essential for the analysis and interpretation of the data then follows. The chapter concludes with an

explanation of the researcher's own stance and a justification of the validity and reliability of the research.

Chapter 4 aims to examine critically the effects of Russian colonial policy on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The consequences of Russian colonisation and the ensuing colonial policy for the Kazakh nomads were far reaching and brought about the breakdown of much of their traditional nomadic culture. Due to the Russian attempts to reorganize and change the main structure of Kazakh society, dramatic changes took place in all aspects of Kazakh culture. The Soviet system, with its policy of Russification and colonisation, pushed Kazakhs to integrate within Russian culture. In this wide-ranging chapter, the status of traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, such as language, religion, music, literature, ethno-medicine, holidays and festivals, is examined before and after the Russian conquest and Soviet rule.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the analyses of the role and activities of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in reviving, conserving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The main motivations of the state doing this are examined, such as reinforcing national identity, developing tourism, and promoting nation branding. The chapter also examines the main challenges that the Kazakhstan Government faces in safeguarding its people's traditional nomadic cultural heritage, including corruption, nationalism and cultural policy inherited from the Soviet Union, as well as the low salaries of the cultural heritage workers.

Chapter 6 addresses the role and activities of UNESCO in the conservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. The chapter is divided into several sections. The first section analyses Kazakhstan's engagement with UNESCO on the issue of cultural heritage from a historical perspective, investigating under which circumstances and to what extent UNESCO

contributes to the protection of the tangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan.The second section examins UNESCO's role and activities in safeguarding and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, with a particular emphasis on the challenges in having Kazakhstani elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Chapter 7 covers the role and activities of NGOs in reviving and safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The chapter starts by analysing the engagement of NGOs in the development of Kazakhstan, with a particular emphasis on their role in cultural heritage conservation. It describes in particular the activities and effectiveness of local NGOs in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Describing the debates around understanding and defining how NGOs have, and are, developing the cultural heritage of the Kazakhs, the chapter also analyses ethnic discontent around the operation of local NGOs. Identification of the strengths and challenges faced by local NGOs in implementing their programmes are mentioned at the end of the chapter.

In conclusion, Chapter 8 starts by providing a summary of the research's methodological and theoretical contributions in the field of cultural heritage conservation in postcolonial countries. It follows by presenting answers to the research questions that have directed this research. The chapter then draws conclusions from the analysis of the activities of the identified stakeholders in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The thesis concludes with a set of recommendations for future research and how the Government of Kazakhstan could develop the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON REPRESENTATIONS OF KAZAKH CULTURE IN LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the theoretical frameworks for this PhD research and to critically survey the existing literature on the research subject. A wide range of literature provides a basic understanding of the different issues surrounding the disrupted nomadic Kazakh cultural heritage and the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The literature has been assembled into categories for ease of explanation. These categories, which will be analysed in order, are: theoretical approaches, the Russian/Soviet perspective, Western perspective, and the Kazakh perspective. These categories are not precisely defined, but rather are developed to make understandable their impact in the present thesis. In discussing and evaluating this literature, this chapter also indicates the place of the thesis in its wider historiographical context.

2.1 Theoretical approaches

This PhD research can be considered to fall within postcolonial studies as it aims to examine the consequences of Russian/Soviet colonisation on the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and to analyse the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The consequences of Russian and Soviet colonisation and the ensuing colonial policy suppressing the culture of the Kazakh nomads were far-reaching and brought about the breakdown of much of the traditional nomadic culture. Due to Russian and Soviet attempts to reorganize and change the structure of Kazakh society, dramatic shifts took place in all aspects of Kazakh culture.

The term "postcolonial" entered the arena of academic and political discussion in the second half of the twentieth century (Loomba, 2005). The concept encompasses ideas of poststructuralism, Marxism, and feminism. Postcolonial studies examine not only cultural effects of colonisation but also evaluate interactions and representations engendered in societies that were once colonies (Quayson, 2000). Postcolonial scholarship deals with the past and its relationship with the present, foregrounding the links between cultural forms and geopolitics. Thus, postcolonial studies are used "to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day" (Ohadike, 2000, pp.3-4).

Postcolonial studies were strongly influenced by work of Edward Said on "*Orientalism*" (1978). This study modified the terms of the dispute regarding the nature of Western scholarship on the non-Western world. The created image of the Orient (the East, the "other") was predominantly depicted as irrational, uncivilized, despotic, inferior, depraved, aberrant and overly sexual (Macfie, 2002, p.4). That is not to say that there were no positive representations, for the East is also illustrated as exotic, beautiful, colourful and even kind, but more in the sense of noble savages (Van der Ree, 2014b). The Occident (the West), on the other hand, is presented as essentially rational, developed, humane, superior, virtuous, and normal (Macfie, 2002, p.4). Many representations of the Orient are driven by the unspoken assumption that the West is the standard of what is good and anything different is treated as deviant from the divine norm, and thus problematic and requiring resolution through the agency of first-world countries (Van der Ree, 2014b). In other words, the discourse of colonialism represents one of the mechanisms by which Europe dominated its colonies, as well as being the framework that justified such domination. Portrayals of non-Western cultural regimes often depict the majority of the population suffering from exploitation and hunger at the hands of greedy and selfish oppressors (Van der Ree, 2014b).

Orientalism can be defined as "*the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient*" (Said, 1978, p.3). Being an indisputable part of this discriminatory discourse, even those Orientalists who carry and exercise sincere sympathy for people of other cultures cannot transcend the congenital Eurocentric canons, and hence involuntarily perpetuate Western domination (Bertens, 2001). When Said referred to the West, he largely meant nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain and France, although he latterly expanded this to include the United States (Said, 1978). In fact, the author disregarded other European nations with oriental influences including Germany and Russia. As for the Orient, Said was consciously vague but tended to refer to the Near East and North Africa, neglecting Inner and East Asia altogether.

2.2 Russian/Soviet scholarship

The dominance of Soviet Russian historiography in analysing the history and cultural heritage of the Kazakh people reflects Said's view. Soviet researchers generated substantial historiographical and anthropological works on the peoples of Central Asia. It should be noted that the politics of the Soviet Union severely influenced the scholarship and the published research. Soviet administration demanded that the scholarship on history in particular should be imbued with the communist party spirit, and should be nothing less than "party scholarship" (Markwick, 2014, p.375). The communist party was seen as the sole guardian of historical truth (Mondry, 1990). Consequently, anthropological and historical studies were strictly ideological in their analysis. However, it would be a deceptive generalisation to consider that all of the Soviet scholarship was equally deficient.

Soviet literature about the Kazakhs and their culture was entirely based on descriptive Orientalist accounts of Russian travellers and ethnographers. The Russian administration sent various expeditions to discover and investigate the territories and peoples they conquered, similar to the way in which the British, French, and Germans had dealt with Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and South America. Scientific expeditions and military leaders, such as Miller, Levshin, Radlov, Aristov, and Semenov developed the areas of geography, geology, ethnography, and sociology in the Russian Empire (Demko, 1969). However, these observers defined the nomadic Kazakhs wrongly and in a distorted manner. For example, Levshin (1823) stated that reverence for the past was a quality that differentiated educated persons from savages, and that the nomadic Kazakhs had neither a history nor an aristocracy. Thus, these Russian/Soviet scientific expeditionaries tried to stress that the Russians gave a beginning and a meaning to a place that was bereft of history. Similar to Said's Orientalism, the Russian/Soviet expeditionaries described the Kazakhs as wild, lazy and warlike (Bartold, 1963). They presumed that the nomadic Kazakhs would have to assimilate with the Russians, as otherwise they would probably become extinct. On the other hand, Soviet Kazakh scholarship tried to demonstrate that the earlier Russian scholarship refused to acknowledge or appreciate that the nomadic Kazakhs had been forced to adopt to an alien society, culture and economy. Most of the Soviet Kazakh literature stated that it was necessary for colonisers to explore the land and gain a deeper understanding of Kazakh culture. However, ultimately, it is no surprise that there is a shortage of research from Russian/Soviet scholarship exploring and describing the nomadic Kazakh culture, society, politics or economic structure.

Broadly speaking, there are limitations classically connected with Soviet scholarship. On the surface there was a tendency to reflect the problematics of other colonies and colonisers. Similar to Said's *Orientalism*, Russian/Soviet

scholarship often appealed to stereotypical perceptions of the Kazakhs to defend their interests in the Kazakh steppe. Confident in their own European identity, the Russians looked to Central Asia with haughty disdain (Schimmelpenninck, 2010). Central Asia had negative connotations, as depicted in Vladimir Dal's *Dictionary of the Russian Language* (1863) which included such definitions as a "rude, uneducated person" for the noun *Aziat* (Asian) and "savage, crude" for *Aziatskii* (Asian). *Aziatchina* similarly came to signify defects of the Asian continent. Following European ideas of progress, they considered nomadism as backward, but they were not the first to have encountered 'awkward, inimical, and barbaric' nomads. Earlier Russian scholars adopted an epistemological understanding of nomads constructed on both their own observations and those they derived from the histories of the Greeks, Romans, and Chinese, and they applied that knowledge to their understanding of the Kazakhs, which led them to overgeneralize and misjudge the social, cultural and economic structures of the Kazakh people (Asfendiyarov, 1998). The fifth century Greek philosopher Herodotus produced stereotypical representations of nomadic peoples living beyond the boundaries of civilization whose whole lives were described as entailing "conquest and rapine in the fat lands and rich cities of the plain (Sabol, 2012). Riding a horse [,] living in a tent [, and being] menaced by perennial uncertainty of supplies of grass and water. His temptation to maraud was strong and oft-repeated. The mobile existence of the grass and man made it easy for him to raid and pillage" (Jones, 1971, p.376). Therefore, Russian scholars generally believed that the nomadic lifeways of the Kazakhs made them and their economies undoubtably backward.

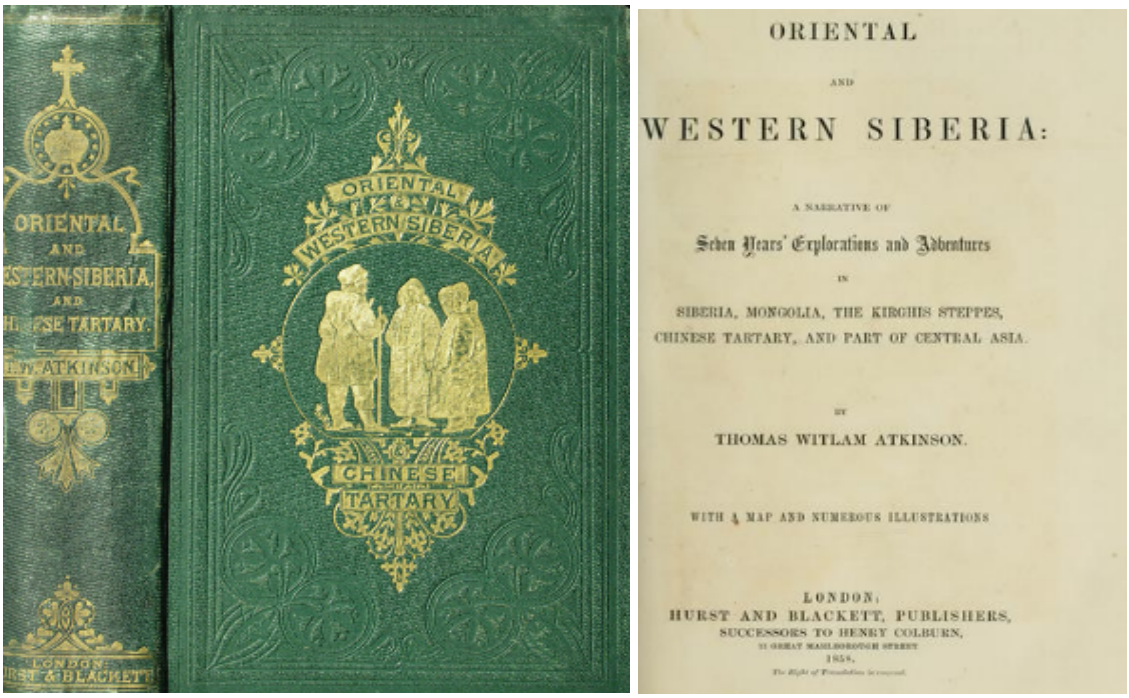
2.3 Western researchers

The Kazakhs have only been studied to a relatively limited extent in the West, mostly because of the significant actual and theoretical challenges that such study

presents to any investigator. During the approximately 70 years of Soviet rule, most of its colonised republics, including Kazakhstan, were closed to Western researchers and travellers. Consequently, there were very few Western anthropologists and ethnologists who had had the oportunity to study the peoples of the Soviet Union in the places where they lived. Most books and articles on such peoples were published in Russian, hence restricting accessibility for many scholars in Western countries. Few of the studies were accessible in Western libraries, and those scholars who did try to acquire books from colonised Soviet republics were hindered by bureaucratic hazards (Svanberg, 1999). As a result, there were very few studies published about Kazakh culture and history by non-Soviet researchers before 1991.

The ethnographic observations of an English artist and a governess, Thomas and Lucy Atkinson, can be considered as one of the first Western sources on Kazakh culture. These husband-and-wife travellers made three substantial journeys into Central Asia, in particular to what is today eastern Kazakhstan (known in the mid-nineteenth century as Oriental Tartary), the Kirghis (more properly Kazakh) steppe and Chinese Tartary in 1848 (Fielding, 2015). During this period, Russia colonised, and tried to control, the northern steppe that extended all the way from the Urals to China. Thomas Atkinson's *Oriental and Western Siberia* (1858) offers a detailed description of the nomadic Kazakh way of life (Figure 3). Seasonal migrations, the construction of yurts, the management of horses, the making of horse milk (*qymyz)*, and traditional nomadic games and festivals are all covered. Lucy Atkinson also published a book called *Recollections of Tartar Steppe and their Inhabitants* (1863), which is one of the earliest travel books ever written by a woman. The writings of the Atkinsons provide some of the only descriptions of people and their traditions prior to Russian colonisation.

Fig. 3 Thomas Atkinson's *Oriental and Western Siberia* ,1858



Source: Royal Collection Trust (2020)

Another British journalist and traveller, John Foster Fraser, visited the Kazakh steppe in the 1900s. He described the Kazakhs as the Red Indians of the West Siberian steppe. Fraser pointed out that the Russians "*have conquered them, and pushed them upon the least fertile tracts of land to make room for immigrants. The race is decreasing in number, and will one of these days, disappear from the face of the earth altogether*" (Fraser, 1902, p.40). Moreover, Fraser (1902, p.40) stressed that the Kazakhs have "*lost their heritage and are soon to be extinct. The touch of civilisation means death to them*". Fraser also suggested that the Kazakhs had to assimilate or vanish from the steppe in order for Russia to take advantage of "*land capable of immense agricultural possibilities, great stretches of prairie waiting for the plough*" (Fraser, 1902, p.42).

John Wilford Wardell's ethnographic observations can be considered one of the most significant Western sources on Kazakh culture. He worked as a consulting metallurgical engineer on the staff of Walter G. Perkins. In 1914, Wilford was sent to the Kazakh steppe for five years to complete detailed plans for mines, to assist

in construction work and to become absorbed in the operating staff of the Spassky Zavod, which was one of the centres of Russian mining in Kazakhstan (Wilford, 1961). In the 1960s, he described himself as follows: "*I was one of the last Englishmen to visit Kazakhstan – for few, if any, have been there since the Soviet Union was finally established – and as the conditions of life there have perhaps altered for ever, I think that it is most desirable to save for history this account of the inhabitants of the country and how they had lived for hundreds of years before the great change*" (Wilford, 1961, p. 15). To this, Wailford added a description of the country, comprising interesting information regarding Kazakh manners, customs, traditions, and social life (Figure 4). Due to the aforementioned language barrier, Wilford relied on literature written by Russian ethnographers. Thus, perhaps influenced by these writings, he described the Kazakhs as awkward, inimical, and barbaric nomads. Possibly because he worked for Russians, he often compared the Russians and Kazakhs, and gave preference to the former.

Kazakh culture has been particularly neglected in other ethnographic literature. From the pre-revolution period (1917), the studies of the French scholar Joseph Castagne (1925) and the German ethnographer Richard Karutz (1911) should be noted. Professor Joseph Castagne lived and worked in Russia for more than twenty years, was a member of the Orenburg Scientific Archival Commission, the Turkestan Circle of Archaeology Enthusiasts, and the Imperial Russian Geographical Society in Orenburg and Turkestan (Gorshenina, 1996). He was interested in the history, archaeology and ethnography of the Kazakh people. The French scholar Joseph Castagne was involved in archaeological expeditions conducted in ancient kurgans. In 1903-1909, a German researcher Richard Karutz managed to conduct ethnographic research on the Mangyshlak Peninsula in western Kazakhstan (Figure 5). Afterwards, he wrote an article "From Lubeck to Kokand" and a book *"From the Kirgiz and Turkmens of Mangyshlak"*. His works (1910, 1911) describe the nomadic lifestyle of the population of western

Kazakhstan, giving valuable information regarding traditions, food, clothing and shelters of nomadic Kazakhs. Karutz highlighted the valuable role of horses and yurts in the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakh people, and described the Kazakhs as innate equestrians and shepherds.

Fig. 4 John Wilford Wardell and the Kazakhs, 1915



Source: Wilford, 1961, p. 44

Fig. 5 Kazakhs photographed by Richard Karutz in western Kazakhstan, 1903



Source: Zhanaozen press (2021)

Then, in the 1930s, some American anthropologists had the opportunity to conduct fieldwork in Kazakhstan. Despite being considerably restricted by police and regulations, Alfred E. Hudson (1938) managed to conduct interviews with two informants during a stay of a few weeks in Alma-Ata in 1936. Hudson's work was devoted to describing the nature of Kazakh social structure through an examination of the traditions of their origins and how these related to economic life, class stratification, political administration, marriage and family. This research is particularly important as it refers to the middle of the nineteenth century, the period directly preceding the Russian conquest of Kazakhstan. However, due to the restricted number of informants (2), Hudson's research is largely based on Russian literature. The same must be said of his colleague and travel companion Elizabeth Bacon (1966) who also conducted some interviews with Kazakhs through translators. Although most of these Western researchers demonstrated sincere sympathy towards the Kazakhs and their cultural heritage, they could not depart from the Eurocentric canons hence involuntarily perpetuating attitudes of the Russian colonisatists in the Kazakh steppe and people.

Most of the literature written in the English language before the collapse of the Soviet Union was concentrated on religion and ethnicity. The Kazakhs were frequently related to other Central Asian nationalities under the category of Soviet Muslims or Turkic peoples. To illustrate this trend, Martha Olcott in *The Kazakhs* (1995) described Kazakhs within the Soviet multinational state and the broader Islamic world. She focused on the connection between Islam and nationality by emphasising how both Kazakhs and outsiders tried to manipulate Islam and nationality in pursuit of their own aims. While the Russian Empire had encouraged Islamisation of the Kazakhs in order to make them more peaceful, the Soviet administration tried to destroy Islamic influences for the same purpose. However, the book was written almost completely on the basis of Russian-

language sources, all of which demonstrated a Russian point of view. Although some Kazakh sources are cited in this book, they are barely utilised. Myer in *Islam and Colonialism: Western Perspectives on Soviet Asia* (2002) examined the extent to which the Islamic background of the Central Asian region's inhabitants affected their attitude to Soviet rule and whether or not the Soviet Union's rule in Central Asia was "colonial". However, the main limitation of this research was that Myer examined the role of Islam in all Central Asian countries through the same theoretical perspective. It should be noted that the role of Islam varied within each of the Central Asian republics and the nature of Soviet rule was also different in each of its republics. As a result of the Soviet immigration policy, the Kazakhs were turned into a minority in their own country and Russian cultural dominance destroyed Kazakh cultural heritage and language in most walks of life. Therefore, Soviet rule in Kazakhstan can unquestionably be considered as "colonial". Meanwhile, in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Soviet rule was differently enforced. Postcolonial studies have engaged with significant voids and increased our ability to examine the multitude of factors that function in the conceptualization of the nation and the adoption of national ideas by the Central Asians themselves (Kudaibergenova, 2013).

Prior to the Russian conquest, the nomadic Kazakhs did not have any written literature, so the literature written by Western researchers and travellers has been very significant for modern Kazakhstan in developing its collective memory. In particular, the written works of the above-mentioned authors are crucial when analysing the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people before and after the Russian conquest.

2.4 Kazakh perspectives

2.4.1 Collective memory

Collective memory is a theoretically important concept because it covers both sociocultural and psychological processes. Anthropology, along with sociology, social psychology and historical hermeneutics, has established the theory of collective memory which is considered one of the most popular theories within cultural heritage studies (McDowell, 2008). Weedon and Jordan (2012, p. 143) define collective memory as "*narratives of past experience constituted by and on behalf of specific groups within which they find meaningful forms of identification that may empower*". Collective memory contributes to reconstituting the "imagined communities" with which individuals identify themselves and that furnish in them a sense of history, place and belonging (Anderson, 1983). The groups associated with specific formulations of collective memory differ significantly in size and complexity: from nations and ethnic or religious groups to local communities and families. When building collective memory, communities rely on various sources of materials that contain remembered experiences as referred to by members of communities and in narratives of history detected in books, libraries, museums, archives, films and television (Gillis, 1994).

There has been much debate and discussion on collective memory's relationship with history. For scholars working on postcolonial built heritage, it is important to be aware of, as well as to engage with, the different disciplinary fields of knowledge and existing tensions between them, as they challenge the ways in which a topic of inquiry has been approached (Confino, 1997). History, occasionally, is considered as superior to memory. This view is explained by the idea that history deals with what actually occurred, with the factuality of actions, while memories by contrast are subjective and not necessarily tightly bounded to reality. Some scholars review memory-based sources as unreliable, useless and misleading (Gedi

and Elam, 1996). French historian Pierre Nora (1989) in his famous concept of "sites of memory" (*lieux de memoire*) described the connection between memory and history as substantially antithetical. Memory and history for Nora, far from being synonymous, appeared now to be in fundamental opposites. Nora (1989, p.7) stated that instead of being "real environments of memory" (*milieux de memoire*), sites of memory are "where memory crystallises". The "crystallisation of memory" mostly occurs in communities with strong oral traditions. Nora (1989, p.8) explained that this is the result of the "acceleration of history" and ‘‘an increasingly rapid slippage of the present into a historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear".

2.4.2 Developing collective memory in Kazakhstan

According to cultural critics, history is not given, but framed (Crowley, 1964; Osborne, 2000; Phillips, 2013). Hence, they consider historians as storytellers who foist their viewpoints on their reports, for their privileged positions as narrators allows them to dictate how people, events, and issues in a narrative are considered. This partly justifies why historical reconstruction is common in postcolonial countries. The history of colonised peoples constructed by the colonisers is mostly viewed as objective and reliable during the colonial period (Halbwachs, 1980). This history is permeated by the viewpoint of the colonising powers, their biases and their intentional distortion of the colonised. Soviet historiography restricted the collective memory and identity of each republic within the Soviet Union to that of an ethnic and geographical unit through a Russo-centric bias. After gaining independence, Kazakh scholars started to recover their past and propagate a vanished chapter of national history with considerable ideological motivation (Laruelle, 2015). Their main aim has been to prove that Kazakhstan was a country of rich history dating back for millennia and that its ancestors were not "barbarian nomads" but rather nomads who

contributed towards a rich civilisation. As part of a governmental project (1992-1998), the history of Kazakhstan was rewritten, with selected components of national identity inserted along the way. Kazakh scholars sought to recover a past that was denied by the Soviet communal memory. The reconstruction of a new history has revealed a tendency to legitimise present Kazakh nationalism, to defend the Kazakification of government and education to utilise history to present a Kazakh national past that was grounded in national opposition, embodied by the great Khans and intelligentsia (Sarsembayev, 1999). Kazakh scholars have tended to employ history to revive Kazakh national memory and identity by emphasising periods of resistance to Russian colonisation.

Recentlypublished history textbooks for schools and universities date Kazakhstan's history back to prehistoric times, thereby tightly connecting the history of the country with that of the territory. By doing so, Kazakhstan is seen to represent a primordialism and impetuosity for ancestrality common to all post-Soviet Central Asian countries (Baigunakov and Sabdenova, 2014). Russian and Western historians have tended to date the history of the Kazakh people back to the fifteenth century and the formation of the Kazakh Khanate (Nadirbekov *et al.,* 2016). However, Kazakh historians widely claim that the history of the Kazakh people dates back 2500 years. They argue that the Scythians are the ancestors of the Kazakhs. The Scythians were a nomadic tribal people that inhabited the Pontic-Caspian steppe. The "Golden Man" found on the territory of Kazakhstan is used as the main piece of evidence to prove such a claim (Nadirbekov *et al.,* 2016) (see Chapter 5). The "Golden Man" has become a renewed symbol of the national identity of the Kazakh people.

In the development of collective memory of the Kazakh people, one of the main objectives has been to prove that the Kazakhs had strong state institutions. This was somewhat triggered by the statement of Russian President Vladimir Putin

who, at the Lake Seliger (Russian) youth camp in August 2014, stated that Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev "has performed a unique feat" because "*he has created a state on a territory where there has never been a state. The Kazakhs never had a state of their own, and he created it. In this sense, he is a unique person in the post-Soviet space and in Kazakhstan*" (Laruelle, 2018, a, p.65). Kazakh historians and élites responded to this statement by starting to publish books and articles on the Kazakh state. The Kazakh Government opted for a more discreet response and announced the celebration of the 550th anniversary of the birth of the Kazakh state, referring particularly to the Kazakh Khanate established by Kerey and Zhanibek[2] in 1465 (Kazakh TV, 2020). This celebration was financially supported by the Government of Kazakhstan and resonated with the public. According to President Nazarbayev, the Kazakh people had carved out a proto-state on the steppe of Eurasia in 1465, a decade-and-a-half before Russians shook off the Mongol yoke on the way to creating their own state. In the opening ceremony of the anniversary, Nazarbayev stated: "*It may not have been a state in the modern understanding of this term, in the current borders*" but "*it is important that the foundation was laid then, and we are the people continuing the great deeds of our ancestors*" (Laruelle, 2018, a, p.65).

2.4.3 Myths in reconstructing collective memory

Collective memory is a type of discourse which aims to explain the present of communities by reiterating some principal values and ideals through recollecting their past experience, and eventually utilising these collective memories to legitimise present and future political choices (Kølvraa, 2015). As sociologist Paul Connerton (1989) pointed out, a community's memory can be manipulated and even controlled by "hierarchies of power" that may influence which aspects of a

[2] Kerey and Zhanibek were the founders of the Kazakh Khanate. In 1459, they "wandered off" from the Uzbek Khanate, as the name "Kazakh" implies.

collective memory are to be emphasised, restrained, or even fabricated. Myths are the best instrument in constructing a State's ideology. Situated within the discursive framework of collective memory, myths are historical narratives which communities truthfully believe to be "what really happened" (Halbwachs, 1992). Mythical truth is moral rather than empirical truth. The ideological function of the myth is to show which values and principles are to be forever honoured, and which are to be shunned and avoided at all costs (Bottici, 2007). Most communities, especially postcolonial nations, reconstructed and recollected the images of their 'founding fathers', whose political ideas were later promoted as national ideas. The reconstruction of the images of 'founding fathers' comes from myths. In the case of Kazakhstan, myths not only tell the story of how communities came to be, but also present how it is yet to fully realise its potential (Tudor, 1978). In other words, during the construction of collective memory, myths contribute to the legitimising of political projects.

In *Myth and Memories of the Nation* (1999), Anthony Smith investigated the lasting power of myths and "ethnosymbolism" to mobilise, define, and shape the destiny of nations. Smith pointed out that the roots of nationalism were indivisible from the reviving of myths, memories, traditions, and symbols, which he referred to as the "inner world" of ethnic communities. Similarly to Smith, historian Keith Cameron (1999, p.4) stated that "myth is inextricably linked with the concept of national identity", while the political scientist, Stuart Kaufman (2006, p.45) argued a "myth - symbol complex" to be at the very core of ethnic identity. As fictionalised narratives exalted to the status of "truth", national myths overdramatise real events, omit significant historic details, and fill the past with symbolic meanings where evidence is either lacking or contrived (Bottici, 2007). But, more than just state-sponsored propaganda, national mythologies have even resulted in the mystical exaltation of a state. In Kazakhstan, mythic nationalism not only strengthens the greater stability of the state, but also attributes to the

entire country a providential character distinguished by a beneficent global destiny.

In postcolonial Kazakhstan (1991-present), there is a trend where national self-esteem is being regained after decades of being taught by the Russian Empire and later the Soviet administration that Kazakhs were incapable of managing their own affairs without the contribution of their "elder brother" (Ro'i, 1996). In order to regain self-esteem, there has been a perceived need to eliminate the racial discrimination and inferiority complexes imposed by the former imperial power (Caron, 2019). The heroic Kazakh national past was taken as a core element in regaining self-esteem. At the national level, Vladimir Lenin was replaced with pre-Soviet heroes who had previously been ridiculed in Soviet historiography (Suleimenov, 1972). Historians have been tasked by the Government of Kazakhstan with rewriting the history of the Kazakh people, placing more emphasis on Kazakh heroes. As a result, many books and articles have been published on Kazakh heroes fighting against the Jungars[3] in the eighteenth century and the heroes of anti-Russian uprisings in the nineteenth century (Qoigeldiev & Omarbekov, 1993). Kazakhstani historians have not only depicted historical heroes taken from oral *eposes* (narrative poems) but have also created a protesting discourse as they have constructed feelings of pride and urged the restoration of justice among the titular nationality. Even non-professional historians have started to publish books about their heroic ancestors. There seems to be competition among the three tribes (*Juzs*) into which the Kazakhs were broadly divided as to who has the best and bravest hero ancestor. At governmental level, another reason behind the propagandization of the heroic past of the Kazakh people has been to unify the population and to promote national identity (Kuzio, 2002). National sentiments and narratives have been important for the

[3] Jungars or Oirats were western Mongolian tribes that founded the Jungar Khanate in 1633. They were located in the west of Mongolia, in the Altay Mountains region

Government of Kazakhstan to unify the population and to promote national identity, especially during the first years in the wake of independence. Similar tactics were also employed by the Soviet administration during the Second World War to mobilise the Kazakhs (Masanov, 1996). Myths were a tool, and the language used therein helped to present an idea of society of that time and to promote national identity.

As surviving evidence or virtual memorials of the past, myths play a significant role when studying the history and cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Even the Russian folklorists and ethnographers such as V. Bartold (1963), V. Zhirmunsky (1965), A. Borovkov (1951), E. Bertels (1944), and K. Zarifov and V. Zhirmunsky (1947) conducted research on the rich myth-based folkloric heritage of nomadic Kazakhs. They argued that, in order to understand the nature and cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, it was important to pay great attention to their mythology. Meanwhile, myth-making has blossomed in Kazakhstani scholarship. The professional historians of Kazakhstan, who suffered under the previous totalitarian regime, tend to stick to their old scholarly traditions and generally do not participate in the formation of mythologised history (Masanov, 1996). However, it is possible to state that, alongside their “pure” scholarly history, a mythologized version has appeared widely in the history-writing processes of post-Soviet Kazakhstan. The mythologisation of history is a common process for almost all postcolonial countries. It is usually employed to "mobilise an ethnicity" which is crucial in times of critical change (Uyama, 1999). In different countries, the appearance of mythologised history is guided by the unique features of their ethnic and political processes. Mythologised history has an instrumental character and can manifest itself in many different forms. Under authoritarian rule, mythologized history assumes the character of official history, in order to validate the reign of a particular person, group and/or ethnic group (Bottici, 2007). The mythologisation of history is defined as the creation of a non-

evidence-based variant of the past, built on mythological concepts such as: the notion of a "Golden Age"; *kulturtreger* (culture bearer) and missionary roles of ancestors; ruthless enemies, and returning to the "good old days" (Chernyshevskii, 2016). The above function of mythologized history has a negative impact on society, as it is used to justify the suppression of a people. In addition, mythologized history often provides a basis for inter-state, inter-ethnic, ethno-religious conflicts and territorial disputes.

2.4.4 Traditionalism in recreating collective memory

Russian-speaking scholars state that traditionalism is one of many challenges faced by Kazakhstan today, but other scholars and practitioners often overlook its influence. Traditionalism relates to the conscious and formal employment of tradition to bolster one's political and economic positions (Amoroso, 2014). According to Russian-speaking scholars, some Kazakh-speaking scholars are traditionalists who are not interested in expanding a knowledge of their history and culture by conducting research and collecting objective evidence in order to comprehend the past (Danilovich, 2010). Instead, these Kazakh-speaking traditionalist scholars are accused of tending to create myths, stimulating group narcissism, and inspiring a certain degree of ethnic arrogance and conceit (Masanov *et al.*, 2001; Phillips and James, 2001). Legitimising the heroic past of the nation has become a growing tendency in Kazakhstani scholarship and there have even been "academic" books published stating that Genghis Khan had Kazakh roots. The political grounds for this idea are highlighted in the foreword to the book by K. Daniyarov (1998, p.13): *Since the association of Genghis Khan with any ethnicity, including the Chinese, has an important geopolitical implication and may guide the political direction of that country in the future, the goal of this book is to attempt to reveal a truth about the Kazakh state and Genghis Khan's origin based on scientific research.*

Daniyarov continued:

Esukei Khan, the father of Genghis Khan, descended from the Kazakh tribe of the Kiyat, while his mother, Oyan, was from the Kazakh tribe of the Merkit, and finally his wife, Borte, descended from the Kazakh tribe of the Qongyrat. Moreover, given that in 1223 Genghis Khan divided his state among his four sons born by Borte, any further attribution of Genghis Khan's origin to the Mongols is groundless (Daniyarov, 1998 p. 27).

A mass migration of Kazakhs from neighbouring countries like Uzbekistan, Mongolia and China to Kazakhstan after gaining independence (1991) brought a new approach to the history of the Kazakhs. These Kazakh repatriates argued that the history of the Kazakhs was more ancient than official history stated. As an illustration of this trend, Bathi (2002), a Kazakh repatriate and historian, expressed a strong belief that the Kazakhs are direct descendants of the ancient Sumerians of Mesopotamia. The most extraordinary example of presenting the history of the Kazakhs as a more ancient people was produced by Baibatsha (2003), a doctor of geological-mineralogical sciences, and a repatriate. He stated that man appeared on Earth during the same geological time in three independent areas, one of which was on the Kazakh steppe. Baibatsha (2003) gave those people a genus name *kazakhantrops* and claimed that 2500 years ago an original Kazakh ethnicity was crystallized out of this ancient people. Kazakh repatriate scholars have different perspectives when it comes to the study of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The vast majority of Kazakh repatriate scholars have turned to Tengrism and focused on reviving its religious tenets. For instance, the famous Kazakh historian from Mongolia, Satrqozha Qarzhaubay (2001), argued that the Kazakhs did not practice Islam before the Russian conquest. He submitted "proof" that Tengrism was the only religious faith that the nomadic Kazakhs had followed. Most of these scholars, who are followers of Tengrism in Kazakhstan, contradict

themselves by proudly adhering to their Islamic heritage (Baibatsha, 2003; Qarzhaubay, 2001). They often oppose the kind of Islam introduced to the country after 1991 by Turkish and Arab religious groups. Moreover, some of the Kazakh historians who migrated from Uzbekistan have denied that the Kazakh people practiced a nomadic way of life (Uskembaeva *et al.*, 2016). Through mythology, they have tried to prove that the Kazakhs developed an agricultural lifestyle rather than a nomadic one. It might, however, be understood that the Uzbeks practiced a purely agricultural lifestyle while the southern regions of Kazakhstan developed agriculture along with their nomadic way of life. In fact, there is widespread agreement among Kazakh researchers that nomadism was once the foremost social and economic way of life on the Kazakh steppe and that the culture of the Kazakh people is derived from a nomadic heritage. Even the word "Kazakh" itself is considered by many linguists to be a reference to nomadism (Masanov, 2011). However, Akiner (1995), when referring to a Kazakh myth, suggested an alternative view that the word "Kazakh" means "white goose". Nevertheless, the final version of the encyclopaedia of the history of Kazakhstan "*Istoriia Kazakhstana: s drevneishikh vremen do nashikh dnei*" (1993) concluded that the word "Kazakh" means "true nomad".

2.4.5 Voluntary unification versus coming together

In constructing the collective memory of the Kazakh people, important scholarly debate has focused on interpretations of the Russian expansion into the Kazakh steppe and the colonisation of the nomadic Kazakhs (Appolova,1948; Asfendiyarov, 1998; Shoinbayev,1982; Timchenko, 2008; Tolybekov,1976; Qozybayev,1991). Soviet (both Russian and Kazakh) scholars describe this process as "voluntary unification" (*prisoedinenie*) (Appolova,1948; Asfendiyarov, 1998; Shoinbayev,1982; Tolybekov,1976). Post-Soviet Kazakh scholars have argued against this terminology by countering that it was conquest and

imperialism (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010; Masanov, 2011; Omarbekov, 2009; Qozybayev,1991). There is still ongoing debate among Kazakhstani scholars as to whether the Russian expansion into the Kazakh steppe was a voluntary unification or a violent conquest. Russian-speaking scholars use the term *sblizhenie* ("coming together") to describe this process (Asfendiyarov, 1998; Moiseev,1991; Shoinbayev,1982). Meanwhile, Kazakh-speaking scholars state that this process was violent, aggressive, and the worst sort of imperialism (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010; Masanov, 2011; Omarbekov, 2009; Qozybayev,1991). Russian-speaking scholars have also debated the idea of the empire and its "civilising mission" but before the nineteenth century, the expansion, frequently treated as the "gathering of the lands", proposed the reconstruction of ancient Russia along "historical, dynastic and religious grounds" (Asfendiyarov, 1998, p.98). None of the Russian scholars argued that Russia was an empire involved in imperialism. Even in the West, the Soviet Union was not considered as an empire. As Alexander Etkind (2011, p.249) pointed out:

Just a few decades ago, the idea that Ukraine or even Central Asia were colonies of the Soviet Empire evoked furious resistance on both sides of the Iron Curtain. In the 1990s, postcolonial experts still debated the reasons for not applying their concepts to the emerging countries of the post-Soviet space [...]. Things move fast in the postcolonial world.

It was only later in the nineteenth century that Russia acknowledged that its imperialism was a "civilising" mission comparable to that of the United States or Great Britain (Dietrich, 1987). Meanwhile, some Russian scholars started to compare Russia's expansion into Central Asia with America's expansion into the West. The Russian historian Appolova (1948), in *The Unification of Kazakhstan into Russian Empire in Eighteenth Century*, stated that the "unification" of Kazakhstan with Russia in the 1930s was based on the long economic and political

interrelationship that emerged at the end of the sixteenth century. Similarly, the Soviet-Kazakh historian Shoinbayev (1982) emphasised the importance of the "unification" of the Kazakhs in the Russian empire in terms of saving the sovereignty of the Kazakh state and preserving the identity of the Kazakhs as an ethnic group. Shoinbayev (1982) pointed out that by bordering with China in the east, with Russia in the west, and the upper part of Bukhara and Kokand in the south, it was made impossible for the Kazakhs to gain their independence and sovereignty for a long time. In the event of Chinese colonisation of the Kazakh steppe, it would not be possible to preserve the sovereignty of the Kazakhs' state and to preserve their identity as an ethnic group. The Soviet-Kazakh historian Tolybekov (1976) characterised "unification" as a large-scale modernisation process, which brought European ideas and culture to the Kazakh steppe, albeit dictated by a totalitarian state. Tolybekov (1976) stressed the significant transformation from a "backward" nomadic society to industrial modernity and tried to explain the vast human sacrifice that would be needed by mentioning "similar" cases of large transformations which had been associated with enormous losses of human life. Common among all of these authors were claims that the Russian administration fought against illiteracy, "backward" rural cultures, traditions and social structures.

However, the Kazakh historian Qozybayev (1991) proposed completely abandoning the term "unification" of Kazakhstan in relation to Russia as he and many others viewed the process as a totally violent conquest. In the eighteenth century, the Russian government exploited the situation when, due to Jungar-Kalmyks' threat to the Kazakh steppe, the Kazakhs struggled to find allies to defend their lands. The 1720s was a period in Kazakh history named the *Aqtaban shubyryndy* ("the Great Calamity") in which the Jungar-Kalmyk invasion looked set to lead to the occupation of the Kazakh land (Hancock-Parmer, 2015). Qozybayev (1991) stressed that the first decade of the eighteenth century was a

terrible time for the Kazakh people. The Jungars, the Volga Kalmyks, the Siberian Cossacks and Bashkirs from all sides plundered, stole cattle and carried off whole families as prisoners. Moreover, Qozybayev (1991) emphasised that it was the Russians who supplied the Jungar-Kalmyks with weapons. In 1730, Abulkhair, Khan of the Little Horde, requested that the Russian Empire assist them to defend their lands from the Jungar-Kalmyk threat (Moiseev, 1991). A year later, Russian diplomats took the Little Horde under Russian suzerainty. Abulkhair Khan pledged "faithful service" to the Russian Empire (Moiseev, 1991). There has been prolonged debate among historians regarding the motives of Abulkhair Khan (Timchenko, 2008). Soviet and Russian historians have claimed that Abulhair Khan aimed to be "Khan of all the Kazakhs" and to enhance his own authority beyond the Little Horde. Appolova (1948), Erofeeva (2003), Moiseev (1991) and Shoinbayev (1982) argued that Abulkhair's request reflected the unification of the Kazakh steppe with Russia. Contrastingly, most Kazakh historians state that Abulkhair Khan aspired to obtain Russian assistance against the external Jungar-Kalmyk invasion rather than to merge into the Russian Empire (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010; Masanov, 2011; Omarbekov, 2009; Qozybayev,1991).

2.4.6 Successes, failures, and implications of the Soviet colonial policy

Almost 30 years after gaining independence, Kazakhstan still seems unsure as to whether the Soviet period should be viewed with nostalgic fondness or as a period in which it was victimised. Numerous pieces of literature look back at that period nostalgically (Caron, 2019; Dadabaev, 2020; Surucu, 2002). As Surucu (2002) pointed out, many cosmopolitan Kazakhs, who are mostly urban Russophones, project and present the period of Soviet rule as a large-scale modernization project which brought European ideas and culture to the Kazakh steppe albeit, unfortunately, dictated by a totalitarian state. Kazakh urban Russophone scholars similarly consider the Soviet period as an era of modernisation and former Kazakh

communist party officials, as the local implementers of this modernisation project for the Kazakh steppe, are seen as local emissaries. These local communists are perceived by Russophone scholars to have fought against illiteracy, "backward" rural customs and "reactionary" social structures and traditions. Moreover, according to this perspective, they pursued the industrialisation, urbanisation and education of the Kazakh people. However, the official historical literature has presented the Kazakhs as victims of the Soviet regime. It asserts that the actions and policies of the Soviet Union were not justified on grounds of "liberalism and enlightenment", as had been the case for European empires where large sums of Western capital flowed into colonial countries, subsidising their infrastructure, factories and railways as well as the establishment of medical, educational and governmental institutions (Van der Ree, 2014b).

Postcolonial theory has outlined the conflicts between universal progress/modernisation and the particularising racist ideologies that legitimise colonial rule. Colonisers defend their colonial rule using an ideology of universally attainable enlightenment, development or liberty, while at the same time destroying the universal applicability of their ideology by institutionalizing categories of significant difference between the coloniser and colonised, such as race or ethnicity (Quayson, 2000). Although programmes constructed to foster enlightenment and cultural development in early Kazakhstan were targeted at helping the "idle" and "backward" Kazakhs, the reification of the Kazakh "other" indicated that cultural differences could always be invoked to explain the failure to universally apply its ideology. The justifying ideology of the Soviet Union was socialism and that its own form of enlightenment would produce *homo Sovieticus* ("Soviet man") (Levada, 2003). Official historical literature criticises Russian colonisation and its destructive impact on the Kazakh traditional cultural heritage and thusglorifies the "revival" of the independent state in 1991 after decades of

struggling for national independence (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010; Masanov, 2011; Qozybayev, 1992, b).

A considerable amount of academic literature has focused on the successes, failures, implications and legacies of Soviet nationality policies for post-Soviet countries (Caron, 2019; Cameron, 2018; Martin 2001). This literature has analysed the Soviet administration methods in the "construction" of the modern nations of Central Asia by building their formal languages, cultures, traditions, and educating their élites. Scholarship has also examined what role ethnic minorities played in the Soviet Union and how they were positioned with respect to Russians. Terry Martin (2001) outlined the "affirmative action" policy of the early Soviet period, stating that land ownership reforms conducted in the Kazakh steppe in 1920s were definitely organised in favour of nomadic Kazakhs instead of Russians. Philip Roeder (1991) stated that the Soviet nationality policy could be considered as a positive aspect as the Central Asian people gained access to material wealth and privileges in the Soviet system.

The Soviet literature tried to explain the Soviet administration policy as aiming to develop two very different processes simultaneously. On the one hand, with the significant support of the party's beneficent and science-based policy, cultures of all Soviet ethnic groups enjoyed an unprecedented "flourishing" (*rastsvet*) (Etkind, 2011). On the other hand, although the cultures of all ethnic groups were supposed to be benefiting from "mutual enrichment", the culture of the biggest ethnic group among the Soviet people – the Russians – was the dominant element in common culture, and the supposedly mutual enrichment was associated with more "giving" by Russians and more "borrowing" by all others (Chernyshevskii, 2016). Soviet literature claimed that the Soviet administration was successful in creating a common Soviet "sense of identity" (Khazanov, 1984; Sydiqov,1974; Tolybekov, 1971).

Some Western researchers have, however, contradicted the Soviet view. William Fierman (1991) in *Soviet Central Asia: The Failed Transformation* examined the failure of the Soviet Union in over 70 years of domination to integrate Central Asia into the Soviet system. Persuaded by their cultural superiority, the Russians tried to "civilise" the Central Asian people by inculcating their language and culture. Fierman (1991) stated that the political, economic, and cultural transformation of the Central Asians was not desirable. Fierman noted that, despite the fact that the Central Asian republics supplied Moscow with raw materials, the Soviet administration was still successful in curtailing mass manifestations of Islamic and Turkic identities. Boris Rumer's (2002) research focused on Central Asian economics from industrialisation to the cotton industry. Rumer (2002, p.184) claimed that Moscow utilised the Central Asian republics as a peripheral region that supplied raw materials such as oil, gas and cotton for the "advanced industrial complexes of European Russia". This industrialisation for Central Asia came at ecological and social costs that the Soviet administration refused to remedy.

Bhavna Dave's (2007) research focused on language policies adopted in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. She stated that little socialising took place across traditional cultural lines and that many Russians looked down on Central Asians, stresseing that all Kazakhs were forced to learn Russian but very few Russians learned the Kazakh language. She proved this using statistical results from censuses. Dave (2007) emphasised that rural Kazakhs who were not fluent in Russian faced discrimination when it came to positions, jobs and housing. Dave stated that the Russians seemed unwilling or unable to recognise and respect the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In describing the language policies of post-Soviet Kazakhstan, Dave (2007, p.117) made a comparison with similar policies in postcolonial Asia and stated that "*Kazakhstan has avoided potential social conflict or politization of the language issue by refraining from adopting a cultural*

or linguistic transformation agenda". This means that due to the highly linguistic Russification of the Kazakh political and social élite, the Government of Kazakhstan could not eradicate the predominance of Russia and Russian.

Critical assessment of the collectivisation campaign and sedentarisation can now be found in some general reference works on Kazakh history published in Kazakhstan since 1991. This assessment is a very important issue in the construction of the collective memory of the Kazakh people because forced collectivisation and sedentarisation led to the end of the nomadic lifestyle for the Kazakh people. However, during the Soviet period, collectivisation and sedentarisation were considered the most successful and positive policiesy of the Soviet administration. Soviet scholar Dakhshleiger (1965) argued that the nomadic Kazakh lifestyle dissipated as more and more people settled in towns and cities. Similarly, Tolybekov (1971) stated that the collectivisation of Kazakh villages (*auyl*) was a natural phenomenon which did not lead to the destruction of the nomadic lifestyle. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, scholars in Kazakhstan have released numerous publications regarding Soviet colonial policy and the destruction of the nomadic lifestyle. Kazakh historians such as Talas Omarbekov (2009), Manash Qozybayev (1992, a), Qaidar Aldazhumanov (2010) and Nurbolat Masanov (2011) examined the results and consequences of collectivisation and sedentarisation, stating that the nomadic Kazakhs were forced to adopt an alien way of life. They characterised collectivisation and sedentarisation as the wilful process of Soviet colonial policy which was responsible for a dramatic decline in livestock numbers and, ultimately, the end of nomadism (1920-1930) in the Kazakh Soviet Republic. Moreover, these researchers highlighted the period of collectivisation (1930-1933) as a time of almost unimaginable suffering. From its beginning in late 1930 to the end of 1933, a massive unnatural famine occurred in the Kazakh steppe. Out of a total

population of 6.5 million, about 1.5-2 million Kazakhs, approximately one quarter of the Republic's population, died in this disaster (Omarbekov, 2009). Of those who survived, hundreds of thousands fled to neighbouring Soviet republics and China.

Critical assessment of collectivisation was increasingly investigated in Kazakhstan after Ukraine's boom of publishing. Ukrainian scholars have debated whether the Great Famine of Ukraine in the 1930s was utilised by Stalin to destroy Ukrainians as an ethnic group (Klid and Motyl, 2012). Indeed, in 2007 the Government of Ukraine has asked the international community to recognise the famine as an act of genocide and demanded compensation from Russia (Ellman, 2007). The United States, through a congressional investigation, confirmed that "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against Ukrainians in 1932-1933" (Congress.gov, 2008). However, Russian scholars, with the support of the Russian government, have rejected these demands for genocide recognition, stating that the Russian peasantry also suffered from this famine (Marples, 2009). Some Russian scholars pointed out that the Soviet collectivisation famines were a "common tragedy of the Soviet peoples" and that this catastrophe should combine, rather than split, the peoples of Ukraine and Russia (Antipova, 2009; Kondrashin, 2008).

Meanwhile, Kazakhstani scholars have not openly claimed that the famine that afflicted Kazakhs was genocide. This might be due to the relatively close political relationship between Russia and Kazakhstan. Historians such as Talas Omarbekov (2009), Qaidar Aldazhumanov (2010) and Mambet Qoigeldiev (2009) have treated the Kazakh famine very differently from the Ukraine famine. Omarbekov (2009), for example, stated that the mistakes and excesses of collectivisation and sedentarisation led to the famine, placing the sole blame on Goloshekin's leadership, rather than policy design or implementation. He again pointed out that

the famine cannot be considered as genocide because Russian peasants also died. It should be noted that during the collectivisation period, all of the confiscated cattle, foods and goods were sent to Moscow and allocated among Russian peasants. However, Sarah Cameron (2018) in *The Hungry Steppe: Famine, Mass Violence and the Making of Soviet Kazakhstan* pointed out that the famine in Kazakhstan has received less attention from Western scholars compared to the Ukraine famine, despite their similarities in scale and devastation. This could be attributable to the different relationships Kazakhstan and Ukraine have with Russia. Cameron also emphasised that the attempt to contemporaneously settle and collectivize the Kazakh nomads was conducted at a much greater speed than for other Soviet peoples, explaining that Kazakhstan's nomads were perceived to be much further behind other more "advanced" societies. In fact, all of these campaigns were conducted in order to meet Soviet grain requirements (Omarbekov, 2009).

2.5 Recreating national identity

The formation and maintenance of a collective memory plays an important role in the formulation of national identity. Heritage gives the meanings and representations placed in the present day upon artefacts, landscapes, mythologies, memories and traditions from the past. It is a key element in the shaping of identities, particularly in the contexts of increasingly multicultural societies. Not every cultural resource of the past is considered a part of heritage. Graham and Howard (2008) point out, opposing the common belief, that heritage is not the "legacy of the past" because the operation of heritage-making is elective and the decisions as to which cultural items of the past are to be selected, conserved and promoted and managed as heritage are made according to the political demands of the present. A large and growing body of literature has investigated the selective politics of heritage-making with regard to identity-building (e.g. McLean, 2006;

Smith, 2006; Graham and Howard, 2008; Anico and Peralta, 2009; Waterton and Smith, 2010) with a special emphasis on heritage's crucial role in building a unified national identity (e.g. Graham *et al.*, 2000; Hall, 2005; Munasinghe, 2005; Logan, 2010; Vrdoljak, 2010). The strength of heritage in legitimising and building national identity has been well-investigated in the heritage literature, especially since Anderson's (1983) notable effort to review nations as "imagined communities". Anderson (1983) found national identity to be an output of nation building, shaped through nationalist narratives based on an assumption of unity among a group of people in terms of shared culture, language, ethnic origins and/or territory. He pointed out that, as elective imaginations of the past that are materialised in the present in the form of artefacts and traditions, heritage serves as a significant tool for any nation-building programme that aims to unify diverse people through a sense of shared experience and identity. Therefore, for Anderson (1983), “the nation” exists in the minds of its members as an “image”.

In recent years, an increasing amount of academic literature has examined the uses of heritage for local nationalistic motives (Bigenho and Stobart, 2016; Fogen and Warren, 2016; Meskell, 1998; Ricca, 2010). This literature has mostly concentrated on how a state's promotion of an "official" national cultural heritage is utilised to integrate minorities and other marginalised ethnic groups into the national identity. Various case studies, for example on non-Burmese and non-Buddhist communities in Burma (Philp, 2010), Tibetan communities in China (Shepherd, 2006; Mountcastle, 2010), and Kurdish communities in Turkey (Aykan, 2014) have explored how governments assert their ownership over the cultural heritage of ethnic minority groups as part of a national programme to locate minority identities within the national mainstream. These cases also indicate that this is a process that is often opposed by sub-national communities.

Nationalists' employment of heritage in some cases has extended well beyond national borders. A number of studies have found that the building of national identity is automatically constructed based on an acknowledgment of "otherness" (Shepherd, 2006; Mountcastle, 2010). Anico and Peralta (2009), for instance, stated that, as mentioned earlier, the formation of identity is dictated by relations or similarities between in-group and out-group members. This is because, in order to identify with another, people need to dis-identify with someone else. National identity promotes unity and belonging among an imagined national community, and this is created through differentiating from other nations. Heritage in this respect works as a marker of difference.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, all five Central Asian republics (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) became independent and started to determine their futures by slowly beginning to unravel their respective identities which the Soviet Union modelled. One of the main issues for all five post-Soviet Central Asian countries was determining their national identities (Crowe, 1998). For the newly-independent Central Asian countries, several views were aired about how they stood in the region and whether they should identify themselves as Asian, Muslim and/or Turkic. However, each country also pondered whether it needed to find its own destiny and identity distinct from that of its neighbours. In the process of determining the national identity of Kazakhstan, the acts of several countries had a decisive influence. The Government of Kazakhstan, with the support of its own political éite, rejected these proposed identities and decided to creat an identity inherited from their ancestors (Weller, 2013). Consequently, Kazakhstan placed its nomadic heritage at the core of its national identity.

Kazakh scholars have been working on emphasising their nomadic inheritance as the basis of their national identity. As Ferret (2016) pointed out, in Kazakhstan,

the excesses of nationalist illumination glorifying the nomadic past have not attained the extremes found in Turkmenistan, nevertheless, the national élites and scholars naturally turned to idealisation of nomadism. Newly-published books after Kazakhstan gained independence contained idealised descriptions of nomadism, with seasonal activities, the assembling and dismantling of yurts, the breeding of livestock, movement from one pasture to another, hunting with birds of prey, and the production of felt and dairy produce all glorified (Masanov, 2011; Kùzembajůly and Äbìl, 2000; Qozybayev, 2000). The famous historian, and head of the Kazakh Institute of History and Ethnology, Qozybayev stated that "*the very rich cultural and historical heritage of the Kazakh people and the role of nomadic civilizations in world history have been under-estimated*" (2000-I, p4). Therefore, in its introduction, a university textbook sets itself the mission of:

revealing the role and place of the Kazakh people, Kazakh statehood in the Pan-Turkish community, in the system of nomadic civilization, and in the historical-cultural development of the community of peoples of the Eurasian world ... [and of] ... showing the evolution of the nomads' spiritual world and their contribution to world civilization, the mutual relations and influences of the nomadic cultures of the steppe, sedentary farming, and the neighbouring peoples of Russia, China and Central Asia (Kùzembajůly and Äbìl, 2000, p. 7).

Douglas (1951, p. 16) argued that collective memory theory suffers under the burden of association with ethnopsychology theories of a reified group-mind or a "quasi-mystic soul with its own existence". Indeed, Kazakh-speaking Kazakhstani scholars have employed ethnopsychological conceptions to state that Kazakh culture is entirely "eastern" and totally irreconcilable with Russia and the West (Kùzembajůly and Äbìl, 2000; Qoigeldiev and Omarbekov, 1993; Qonyratbayev, 1991). From the first days of its independence, most Kazakh scholars argued that the nation needed an ethnic ideology to replace Marxism. In order to achieve this,

Kazakhstani scholars sometimes rely on the mystagogue theory of group-mind (Bulutay, 2000; Kùzembajůly and Äbìl, 2000). Collective memory in formof oral literature is commonly utilised by the Kazakhs to justify their nomadic identity.

Western researchers have, however, criticised the celebration of nomadism in Kazakhstan by stating that this practice is nominal. French scholar Laruelle (2008) argued that the glorifying of nomadism in post-Soviet Kazakhstan is "partial, hesitant and problematic" as nomadism and modernity are irreconcilable. Laruelle, for example, stated that the President of Kazakhstan wore Western suits and ties and only handled traditional costumes when handing them over as presents to guests. Similarly, Ferret (2016) claimed that, although the Government of Kazakhstan tried to reclaim its nomadic heritage, its claim to nomadism focused only on a few emblems, such as the yurt and the horse, which might be signs of nomadism. He stated that, although nomadism continues to be practised today in Kazakhstan, it now involves no more than a tiny minority of the population. Therefore, when analysing Kazakh society, the gap between urban dwellers and rural populations seems to be more relevant than the dichotomy between nomads and sedentary people, while pronounced regional disparities cannot be ignored either.

Nevertheless, in recent decades, some Western scholars have begun to study Central Asia as the fountainhead of early civilisation (Anthony, 2007; Golden, 2011; Hanks and Linduff, 2009). Anthropologist David Anthony in *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language* (2007) described "how Bronze-Age riders from Eurasian steppe shaped the modern world". He showed how the domestication of the horse, the utilisation of the wheel, and the spread of the Indo-European language were core components in the development of early civilisation. Employing findings from radiocarbon dating, metallurgy, archaeology, and comparative linguistics, Anthony made a strong case for Indo-European nomads

being the unsung progenitors of advanced human society. In the third volume of his trilogy exploring the evolution of human consciousness, *Wandering God: A Study in Nomadic Spirituality* (2000), American historian and social critic Morris Berman shed new light on the horizontal world view of Palaeolithic nomads in distinct contrast with the vertical hierarchies of sedentary civilisation. The latter, he affirmed generated tough societies of inequality, warfare, and estrangement. Ancient nomads, on the other hand, cultivated egalitarianism, openness, tolerance, and "a kind of mature ambiguity" that "cathected the whole environment" and provided an alert "fluidity of mind" (Berman, 2000, p.2). Berman argued that reviving this ancient value system could be an antidote to the disenchantment of contemporary society and a prescription for the desacralisation of the natural world.

A foundational piece of literature in the expansion of Western scholarly attitudes towards Kazakh nomads and their history was provided by Anatoly Khazanov. His *Nomads and the Outside the World* (1984) entailed the study of nomads and pastoralists in Africa and Asia. It was written in the Soviet Union with a clear understanding of Soviet arguments regarding the place of nomads in the evolution of human society and technology. Despite its uniqueness as an English-language study at that time, Khazanov's analysis is of limited value as it was written under the influence of the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Throughout the book he stated that nomadism cannot exist independently from settled societies and thus cannot reflect a stage of cultural evolution, but instead has to be considered in connection to the specific settled societies on which it is based, which have their own evolutionary stages.

A number of projects and propaganda campaigns have appeared over the years reflecting government efforts to prioritize Kazakh ethnic identity over others in Kazakhstan. Since Kazakhstan's independence, Kazakh nationalism has emerged

as a strong social force in present-day Kazakhstani society. Nationalism can imply anti-colonialism and has been treated as a driving force behind many liberation movements. Indeed, for many residents of the colonial territories such liberation has entailed improvement of living standards, like fairer wages and diminishing of oppressive taxation (Young, 2016). Influenced by poststructuralist thought, Anderson (2002) in his book "*Imagined Communities"* analysed nationalism in Saussurean terms of language, pointing to its diacritic character (Young, 2016). Young (2016) outlined: "*This is why post-independence attempts at so called "nation building" are more or less doomed, or at least can only operate coercively*" (Young, 2016, p. 173). According to Baudrillard (1988) national identity, in such a process of "nation building" can be regarded as a simulacrum, where a representation takes on an independent form of reality by breaking ties with the imaginary and loosely being referred to as truth. Consequently, hyperreality of nationalism is established, which generates structures of the real without origin (Baudrillard, 1988). When the real is no longer available, its meaning is assumed through nostalgia, resulting in overprovision of myths of origin, escalation of lived experiences, resurrection of figurative and other signs of reality parallel to the hysteria of material production (Baudrillard, 1988). Revival of heritage can also be interpreted from the perspective of such nostalgia: mourning something that cannot be returned - an artificial revitalization (Baudrillard, 1988).

Nationalism cannot survive without territory. Nations and people become bounded to a specific place in a profound and immutable way. George White, in *Nationalism and Territory* (2000), outlined two reasons why place is important to nations. Firstly, he claimed *"they contain within them the natural resources that contribute to the particularities of human culture"* and, secondly, he added that "*nations express their identities in the cultural landscape of places and territories*" (White 2000, p. 21). This identity is then passed on to the next generation and,

over time, it becomes impossible to separate the cultural identity of a nation from the natural features of its territory.

Kazakhstan has been employing elements of nationalism and territoriality to assist attempts to build a national identity while at the same time avoiding ethnic conflicts. After obtaining independence, the Government of Kazakhstan granted citizenship to all of its population, regardless of their ethnic background. At the same time, however, it reinforced the position of Kazakhs within the ethnic hierarchy. Kesici (2011) stated that the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan was the foundation of Kazakh nationalism as it outlined Kazakhstan as the homeland of ethnic Kazakhs. Although the Constitution presents Kazakhstan as a country of unified people(s) without assigning privileges to any of them, the Kazakhs do, in fact, have special status within the country. Kesici (2011) emphasised that the Kazakhs officially obtained special status after the adaptation of the Order on the Conception of the Formation of State Identity of the Republic of Kazakhstan in May 1996. The order starts with the assumption that "*every state emerges on the basis of an ethnic community, and that every ethnic group needs its own state to provide for the material and spiritual needs of this ethnic group*" (as cited in Kesici, 2011, p. 45). In the Order, Nazarbayev (the first President of Kazakhstan) argued that Kazakhstan is the ethnic centre of the Kazakhs and that the multinationalism of Kazakhstan's society was the result of emigration by non-Kazakh groups into Kazakh territories. In other words, he claimed the Kazakhs should have special status in Kazakhstan and any nation-building programme would need to have this idea built-in.

2.6 Cultural heritage stakeholders

The term "stakeholder" was first included in management literature in an internal memorandum published by the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International, Inc.) in 1963 (Freeman *et al.,* 2018). The term related to a group of

people to whom management had to be responsive. It was stated that if an organisation was to accept a more comprehensive approach towards the groups of people with whom it cooperated rather than exclusively its stakeholders, then corporate performance could be enhanced, and society would benefit (Donaldson and Preston, 1995; Jones, 1995; Mitchell, 1997; Frooman, 1999). Later, the concept of stakeholder was utilised in different areas such as project management and economicsy to refer to a person owning a stake in an enterprise, or an individual or company engaged in a particular organisation, project or system literally just in order to have invested their capital in it (Charron, 2007). According to the stakeholders in a corporation are "*the individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to its wealth-creating capacity and activities, and that are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers*". Freeman (1984) defined a "stakeholder" as "any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives" (p. 46). Freeman's book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, has been acknowledged as the beginning of stakeholder theory and thinking in management circles.

The operation of stakeholder theory has been significantly expanded from its primary application in strategic management and business corporations to various areas of inquiry. These include health and social service research (Mercier, 1997; Hyder *et al.*, 2010); tourism planning (Sautter and Leisen, 1999; Ladkin and Betramini, 2002); environmental management (Reed, 2008; Aaltonen, 2011); protected area management (Rastogi *et al.* 2010); fisheries and marine (Mackinson *et al.*, 2011); construction project management (Atkin and Skitmore, 2008); and visitor attraction management (Garrod *et al.*, 2012).

Efforts to protect and conserve cultural heritage demand the engagement of various stakeholders (Thatcher, 2018). There has been no expansive research

focusing on the role and activities of stakeholders in the preservation of cultural heritage. Kalmon (2014) in *Heritage Planning: Principles and Process* identified main stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation by their position in the hierarchy. According to Kalman (2014), the government should be responsible for cultural heritage conservation at the national level, and usually at the state/province and local levels as well. International organisations such as UNESCO have been identified as the second most-important stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation. Another important set of stakeholders were identified as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) ranging from large, well-funded organisations with a global reach to small, local volunteer advocacy groups that care for the protection and safeguarding of cultural heritage. Lastly, communities were recognised as key stakeholders and valuable tools in cultural heritage conservation. However, Kalman's research mostly referred to Western countries and no mention was made of the possibility that this hierarchy of stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation could be different in non-Western countries. For example, community participation in developing countries in cultural heritage preservation is totally different from developed countries because participation works differently according to the different cultural and political contexts. Community participation involves collaboration between community members for the purpose of achieving common goals, improving the local community, and pursuing common benefits (McCloskey *et al.*, 2011). In this regard, Stolton and Dudley (1999) pointed out that socio-economic, political and cultural features were more likely to determine the pattern of power and wealth allocation among different groups in most developing countries and that these factors affected the participation of communities in developing countries. From a socio-economic perspective, economically disadvantaged countries suffer from low income, poor housing, poor quality of health service, low life expectancy, and a common sense of dissatisfaction and despair (Pinch, 1997). Thus, under those

circumstances, community participation in cultural heritage protection is more likely to be very low or take the form of enterprise.

From a practical perspective, cultural heritage researchers need to develop theories that explain who the main stakeholders are and who the most important and powerful stakeholders are in the preservation of cultural heritage. In particular, there is a need for research to be conducted into people's main motivations for engaging in the conservation of cultural heritage and how they interact with each other in the process. Moreover, there is a need to address how the notion of authenticity is understood, perceived and constructed by multiple stakeholders involved in the development of cultural heritage. It is important for researchers to examine how stakeholder engagement varies in developed and developing countries, taking into account their specific socio-economic, political and cultural features. Using a postcolonial country, Kazakhstan, as a case study, this thesis aims to fill the research gap by advancing theoretical and empirical understanding of various stakeholders' perceptions in getting involved in, and reviving and promoting, cultural heritage.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

This chapter details the methodology used to answer the research questions. A case study approach is deployed with the aim of analysing the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Interviews and textual analysis are the main data sources, to which thematic analysis has been applied in order to identity common themes and concerns.

3.1 Research design

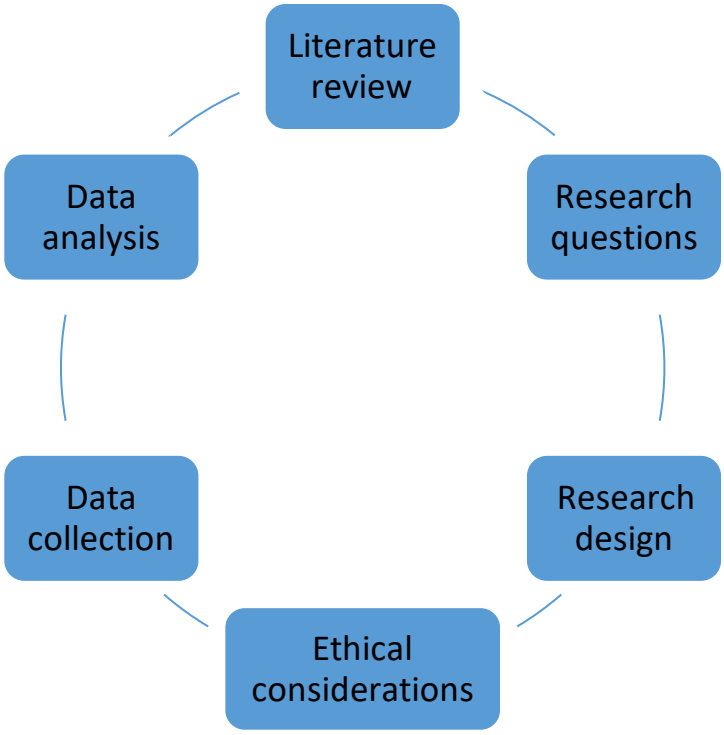
3.1.1 Rationale behind a qualitative approach

While it is possible to research cultural heritage quantitatively, its qualitative components like the meaning of cultures, social relationships and objects can only be properly understood with some awareness of the local context (Sorensen and Carman, 2009). As Phillimore and Goodson (2004, p.3) pointed out, qualitative methods are used "*to collect data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviours and to seek an understanding of actions, problems and processes in their social context*". Qualitative analysis is part of the naturalistic method of inquiry, which presumes that reality is incessantly changing and that human social phenomena are so complex that it would be impossible to find anything approximating a scientific law therein (Oppenheim, 1992; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Seymour, 2001; Silverman, 2004).

This research aims to examine the perceived roles of the government, international organisations, and non-governmental organisations in the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. With this aim in mind, a qualitative approach was chosen because this allows information to be gathered about behaviours, activities, occurrences and events which enable the researcher to better understand actions, problems and processes in the given social context

(Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). Pickering (2008, p.90) has emphasised the significance of qualitative approaches: "*the real intellectual work of cultural studies – the locations where meaningful reflexivity and debate is to be had – is seen to involve engaging with theoretical complexities or revelling in the richness of qualitative data*". Qualitative approaches do indeed provide the researcher with rich data on the roles of the various stakeholders in reviving and conserving the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Fig.6 Summary of the research approach



3.1.2 Rationale behind a case-study approach

As for the research design, in combitation with textual analysis, a case-study approach as selected as the most appropriate (Figure 6). Depending on the source viewed, using case studies in a qualitative context may be viewed as both a research type and also a method, as well as having a variety of definitions (Starman, 2013). According to Veal (2006), case studies can provide deeper understandings of people, events, experiences, and organisations in their social

and historical contexts. Case studies can be utilised to achieve the following aims: to provide descriptions, to test theory, or to generate theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). This research falls into the last category, namely theory generation. It has been deployed with the aim of replicating or extending emergent theory. Building theory from case study research may serve to fill theoretical categories and provide examples of existing theories (Eisenhardt, 1989). This research also employs the case study through interviews as a collective case study to provide insight into general issues extended over several case studies (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015).

Within the field of cultural studies, it is argued that case studies are often chosen for their flexibility in supporting research (Beeton, 2005), but that they must also be exemplary in going beyond merely just documenting a case. In doing so, they demonstrate their validity and overcome the stereotypical view of case studies (Xiao and Smith, 2006). More recently, the use of case studies in social research has provided analysis of the component elements for a methodological approach (deUrioste-Stone *et al.*, 2018) as well as suitable goals and circumstances for this type of research, including those of this study.

This research therefore takes the view, based on the literature cited above, that a qualitative case study approach is appropriate for the research topic, and the use of a multi-case approach suits an overview of the situation in Kazakhstan. It aims to examine the consequences of Russian/Soviet colonisation on the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and activities of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The research seeks to provide a rich and comprehensive analysis of how the traditional cultural heritage was disrupted as a result of colonisation and how and why it has been revived and promoted after assuming independence, looking at the case of Kazakhstan.

Cultural heritage knowledge-gathering has generally been characterized by case studies, area-specific discussions, examples of best practices, and one-off or one-time research. In contradistinction to more specifically directed research, case studies examine problems that demand a holistic understanding of the event or situation in question. A case study is advisable when *how* or *why* questions are being asked in relation to a recent set of events, over which the researcher has, or had little or no control (Yin, 2009). A case study can be classified as a research strategy, or an empirical inquiry, that explores a phenomenon within its real-life context. Yin (2003) advocated the use of case studies when dealing with extreme, rare, critical and/or revelatory topics. Therefore, a case-study methodology is often deployed in research projects related to cultural heritage covering themes or topics such as cultural heritage tourism, conservation of UNESCO World Heritage sites, as well as conservation of postcolonial cultural heritage (Chan & Lee, 2017; Meskell, 2013; Salamandra, 2004; Watkins, 2000; Ween, 2012; Winter, 2007).

Kalman (2014) identified the main stakeholders in cultural heritage preservation by their position in the following hierarchy: government, non-governmental organisations, communities, and international organisations such as UNESCO. This research has aimed to analyse the functioning of such a hierarchy of stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation within the case of Kazakhstan.

The focus of this research is nomadic cultural heritage, bounded by both time and place. This research relies on different sources (government officials, cultural heritage practitioners, non-governmental organisations, representatives of foreign investment companies, and published literature on the topic) and methods in order to examine the role of stakeholders in reviving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The attributes of a case study are thus ideal for the research (Gillham, 2000; Yin, 2003; Mauffette-Leenders *et al.,* 1997). Moreover,

Yin (2003) recommended using a case study when the research topic is situated in a real-life context.

The research design used here allows the investigation to explore various factors (political, economic, social, geographical and cultural) that affect the ways in which a particular heritage is perpetuated (Bade, 2011). This impact is analysed in terms of intangible nomadic cultural heritage as well as geopolitics. A case study allows to a holistic picture of the processes of cultural heritage conservation in Kazakhstan be obtained and helps establish a better understanding of certain recent events and experiences in the political, social and historical context of Kazakhstan.

The case study approach does not provide explicit comparisons between countries, yet, under certain circumstances, it allows for the drawing of implicit conclusions from this approach regarding the way institutions and cultural characteristics affect an individual's behaviour and destiny (Chetty *et al.*, 2014). This can be done either by contrasting the unique characteristics of one single country with a more conventional or generalised case, or by gathering several "case studies" that address the same research question in different institutional settings (Chetty *et al.*, 2014). In this research, the consequences of the Russian colonisation of Central Asian countries and the ensuing colonial policy on the culture of Central Asian countries are compared briefly. Moreover, Kazakhstan's approaches to stakeholder engagement in reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people are compared with those of other Central Asian countries.

3.2 Research sites

A multi-sited ethnographic research was utilised as the fieldwork was conducted in more than one geographic location (Marcus, 1995). This allowed the researcher

to interview all the different groups of stakeholders in the protection of cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Interviews were conducted in four selected cities in Kazakhstan: Almaty, Astana/Nur-Sultan, Qyzylorda, and Oral (Figure 7). The rationales behind the choice of each city are given below.

Fig.7 Cities in Kazakhstan chosen as research locations



Source: Modified from the public domain map provided by the Cartographic Section of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN, 2014).

Almaty

Almaty is located in southeast Kazakhstan at the base of the Trans-Ili Alatau mountains. It is the largest city in Kazakhstan. Almaty was the capital of the Kazakh Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic from 1936 to 1991. When Kazakhstan gained its independence in 1991, Almaty remained the capital city until 1997 when it was replaced by Astana. Nevertheless, to this day Almaty remains the financial and cultural centre of the country (The Almaty Administration, 2017). According to the official census of 2009, the total

population of the city was 1, 365, 632 people. Kazakhs made up 53% while Russians comprised 33.2%, Ukrainians represented 0.9% and the remainder was composed of various other nationalities (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a).

Several factors influenced the decision to choose this city for conducting interviews. Firstly, many of Kazakhstan's most important government-funded cultural heritage preservation centres are located in Almaty. Foremost among these for this research were the Central State Museum, the State Historical-Cultural Museum Reserve "Issyk" (Figure 8), the Kasteyev State Museum of Arts (Figure 9), and the State Museum of National Musical Instruments. These state museums display extensively the history and culture of the Kazakhs. Secondly, Almaty serves as a major hub for several institutions, including the Kazakh National Art Academy and the Kazakh National Conservatory. The Kazakh National Art Academy is the only university in Kazakhstan which teaches younger generations about traditional Kazakh crafts made with materials such as felt, wood, leather and metal. Meanwhile, professional musicians are educated about Kazakh musical heritage in the Kazakh National Conservatory. Instruments associated with Kazakh musical heritage include the *dombyra, qobyz, syrnai* and *sybyzgy*. As a consequence, most professional traditional craft-makers and musicians live in Almaty. Finally, UNESCO's delegation to Kazakhstan is based in Almaty and the offices of several other non-government organisations are also situated here.

Fig. 8 The State Historical-Cultural Museum Reserve “Issyk”, copy of “Golden Man” (see Chapter 5)



Source: author’s photo

Fig.9 The Kasteyev State Museum of Arts, felt carpet (eighteenth century)



Source: author’s photo

Nur-Sultan (previously Astana)

In 1997, Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakhstan moved the capital city from Almaty to the newly-named Astana (previously Akmola, 1939-1997). In 1830, Russian troops built a stronghold on the northern bank of the Ishim River, in the northern part of the ancient Sary Arka, and this later grew into the city of Akmola (Voloshin and Gakhov, 2003). The city became an important point of trade connecting Central Asia to the Russian Empire. In the Soviet period, Akmola became the centre of the *Virgin Lands* campaign (1954-1960), one of the largest Soviet projects undertaken on the territory of Kazakhstan, in order to turn the steppes into a giant agricultural centre (Voloshin and Gakhov, 2003).

The Government of Kazakhstan offered various logistical and economic reasons for the relocation of the capital city. First of all, the revival of a Kazakhstani identity from Almaty would have been complicated by the city's obvious and deep-rooted associations with communism and the Soviet era. Almaty, although seen as a city of creativity and culture, could not ensure a "blank canvas" upon which to imprint a new sense of national identity. When the Japanese architect, Kisho Kurokawa, created the Master Plan of Astana, he acutely pointed out: *"the best hieroglyph is produced when it is drawn on a clean sheet of paper*" (Nazarbayev, 2008, p.301). Kurokawa's Master Plan reflected President Nazarbayev's credo of Eurasianism - the view that Kazakhstan is a bridge between Europe and Asia and a vital member of global civilisation.

On 23 March 2019, the capital Astana was renamed Nur-Sultan in honour of the long-ruling President Nursultan Nazarbayev who announced his resignation on 19 March 2019. The order to change the capital city's name was issued by Kazakhstan's newly sworn-in interim President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. However, during the data collection for this research (2017-2018) the name of the capital city was still Astana. The city is located in northern Kazakhstan and it is

the fastest-growing city in Kazakhstan. According to the official census of 2009, its population was 613 006, of whom 69.4% were Kazakhs and 19.9% were Russians (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a).

Today, Nur-Sultan is the administrative centre of the country where many governmental and non-governmental organisations are located, including ministries. Thus, the inclusion of this city is essential to understanding government policies intended to preserve the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

As part of a nation-building process, the Government has been working toward the establishment of a positive national brand. In order to achieve this, Kazakhstan has pursued a policy of hosting a number of major international events (Shakirova, 2015). The Government believes that hosting such events leads to economic growth and upgraded infrastructure, and the country has asserted itself as the regional leader in Central Asia (Shakirova, 2015). Through this policy, the capital city of Kazakhstan has hosted the following major international events: the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Summit (2010); the Asian Winter Games (2011); the 28th World Winter Universiade (2017); and the World EXPO-2017. The latter is probably the most significant international event to have been hosted by Kazakhstan. The data collection for this research was undertaken when the capital city of Kazakhstan was hosting the World EXPO-2017 (Figure 10). This allowed the researcher to analyse how hosting such international events motivated the Government to present and promote the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Moreover, the timing of the interviews in 2017 offered a good opportunity to see the specific ways in which the Government of Kazakhstan did this. The author conducted interviews with

people who were directly responsible for presenting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people to the guests of this major international event.

Fig. 10 Ethno-village at World EXPO-2017, Astana, 2017



Source: author's photo, 2017

Qyzylorda

Qyzylorda is located in southern Kazakhstan, bordered by the Aral Sea and Uzbekistan. The city was the capital of the Kazakh ASSR from 1925 to 1929. According to the official census of 2009, there were 230, 422 inhabitants in Qyzylorda, 208, 867 of whom were Kazakhs (90.6%) and 10, 615 of whom were Russians (4.6%) (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a).

Several factors influenced the decision to conduct interviews in this city. Firstly, the region in which this city is located houses a school for folk singers (Figure 11), headed by the *zhyrau* who performs epic Kazakh tales and stories in the form of

songs (Ayaghan, 2005). Qyzylorda is also credited as the birthplace of the *qobyz*, one of the main national musical instruments of the Kazakh people. Today, there are a number of schools in Qyzylorda aimed at reviving and developing the improvised oral poetry and musical culture of Kazakhstan's ancestors. These schools are mostly owned and developed by local people who are professionals in performing oral poetry and the musical culture of the Kazakh people. Secondly, compared to many other parts of Kazakhstan, the people of Qyzylorda practice Kazakh traditions more commonly in their everyday lives (Ayaghan, 2005). Finally, Qyzylorda has also been the focus of Chinese investment with respect to its oil fields. There are two big oil companies operating in this area, PertoKazakhstan and Kazgermunai, whose shareholders are from China and Kazakhstan. Thus, this represents a valuable research site when examining the role of foreign investments in the conservation of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Fig. 11 Qyzylorda folk singers *(zhyrau)*



Source: author's photo, 2019

Oral (Uralsk)

Oral (known as Uralsk in Russian) is located in northwest Kazakhstan, near the border with Russia. According to the official census of 2009, the population of the city was 247, 236 of whom 58.3% were Kazakhs and 35.4% were Russians (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a). This city's population is one of the most Russified in Kazakhstan for several reasons. The first such reason is simple: its proximity to the Russian border. Secondly, the historically high level of the Russian-Ukrainian peasantry population that developed in the city and the subsequent transposition of Russian culture. Oral itself was established in 1613 by Cossacks, a group of predominantly East Slavic-speaking people who became predominant citizens of the city (Anes, 2010). Cossacks served as frontiersmen for the Tsarist army (Sapunov, 2001). When the Russian Empire's borders were secured, the Cossacks were incorporated into Russia's regular military service (Sapargaliyev, 1966). The Cossacks were faithful to the Tsar, and served as special shock forces to suppress the military activities of the Kazakh people. In modern times, Cossacks as an ethnic group have presented some difficulties for the Government of Kazakhstan as they have been outspoken against Kazakh independence (Yerokhin, 2013). After the declaration of independence (1991), Cossacks living in Kazakhstan called instead for the re-establishment of Russian rule over the country. Currently, Oral is the city in Kazakhstan in which most of the country's Cossack NGOs are located. Therefore, when researching the activities of NGOs in preserving the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, this city is of great significance. Beside Cossacks, the city is also home to a significant Tatar population. Oral has preserved some cultural heritage sites that predate the Soviet era such as the Mikhailo-Archangelsky Church (1740), the Church of Christ the Saviour (1891), the Residence of the Ataman (Cossack chieftain) (1825) (Figure 12) and Merchant Karev's House (nineteenth century) (Figure 13) (Anes, 2010).

Fig. 12 The Residence of the Cossack chieftain *(Ataman)*, Oral city



Source: author's photo, 2019

Fig. 13 Merchant Karev's House (nineteenth century), Oral city



Source: author's photo, 2019

3.3 Research sampling: interviews and organisations

3.3.1 Interviews

Research involves choices (Shipman, 1997), implying that the population under review has to be sampled using a particular approach to the selection of

participants. Selection of participants is an important aspect of building theory from case studies. In this research, the researcher applied selective or purposeful sampling because such a form of sampling allows for the selection of key informants to provide an in-depth understanding of the research topic (Morse, 1991; Coyne, 1997). In qualitative research, sample selection plays an essential role in determining the eventual quality of the research. Qualitative research provides flexibility in sampling as its sampling practices are not rigidly dictated as they are in quantitative study (Coyne, 1997). According to Abrams (2010), qualitative research has different targets and purposes, and qualitative sampling is not simply designed to be "representative" in the sense of searching for approximate known population parameters. Qualitative research is frequently applied to extreme or "negative" cases in order to produce unique understandings (Huberman and Miles, 1991). Accordingly, probability sampling does not suit the purposes and assumptions of most qualitative research questions (Abrams, 2010). According to Morse (1991, p.127), the adoption of random sampling in qualitative research *"violates both the quantitative principle that requires an adequate sample size in order to ensure representativeness and the qualitative principle of appropriateness that requires purposeful sampling and a "good" informant (i.e. one who is articulate, reflective, and willing to share with the interviewer)*". Identifying key informants (participants) among stakeholders allows appropriate data to be obtained in order to understand their roles in preserving and presenting the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

The participants were selected according to their functions and the type of activities they performed in their respective organisations. In order to examine the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, the following general categories of stakeholders were identified: the Government, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, foreign countries/foreign investment companies,

and cultural heritage practitioners. Consequently, participants were then categorised into one of these groups of stakeholders.

Moreover, the researcher spent one year monitoring and researching the website of the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan in order to identify key informants for this research (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2016). Thus, the researcher picked out several potential informants in the various stakeholder categories, as illustrated in Table 1.

The qualitative case study approach used in this research extensively reviewed the possibilities for interviews in each of the case areas. The final selection was dependent upon finding those willing to take part as well as consideration of their position within the tourist sector. From a review of the website of the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan the researcher identified a list of approximately one thousand governmental organisations and cultural heritage practitioners responsible for the development and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. As interviews were planned to be conducted in four selected cities in Kazakhstan - Almaty, Astana, Qyzylorda, and Oral - the number of potential organisations reduced significantly within the selection categories identified: Government; cultural heritage practitioners; and, non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Research was then undertaken to identify the potential size of each category and to identify potential interviewees. A total of 18 interviews were conducted as representing “Government”. Whilst this number may seem small in comparison to the potential total, it was felt that the individual interviewees held significance in their particular area and could be considered as suitably representative for this study.

As Table 1 shows, the researcher included eighteen representatives from governmental organisations responsible for the development and preservation of

the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. For example, the researcher interviewed the head of the Traditional Kazakh Culture Department of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n1) to understand how the Kazakh traditional cultural heritage both tangible and intangible are being revived and promoted in a government level. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the main executive body of the Republic of Kazakhstan when it comes to managing the fields of culture. The researcher also interviewed an archaeologist at Nazarbayev University (see Table 1, n5). He has been engaged in archaeological fieldwork and research in Kazakhstan since 2003. His specialisation is in the study of mobile pastoralism of Kazakhstan in general. He has been involved in various governmental programmes that focused on systematisation, restoration and preservation of the Kazakh cultural heritage. The researcher was interested in studying the governmental programme entitled "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan" that aims to promote the image of Kazakh culture at an international level. The head of the Kazakh Language Centre (Qyzylorda) was also interviewed to understand the different issues behind promoting the Kazakh language as a State language (see Table 1, n10). The main aim of the linguistics centre is to teach all governmental workers the Kazakh language. Each region of Kazakhstan has a such linguistic center which is fully funded by the Government of Kazakhstan.

The data collection for this research was undertaken when the capital city of Kazakhstan was hosting the World EXPO-2017. This allowed the researcher to analyse how hosting such international events motivated the Government to present and promote the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Moreover, the timing of the interviews in 2017 offered a good opportunity to see the specific ways in which the Government of Kazakhstan did this. The Government stated that hosting such a major global event was a crucial

opportunity for Kazakhstan to present the nomadic culture of the Kazakh people to an international audience and to build its national brand. Aiming to build awareness and draw the interest of tourists, special cultural programmes were designed to nurture the nation's rich cultural heritage and to provide an "authentic" experience. For example, a national cultural complex *Ethnoauyl* (Ethno-village) was a unique cultural tourism and image project that formed part of EXPO-2017 (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, a). The author conducted interviews with people who were directly responsible for presenting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people to the guests of this major international event. The Head of the Traditional Kazakh Sports Department of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n2) was interviewed. This department is responsible for the reviving and promoting of traditional Kazakh sports. During hosting the World EXPO-2017 this department was responsible for the organisation of traditional Kazakh games at Ethno-village such as traditional hunting with birds of prey and traditional Kazakh horse games such as *kokpar, audaryspak, baiga kyzkuu*, and *tenge alu*.

From the list of a thousand of governmental organisations and cultural heritage practitioners the researcher identified several potential interviewees. Having worked at the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan since 2007, the researcher is familiar with some of the best-known practitioners and authorities at governmental level who are responsible for the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Thus, the researcher started by recruiting such people who then identified colleagues and friends, who are also contributing to the revival and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people with whom the researcher could also conduct interviews. Weiss (1994) pointed out that in some cases the researcher may know some people in the population of interest, and such people may represent a valuable starting point

for data collection. Thereafter, the researcher can ask for assistance from other people who are likely to know others in the population of interest. Thus, the researcher can use referrals to build a sample accordingly. A total of 19 people were interviewed as "practitioners" and selection was as wide as possible to give consideration to different aspects of cultural heritage. However, in doing so, it is acknowledged that one individual view for a restaurant or leather craftsperson, may not be representative of all artisans. It is difficult to overcome this limitation without, perhaps, some incentive for more people to take part in the research.

The researcher interviewed nineteen representatives of local people who were practitioners of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. These included Kazakh national craftspeople and artists that kept alive and developed initiatives to raise awareness about protecting and safeguarding the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. For instance, the researcher interviewed two yurt makers (one Russian-speaking and one Kazakh-speaking) (see Table 1, N36, n37). The Russian-speaking one is the most popular yurt-maker in Kazakhstan, and has been involved in the project of improving "traditional knowledge and skills in making Kyrgyz and Kazakh yurts" inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The researcher also interviewed an *aitysker* (singer, and performer of improvised oral poetry) (see Table 1, n21) who has been operating since the Soviet period. His input had enriched the research by allowing comparisons between the state of his art during the Soviet era and now.

The researcher was unable to conduct interviews with families who practice nomadic pastoralism. Currently, nomadic pastoralism in Kazakhstan has largely been replaced by sedentary animal farming. In order to understand the main features of the Kazakh nomadic cultural heritage it was useful to conduct interviews with the ones who used to practice pastoral nomadism. Fortunately,

some of the interviewees in this research used to practise the nomadic way of life. The Kazakhs who migrated from the Kazakh steppe to Mongolia, China, and Turkmenistan during the forced collectivisation period and famine have been preserved their traditional nomadic cultural heritage. The Kazakhs who live in Bayan-Ulgi (Mongolia) and Xingiang (China) are able to lead a traditional nomadic life (Post, 2007). They live in traditional nomadic dwelling yurts and move from one place to the next with their cattle. Thus, the nomadic Kazakh tradition still exists in their purest form in these places. The migrant Kazakhs are more nationalistic, more linguistically and culturally pure than the Kazakhs who had stayed put and experienced the "Russification" of Kazakhstan under the Soviet Union. The researcher interviewed a yurt maker (see Table 1, n37) who was born and grew up in Mongolia. She used to live a nomadic lifestyle and her father was a well-known livestock herder. She and her family migrated to Kazakhstan through the governmental repatriation programme, and she is now making yurts and yurt decorations with her family. During the interview she nostalgically shared her experiences while living the nomadic way of life.

From the website of Ministry of Justice, there are 772 registered local NGOs that aim to preserve cultural heritage (Figure 87), 313 of which are concerned with reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). Most of these NGOs are registered to obtain various grants from the Government of Kazakhstan so there is still a level of Government involvement in them. The researcher, by monitoring the website of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan, identified 16 active local NGOs which are focused on reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. By contacting to all of these 16 NGOs, the researcher was able to conduct interview with 6 of them, representing just over one third.

In terms of non-governmental organisation representatives, the researcher interviewed the head of "The Heritage of the Nomadic Civilization of the Kazakh People" (see Table 1, n40). This NGO is aimed at promoting and reviving the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. This NGO promoted The World Nomad Games (an international sport competition dedicated to traditional sports that were practised by the Central Asian nomads) in Kazakhstan and promoted the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people in this Games. This NGO also promoted offers in organisation of the nomadic games and festivals in various private events. The researcher was interested what their main priority is: either safeguard the Kazakh traditional nomadic heritage or to promote their business. The head of the Craftsmanship Centre *Qazaq-Oner* was interviewed to examine the role of NGOs in preserving and promoting cultural and artistic traditions of the Kazakh people. The centre features a shopping gallery, workshops, a multimedia centre for traditional music and a restaurant serving national cuisine. It brings together artisans from Almaty and those who are committed to preserving traditional crafts. The centre is responsible for the training and co-ordinating of craftsmen as well as for the organisation of exhibitions, fairs and craft festivals.

In order to analyse how cultural heritage has been protected and promoted for the development of tourism sector in Kazakhstan, the researcher interviewed local NGO working on the development and promotion of local cultural heritage tourism (see Table 1, n41). She has been running a travel agency for more than 12 years. Her tour agency often participates in international tourism exhibitions and fairs to promote Kazakhstan's tourism products. She is the Head of the National Association of Domestic Tourism of Kazakhstan. The aim of the association is to support local tour operators to develop Kazakhstan's tourism industry.

The researcher interviewed private business owners to examine their roles and activities in understanding, protection, and promotion of the Kazakh cultural heritage. For instance, the owner of a restaurant serving traditional Kazakh cuisine (see Table 1, n32) was interviewed. The national cuisine is an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and their nomadic traditions and history. The restaurant revives and promotes Kazakh cuisine by using modern technologies. The owner of the restaurant has published a book with their old recipes. This restaurant especially was very popular among international tourists when the capital city of Kazakhstan was hosting the World EXPO-2017. *Quraqshy* (woven bedsheets maker) who has a private business on preparing brides' dowry was interviewed for this research (see Table 1, n28). A dowry is a property or gifts that a woman's parents presented to the man she marries. According to tradition, the parents used to prepare the dowry quite early when their daughter is still a child. Today, many brides use the services of professionals who are involved in preparing woven bedsheets. The interviewee is the famous needlewoman in Kazakhstan who has been preparing a dowry for more than twenty years.

Finally, the researcher interviewed a member of a Chinese-Kazakh oil company (see Table 1, n42) in order to explore its role in, and influence on, the preservation of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

However, the researcher was unable to conduct interviews with representatives of international organisations. UNESCO is the only international organisation in Kazakhstan which seeks to protect and preserve cultural heritage. Despite the researcher having visited the UNESCO Almaty Office several times and proposing that one of its representatives participate in a research interview, no UNESCO representative was put forward. Nevertheless, some of the interviewees in this research had collaborated with UNESCO's office in Kazakhstan. As representatives of different areas of cultural heritage conservation, feedback from

their interviews served to outline and examine the roles and activities of UNESCO in promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. For example, one interviewee of this research works at the Restoration and Preservation Center (see Table1, n15) whose main responsibility is to restore cultural heritage sites that are either already inscribed or being prepared for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Another participant of this research was a yurt maker who had been involved in inscription of the traditional knowledge and skills for making Kyrgyz and Kazakh yurts on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (see Table 1, n37). Interviews with these people were highly beneficial in terms of analysing the benefits and drawbacks of gaining UNESCO inscription. Therefore, ultimately, the research was not hindered by the absence of a UNESCO office representative in the interviews.

It should be noted that the researcher, after conducting interviews, monitored the activities of the participants online and kept in touch with them. During the entire period of writing-up this doctoral research, the participants kindly shared additional materials (reports, photos, and published materials such as articles and books) about their activities in reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Table 1 Interviewees

Government		
1	Head of the Traditional Kazakh Culture Department of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan)	This department is responsible for the reviving, protecting and promoting of traditional cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible) of the Kazakh people.
2	The Head of the Traditional Kazakh Sports Department of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Nur-Sultan)	This department is responsible for the reviving and promoting of traditional Kazakh sports.

3	Producer of Kazakh Culture TV Channel (Nur-Sultan)	Kazakh TV is an image-building, educational channel portraying the dynamic development and emergence of Kazakhstan, its investment and touristic potential, its global initiatives, its cultural and historical heritage, and its sustainable development measures.
4	Head of the State Museum of Arts named after Kasteev (Almaty)	It is the country's largest art museum, the collection of which already amounts to 25,000 items of art. It introduces guests to the decorative and fine arts of Kazakhstan, modern foreign art, classical Russian art and the art of Western Europe of the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The collection of decorative and applied art of Kazakhstan is dedicated to the preservation and protection of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people such as traditional weaving, the manufacture of patterned felts, embroidery, the weaving of mats, and the artistic processing of wood, metal, leather and bone.
5	Archaeologist at Nazarbayev University (Nur-Sultan)	He has been engaged in archaeological fieldwork and research in Kazakhstan since 2003. His specialisation is in the study of mobile pastoralism of Kazakhstan in general. His research focuses on material studies examining how the region 's Bronze Age societies were incorporated into, the establishment of transregional webs of exchange and technology transfer, thousands of years before the Silk Roads. He has been involved in the governmental programme entitled "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan" that aims to promote the image of Kazakh culture at an international level.
6	Conductor of the West Kazakhstan Philharmonic Orchestra (Oral)	He graduated from Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory as a national orchestra conductor. At 27, he became the new principal conductor of this well-

		respected orchestra and received praise for a stunning performance. He is the author of over 100 music compositions.
7	Head of Kazakh Ethnographic Music Centre (Oral)	The music centre was created in 1981. The mission of the centre is to preserve and promote folk music, as well as revive national musical instruments. He is a musicologist, composer, people's artist of the Kazakh SSR, academician of the academy of Science of the Kazakh SSR, academician of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, and professor.
8	Head of Kazakh Music University (Oral)	This University carries out training of professional musicians for more than seven decades. It was one of the leading institutions for musical education in Soviet Kazakhstan.
9	Head of the Equestrian School for Children (Qyzylorda)	The school has outdoor and indoor arenas, and provides riding classes for children from the age of 10. The main mission of the school is to teach children Kazakh nomadic equestrian games.
10	Head of the Kazakh Language Centre (Qyzylorda)	The main aim of the linguistics centre is to teach all governmental workers the Kazakh language. The linguistic centres are fully funded by the Government of Kazakhstan and each region of Kazakhstan has such a centre.
11	Kazakh Language Scholar (Qyzylorda)	He is a well-known Kazakh language scholar working on grammar and methodology in researching the Kazakh language. He is working at Qyzylorda University named after Qorqyt Ata.
12	Kazakh Literature Center at the research centre "Otyrar Kitaphanasy" (Nur-Sultan)	His main function at this centre is translating old Kazakh books written in Arabic script into Kazakh language. All of these old books were written in the Kazakh language but in Arabic script. This research centre has done tremendous work in the translation and publication of old manuscripts. These manuscripts are very helpful for researchers to revive and

		promote the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The Government of Kazakhstan established the centre and allocated significant funds to translate old Kazakh books written in various scripts (Runic, Arabic, and Chinese).
13	The Central State Museum of Kazakhstan (Almaty)	It is one of the largest museums in Central Asia. Its collections were originally displayed in the 1830s in the city of Orenburg (the first capital city of the Kazakh ASSR), where they were organised by the *Nepliuevskii Academya* as the "Orenburg Region Museum". The museum collects valuable items of traditional Kazakh culture: extensive collections of arms inventories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, jewellery, carpets, clothing and other items made of felt, a variety of Kazakh national embroidery and a full-sized display of a nomadic house for Kazakh people – a yurt - with a traditional interior.
14	Head of the Religion Centre (Qyzylorda)	The religion centre, part of the Ministry of Information and Social Development (MISD), handles religious issues. The centre carries out scholarly research and promotes dialogue between cultures and religions.
15	Curator of the Restoration and Preservation Centre (Almaty)	His main responsibility is to restore cultural heritage sites that are either already inscribed or are being prepared for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List.
16	State Historical-Cultural Museum Reserve "Issyk" (two participants: head and curator) (Almaty)	The museum was founded in the framework of the national programme entitled "Cultural Heritage". It is a complex of 80 Scythian burial mounds (kurgans). The main artefact of the museum is the skeleton of the "Golden Man" or "Golden Warrior", a Scythian warrior from around the fifth century BCE who was found in 1969 in a tomb near

		Issyk settlement, about 60 km east of Almaty. His costume was made out of more than 4000 separate gold pieces. Director of the State Historical-Cultural Museum Reserve "Issyk" is the Chairman of the Expert Commission of the Kazakhstan National Committee of the World Heritage under the National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO.
17	Head of the Qyzylorda Regional Historical and Cultural Museum (Qyzylorda)	The museum was opened in 1939 in the building of the Russian Orthodox Church of Perovskaya Kazaknskaya Mother of God which is a unique architectural complex built in 1890-1895. The museum follows the classic chronological structure of all of Kazakhstan's regional museums, with rooms dedicated to the prehistoric period, the natural environment, and then history from medieval times to the present. The museum collection also focuses on local resistance to Russian imperialism and early Soviet power under local elite Mustafa Shoqay, and later its period as the fledgling capital of the KazSSR. Here there are also many Kazakh-language documents in the original 1920s Latin script.
18	Producer, Kazakh theatre (Qyzylorda)	He has been working in theatre since the Soviet period. The Kazakh State Academic Drama Theatre has been considered one of the main cultural venues of Kazakhstan for many years. That is why it was located in the capital of the Kazakh ASSR, Qyzylorda. He used to work at this theatre as an actor and performed in "Red Falcons", "Zharlyk", and other works that glorified Soviet power. After Kazakhstan gained its independence from the Soviet Union, he became the main producer and director of this theatre. Currently, the theatre performs acts that reflect the

		traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.
Cultural Heritage Practitioners		
19	*Aitysker* (singer, performer of improvised oral poetry) (Qyzylorda)	He has been performing since the Soviet period. He established the school of Aqyns-Aityskers in the city of Qyzylorda. He performed Aitys in a recording project run by UNESCO's Almaty Office. This recording performance has been broadcast on most of the country's channels.
20	*Aqyn* (improvising poet) (Qyzylorda)	He is working as a professor of the Kazakh improvising art at Qyzylorda University named after Qorqyt Ata. The Kazakh improvising heritage was the topic of his doctoral research.
21	Aqyn(improvising poet) and Aitysker (singer, performer of improvised oral poetry) (Qyzylorda)	He is one of the well-known improciving poets in Kazakhstan. He has been involved in the project of improving "Aitysh, aitys, Art of Improvisation" inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
22	Kazakh national dancer (Nur-Sultan)	She graduated from the Kazakh National Academy of Choreography. She is working as a prima dancer at the theatre, the main mission of which is to revive traditional Kazakh dance culture while also keeping up with the development of world ballet and training talented ballet dancers who then promote Kazakhstan around the world.
23	*Dombyrashy* (performer of the Kazakh national musical instrument, the *dombyra*) (Oral)	He is a well-known *dombyrashy* from the Soviet period.
24	*Qobyzshy* (performer of the Kazakh national musical instrument *qobyz*) (Oral)	She is a *qobyz* performer at the local philharmonic.
25	*Kiizshi* (felt producer) (Nur-Sultan)	She makes yurt coverings, carpets, clothes and utensils from felt.
26	*Zerger* (jeweller) (Nur-Sultan)	He is a well-known jewellery artist both in Kazakhstan and other CIS countries. He

		makes jewellery, amulets, weapons, belts and metal installations in traditional Kazakh style. He is also the Head of the Department for Restoration and the jewellery workshop at the Presidential Cultural Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan. He reproduces old pieces of art aiming toward the preservation of traditional cultural heritage.
27	Kazakh folk singer (Oral)	He is a well-known folk singer from the Soviet period. He is a soloist at the local philharmonic, and promotes the folk songs of the Kazakh people at the local and international levels by participating in festivals.
28	*Quraqshy* (woven bedsheets maker) (Qyzylorda)	She has a private business on preparing brides' dowry. She has been involved in international exibitions on traditional art many times.
29	Leather craftsperson (Nur-Sultan)	He makes various items of clothing, lashes, footwear, and vessels (convenient for storage and transportation of dairy products) in traditional Kazakh style. He also makes horse equipment from leather and actively participates in and promotes traditional leather products in exhibitions at the national and international levels.
30	*Syrmaqshy* (decorated felt carpet maker) (Almaty)	She was born and grew up in Mongolia. She used to live a nomadic lifestyle and her father was a very well-known livestock herder. She and her family migrated to Kazakhstan through the governmental repatriation programme. She runs a local business with her family making decorative felt carpets in traditional Kazakh style.
31	*Toghyzqumalaqshy* (Qyzylorda)	*Toghyzqumalaq* is an intellectual game of the Kazakh people which is officially recognised as a "sporting game" by the Government of Kazakhstan. He is a master in *toghyzqumalaq* and trainer at a sport school for children.

32	Owner of a restaurant serving traditional Kazakh cuisine (Nur-Sultan)	The restaurant revives and promotes Kazakh cuisine by using modern technologies. The owner of the restaurant has published a book with their old recipes.
33	Well-known scholar and traditional customs preserver (Qyzylorda)	She has written books on traditional customs that are rarely practised among Kazakhs today. She gathers materials about these customs by interviewing older generations from rural areas.
34	Wood craftsperson (Nur-Sultan)	He manufactures wooden parts of yurts, and makes various wooden dishes and musical instruments. He has established a school for young people to learn about the woodworking craft in traditional Kazakh style.
35	*Zhyrshy* (performer of epic tales and stories in the form of songs) (Qyzylorda)	She obtained bachelor and master's degree in traditional music heritage of the Kazakh people. She is working at "The Kazakh Concert" as a *zhyr* performer. She is the student of Amasbek Almatov who is famous throughout the Republic of Kazakhstan and around the world for his singing of the Kazakh traditional epics.
36	Yurt-maker (Russian-speaking audience) (Almaty)	She is the most popular yurt-maker in Kazakhstan, and has been involved in the project of improving " traditional knowledge and skills in making Kyrgyz and Kazakh yurts " inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
37	Yurt-maker (Kazakh-speaking audience) (Almaty)	She was born and grew up in Mongolia. She used to live a nomadic lifestyle and her father was a well-known livestock herder. She and her family migrated to Kazakhstan through the governmental repatriation programme, and she is now making yurts and yurt decorations with her family.
Non-governmental Organisations		
38	Head of the Horse Sport Federation and NGO reviving	The aim of the federation is to revive and preserve traditional horse games which are

	national customs (Nur-Sultan)	now perceived as equestrian sports. The federation has been supported and recognised by the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Committee on Sports and Physical Education of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan. The federation encourages younger generations to become involved in horse-riding sports. It also organises workshops and trainings to improve the skills of judges and stewards with the aid of local and foreign experts, and to assigning ranking positions.
39	Kazakh-language educator for Russian speakers (Almaty)	He is concerned with reviving the Kazakh language and literature. He was born in the north of Kazakhstan in a Russian-speaking family. At the age of 50, he started to learn the Kazakh language and created his own methodology to learn the language for Russian speakers. Moreover, he established an NGO to teach Kazakh to Russian speakers using his own methodology.
40	Head of the NGO " The Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation" (Almaty)	The aim of this NGO is to support and implement the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in reviving and safeguarding the traditional nomadic culture of the Kazakh people. It has proposed that the Government of Kazakhstan establish Tengrism as a state religion.
41	Local NGO working on the development and promotion of local cultural heritage tourism (Nur-Sultan)	She has been running a travel agency for more than 12 years. Her tour agency often participates in international tourism exhibitions and fairs to promote Kazakhstan's tourism products. She is the Head of the National Association of Domestic Tourism of Kazakhstan. The aim of the association is to support local tour operators to develop Kazakhstan's tourism industry.

42	Head of the Craftsmanship Centre *Qazaq-Oner* (Almaty)	The centre spans 800 square meters and features a shopping gallery, workshops, a multimedia centre for traditional music and a restaurant serving national cuisine. It brings together artisans from Almaty and those who are committed to preserving traditional crafts. The centre is responsible for the training and co-ordinating of craftsmen as well as for the organisation of exhibitions, fairs and craft festivals.
43	Manager of Chinese-Kazakh Oil Company (Qyzylorda)	His main responsibility is to arrange financial support for the local governor to support local educational and cultural activities.

3.3.2 Texts

Published texts were used to obtain information on past and present events in Kazakhstan illustrating the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The texts dated from as far back as 1814 and went right up to 2019. These included books and articles in three languages (Kazakh, Russian and English). The researcher consulted books on the history and influence of Russian colonisation on the cultural life of Central Asian people from various libraries across the UK and Kazakhstan (Table 2).

Table2 List of Libraries

N	Library	
1	Bill Bryson Library, Durham University (UK)	During the writing-up of this doctoral research, the researcher inspected relevant books written in English from this library.

2	The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (UK) (SOAS)	SOAS is the world's leading higher education institution in the study of Asia, Africa and the Near and Middle East. Therefore, in comparison with other UK libraries, the SOAS library has extensive literature on Asia in English. As the university has a Central Asian Studies department, its library provides a wide range of literature relevant to the research topic.
3	University College of London (UCL) Library (UK)	UCL Library provides access to a huge range of electronic sources relevant to the research topic. The researcher searched for articles and books in the database of the UCL Library using the following keywords: nomadic culture of the Kazakh people; and the Russian colonisation.
4	The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the UK	The Embassy kindly shared their books related to the research topic upon the researcher's request.
5	Qyzylorda Regional Library named after Tazhibayev (Kazakhstan)	From this library, the researcher collected texts about the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people in Kazakh and Russian.
6	The National Libraries of Kazakhstan located in Astana/Nur-Sultan and Almaty (Kazakhstan)	From these libraries, the researcher collected texts about the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe, and the situation in Kazakhstan after gaining its

		independence (both in Russian and Kazakh).
7	The researcher's personal library	Due to specialising in the history of Kazakhstan, the researcher has extensive literature on the history of Kazakhstan. This helped to shed light on the historical premises and background of the research topic

The collected texts were used in order to gain an understanding of the consequences of the Russian colonisation on the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

3.4 Data collection

This research has relied on both primary and secondary research data. The chapters regarding nomadic Kazakh culture and the Russian and Soviet colonisation of the Kazakh steppe are based on secondary data. Meanwhile, the chapter about the role of stakeholders in reviving and preserving the disrupted heritage of Kazakhstan is grounded in primary research data (interviews).

3.4.1 Interviews

Interviewing was selected as one of the main data collection methods because this would enable the discovery of attitudes and perceptions of the relevant stakeholders about cultural heritage conservation in Kazakhstan. According to Sorensen and Carman (2009, p.9), interviewing is one of the most frequently used methods in cultural heritage studies, because the investigation of different aspects of people's attitudes towards the past and how these are formed serves the main aim of cultural heritage research. Moreover, interviews are more desirable because this research deals with the participants' own experiences and the meanings and

rationales behind of their actions. Interviews are not only conversations from which narrative data are elaborated, they are a lively process which engage active subjects behind interview participants (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). The purpose of interviews is to obtain in-depth data which are "*able to provide more granular detail than quantitative research*" (Greener, 2011 p,94). Interviews maximise the validity and reliability of the research's main findings. They are associated with the inductive research strategy, in which findings that were explored during the research process follow some of the theoretical assumptions on which the research was built.

However, the method of interviewing has been criticised for several reasons. Firstly, interviews are time-consuming. Researchers have to go through a long process, starting from accessing and making contact with participants, then conducting the interviews, followed by transcribing the data and making use thereof. Secondly, the responses of the interview participants mostly depend on how they perceive the researcher(s). In particular, the sex, age, ethnic origin, and the social status of the researcher(s) will have a bearing on the amount of information an interviewee is willing to divulge, and the authenticity thereof. Research findings from interviews also cannot be generalized. Besides these issues, Hammersley and Gomm (2008, p. 100) added that researchers should remember that: *"what people say in an interview will indeed be shaped, to some degree, by the questions they are asked; the conventions about what can be spoken about;...[...]...by what time they think the interviewer wants; by what they believe he/she would approve or disapprove of".* Another problem that affects interviews is interpretation. As noted by Bryman (2012), this refers to the problem of the researcher not being able to perceive events from the perspective of others (interviewees). Such a failure can lead to bias. Thus, interviews are often criticised by positivists due to the lack of objectivity and generalisability associated with them. To ensure the rigour of this study's findings, Lincoln's and Guba's (1985)

criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability have been applied. According to Henderson (1991), credibility in qualitative studies is mostly determined by the researcher having the necessary personal and interpersonal skills to limit biases; the researcher limits bias by developing trust with informants and avoiding being influenced by their reactions or how "reactionary" behaviours select perception. That is why it is crucial for the researcher to establish a friendly rapport with participants. In the present study, this was relatively easy as most of the participants already knew the researcher to some extent. With regard to the strengths and limitations of interviews, and to make the researcher's position clear, the researcher adhered to Robson (2002) and Ho (2006) who stated that, although interviewing is a valuable method of obtaining insights into an interviewee's perceptions, it should also be used in combination with other methods. For example, employing observation subsequent to interviews can allow researchers to explore participants' external behaviours and internal beliefs. Although it can depend on the research questions being asked, employing more than one data collection method contributes to getting richer data and validating the research findings. With this in mind, in this research textual analysis was used as a supplement to interviews.

Nevertheless, there were still several clear motivations behind conducting interviews to answer the research questions of this study. First, interviewing is an appropriate tool for conducting this research as the problem forming the subject of the research - the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe – occurred in the recent past. Thus, the researcher could not have observed it first-hand. In other words, interviews give an opportunity for interviewees to disclose stories and accounts that can provide insights or illumination into events that have already occurred from their own experience. Therefore, finding key informants – representatives of different stakeholders in the preservation of nomadic cultural heritage – was of paramount importance for this research.

In this research, the researcher utilized semi-structured interviews as these allowed the researcher to keep participants focused on specific questions regarding the preservation and promotion of nomadic cultural heritage, while also providing the researcher with flexibility to address any other emerging contextual information that the participants were willing to share in order to answer the research questions even more comprehensively. Secondly, interviews gave the participants an opportunity to share their opinions and perceptions about everyday objects. Related to this, Greener (2011, p.77) pointed out: *"Some people may feel that in public their views are not welcome, or even that their views could harm them personally or professionally if voiced to others in the research setting".* Therefore, the interviews were conducted one-to-one and face-to-face in the interviewee's language in order to decrease any power asymmetry and to establish a friendly rapport. Furthermore, as cultural heritage conservation is considered a sensitive topic because it is tightly bound with politics, conducting face-to-face interviews helped to ensure anonymity and confidentiality, thus making the interviewee more comfortable about speaking openly. In addition, as the purpose of this research was to explore the given topic, interviews seemed the most appropriate data collection method. They allowed for the exploration of the perceptions of the interviewees on the role of the particular stakeholder they represented in the preservation and promotion of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. There is also a commonly held perception that interviews generate comprehensive, thorough, and compound understanding of the human world (Greener, 2011).

3.4.2 Interview piloting

The researcher created a list of questions covering the following themes: work experience; nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people; the Russian colonisation; and revival of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people after

independence. Initially, the questions were in English, and then the researcher translated them into Russian and Kazakh to accommodate participants who do not speak English. Being multilingual, the researcher was able to translate everything herself. Thereafter, the researcher piloted these questions with two people working in the sphere of cultural heritage conservation in Kazakhstan via Skype. This was done in order to test whether the questions were sufficiently clear and understandable. However, a full pilot study was not possible because the number of potential participants was insufficient to do so.

3.4.3 Interview process

According to McCracken (1988), to achieve saturation in research, it is sufficient to conduct between eight and 24 interviews, depending on the research topic. The sample size can be minimal if the research focus or phenomenon is conceptually small. However, when the phenomena is extensive, a vast sample might need to be interviewed before saturation can be achieved. There were 43 participants in this study. The interviews were conducted in the four cities in Kazakhstan in the period between 28th June and 1st September 2017. As mentioned above, the researcher identified potential participants first through monitoring the official website of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Then, the researcher found these identified persons in social networks and contacted them directly. The researcher gave them information about the research and invited them to participate in the study. Some of them declined and some of them did not respond at all. To ensure greater participation, the researcher had to find a gatekeeper – someone who knew and could enable access to the desired participants. For instance, a craftswoman working with felt only agreed to participate in the research when a colleague of the researcher asked her to do so. Making personal contact with desired participants was also effective. For example,

the researcher approached one jeweller in person at an exhibition and told him about the research, after which he agreed to participate.

Having gained the interviewees' consent to participate, the interviews were conducted either at their workplace or in a café. The participant chose the venue in each case. Some of these interviews required a follow-up meeting. In most cases, the researcher met the participant for the first time at the interview, which was unfortunate because the researcher would have preferred to build a personal rapport with them before conducting the interviews. It was impossible to do this due to the fact that the participants were mostly professionals in their fields and thus had limited spare time. In order to accommodate interviewees' schedules, the researcher conducted most of the interviews during their lunch breaks. The researcher tried to identify what each interviewee did in order to preserve the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, how they did it, why they did it, and perhaps, if the opportunity arose, what they would do differently. The duration of interviews ranged between 20 minutes and two hours. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face except for one which was done by phone. The interviews were conducted in the language of the participant: Kazakh or Russian. Some of the participants used a mixture of Kazakh and Russian.

The interviews were audio recorded with the explicit, signed permission of the interviewees and transcribed by the researcher and then summarised in form of notes before being analysed.

3.4.4 Textual analysis

In order to gain an understanding of past events and concepts relating to the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, and the Russian/Soviet colonisation of the Kazakh steppe, collecting texts was considered the most appropriate and effective method. This method can be justified by the

impossibility of conducting interviews with those who had experienced those the relevant events first-hand due to the time elapsed. Textual analysis has been utilized in this research as it has proved to be an effective approach in cultural studies (Barker, 2008). It is a method used to analyse texts in order to understand the cultures of people and their views regarding the world around them. McKee (2003) identified texts as books, articles, magazines, television programmes. For this PhD research, the researcher collected books and articles.

In the process of analysing texts, the researcher had to take into account several issues. Different cultures understand the world in very different ways, and different countries act on different values. In other words, cultures may determine the values attached to things around them. It is also widely agreed that various cultures have differences in relation to the existence of abstract and concrete things. Abstract nouns and references to things that do not have a physical existence vary significantly from culture to culture. Different cultures experience different sense-making practices and they also see reality in different ways. In this case, it was found that the texts can be divided according to the views they reflected. Firstly, the texts written by Russian scholars and Russian-speaking Kazakh scholars viewed the Russian/Soviet colonisation of the Kazakh steppe as part of a mission to "civilize" the nomadic Kazakhs. Secondly, Kazakhstani scholars viewed the Russian/Soviet colonisation of the Kazakh steppe as the destruction of the nomadic cultural heritage of Kazakh people. Finally, Western scholars supported either one of these two views depending on where and when their research had been conducted. Those who conducted their research in Kazakhstan tended to support the second view (that colonisation served to destroy the nomadic cultural heritage). Those who had not conducted their research in Kazakhstan supported the first view, which was characteristic of Russian scholars (see Chapter 2).

There are at least three different approaches to making sense of the world in textual analysis: realist, structuralist and post-structuralist (Phillipov, 2013). In the current research, the researcher has adopted a post-structural perspective. According to this approach, a number of texts can be utilized without having to claim that one of them is the most accurate or correct text. There have been a number of texts written in Kazakh, Russian and English regarding the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, the Russian/Soviet colonisation of the Kazakh steppe and its consequences, and the revival of the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1 Transcription and thematic analysis

The researcher engaged in two main stages of data analysis that are commonly deployed in interview analysis in cultural studies (Pickering, 2008). In the first stage, the analysis concentrated on the transcripts which could be subject to a number of interpretive approaches. The researcher had to immerse herself in the data by attentively producing and reading transcripts and highlighting specific elements which were significant with respect to the research questions. The process of transcription is time-consuming and can take various forms. Wellington (1996) recommended word-for-word transcription and field notes to ensure the quality and accuracy of the data collected. However, the researcher was unable to listen to the respondent and take notes at the same time. Meanwhile, Braun and Clarke (2006) pointed out that thematic analysis does not demand detailed transcription and that it was more important that the transcription suited the aim of the analysis. As the main point of thematic analysis is to provide flexibility to the researcher, the transcription form depends on the specific needs of the researcher. Moreover, in many cases, interviews are not useful because the data given by participants are not relevant to the research. In this case, there was no

point in transcribing interviews that were not going to bear fruit. According to Bryman (2012), this is very common among qualitative interviewers and the main challenge in handling data from qualitative research is its volume. Gerson and Horowitz (2002) designed a style of transcribing qualitative interviews where the researcher can transcribe only the portions of an interview which would be useful and relevant to the research. As this research included 43 interviews lasting between 20 minutes and two hours, this style of transcription was used to transcribe the interviews for the current research.

In the second stage, the researcher worked to establish categories. "Category" is a term that embraces various general phenomena like concepts, discourse, constructs and themes (Stuckey, 2015). Categories emerged from the data through reiteration or through direct links to the research questions or the wider academic literature. As a result, some categories or themes were considered more significant than others and became central to the analysis. After categories were finalised, the researcher started the coding process. The aim of coding is to mark texts to easily detect which category a text passage belongs to. Coding can be done via computer programmes or manually via colouring (Michael, 2018). According to Saldana (2009), manipulating data on paper and writing codes in pencil allows for greater control and ownership of the work. Indeed, the researcher found manually coding to be a convenient method for this research. As Pickering (2008, p. 82) pointed out: "*Condensation and categorisation represent the beginnings of analysis and serve to reduce and structure data so that transcripts become more manageable*". These actions were followed by deep analysis or meaning explanation, in which the researcher went beyond what was said in the transcripts. Since thematic analysis was utilized, the appropriate themes that could be derived from the codes were identified.

Thematic analysis is a method widely used in qualitative research. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) "*thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data*". Based on a thematic analysis, the researcher identified themes and concepts prevalent throughout the interviews. It is the researcher's role to identify the themes and one of the benefits of thematic analysis is that it provides flexibility to the researcher to do so. Saldana (2009) suggested that the final number of main themes or concepts should be kept to a minimum to maintain a coherent analysis. In contrast to Lichtman's (2013) five to seven main themes and Creswell's and Poth's (2007) five to six primary themes, Wolcott (1994) recommended that three main themes would be enough to analyse qualitative data. The researcher followed Saldana's and Walcott's advice and restricted the number of themes to three, namely the roles and activities of the Government of Kazakhstan, the role and activities of international organisations, and the role and activities of non-governmental organisations in reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. However, before analysing these major three themes it was necessary to give some consideration to a fourth one, namely "*the effects of the Russian/Soviet colonisation on the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people*".

Proposed themes were examined in relation to each other, the general research questions, and pertinent academic knowledge. In the process of coding, the researcher was grateful to find that the interviewees who had worked in the cultural sphere in the Soviet period gave rich and complex data that could be useful in determining and analysing the effects of Russian/Soviet colonisation on Kazakh cultural heritage. For example, one of the interviewees who was the Head of the Kazakh Music University comparably described the status and development of traditional Kazakh music in both periods: the Soviet period, and the post-independence period. Rich and complex data could be gleaned from direct quotes taken from the interviews.

3.6 Research considerations

3.6.1 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are very significant for scholars whose research involves people directly. The researcher applied for and gained ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Durham University to conduct this research.

First of all, as one of the data collection methods was interviews, informed consent was gained from each of the participants. Obtaining informed consent is a key ethical matter when conducting interviews. It gives participants an opportunity to become well-informed regarding the nature of the research and the implications of their participation therein (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011). Before conducting the interviews, the researcher gave all participants extensive information about the research and asked them to sign an informed consent form. The participants were informed that they could withdraw from the research at any time without reason. According to Fouka and Mantzorou (2011, p. 5): "*Informed consent seeks to incorporate the rights of autonomous individuals through self-determination. It also seeks to prevent assaults on the integrity of the patient and protect personal liberty and veracity*". Therefore, information about the research and the informed consent forms were translated into the relevant language for each participant.

The anonymity of participants and the confidentiality of the data collected are other important ethical issues (Allmark *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, any personal information that could lead to the identification of a participant was eliminated. The participants were named and categorised according to the stakeholder group they belonged to and the type of activity they were engaged in. Interestingly, some of the participants, being artists, were disappointed to learn about their anonymity being ensured as they wanted their names to be mentioned in the thesis. Meanwhile, the assurance of confidentiality meant that participants were totally

free to provide or conceal as much information as they wanted to or from the researcher. Moreover, the researcher must operate in a way that benefits the participants. In this case, providing meaningful interaction about the state of nomadic cultural heritage with participants allowed them to reflect on this very topic. This was beneficial as the interviewees had to ponder questions that they had not thought about before. The researcher also tried to answer the interviewees' questions based on her own knowledge and experience. For example, some of the participants asked about the process that followed after the inclusion of Kazakhstani cultural heritage sites into the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Respect for privacy was also a major consideration when conducting this research. An intrusion of privacy occurs when confidential and private information is distributed to others, without the participant's knowledge or consent (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011). The participants were informed that the results of this research would be used in the writing-up of a PhD thesis which would be consequently available to the public and might be included in other publications in the future. Furthermore, the data collected were securely stored on a personal laptop and the iCloud drive of the researcher, which is password-protected. Only the researcher and her supervisors had access to the raw data. It is very important that the researcher protects their research participants from potential physical, psychological or social harm during the research or after the dissemination of its results.

3.6.2 Researcher's stance: insider or outsider?

The researcher can be considered as an insider because she is from Kazakhstan, has worked in the area of cultural heritage, and is fluent in the three languages (Kazakh, Russian and English). Therefore, when conducting this research, the researcher could rely on her personal experience in order to understand the given

phenomena (Blaikie, 1993). This was also helpful in recruiting participants and gaining their trust in order to encourage them to share their understandings and views in relation to the research topic.

On the other hand, the researcher could also be considered as an outsider because she has lived in the UK for six years and has obtained an MA in International Cultural Heritage Management at Durham University. Therefore, the researcher had access to international literature and practices in cultural heritage conservation. This allowed the researcher to build a professional distance from the research participants (Bryman, 2012) and to step back from the social phenomena being explored (Blaikie, 1993).

3.6.3 Researching multilingually

Researching multilingually was an important aspect of this research for a number of reasons. Firstly, the research area, Kazakhstan, is a bilingual country. Therefore, the researcher and the participants knew at least two languages (Kazakh and Russian). As mentioned previously, the researcher translated all information about the research, the informed consent forms and the research questions from English into both Russian and Kazakh. This was done in order to enable all interviewees to express their ideas as comfortably as possible, regardless of their preferred language. This measure was expected to help the researcher gain in-depth data from the participants (Holmes *et al.*, 2013). Consequently, when transcribing and analysing the interview data, the researcher translated only the main themes and relevant quotations into English. Conducting the analysis in the language of the interviewee is considered an asset which can make the participants feel more closely involved with the research (Holmes *et al.,* 2013).

As for textual analysis, researching multilingually allowed the researcher to refer to original texts in three languages (Kazakh, Russian and English) in order to gain

a holistic view of the research topic, bringing the perspectives of Kazakh-speaking, Russian-speaking and English-speaking scholars together on the impact of Russian/Soviet colonisation on the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The same benefit applied to the theoretical literature review, as the researcher was able to draw on the works of Kazakh-, Russian- and English-speaking scholars to build the theoretical framework for this research.

3.6.4 Research validity and reliability

Any research is evaluated according to its validity and reliability. Validity in this regard means that the research is authentic and credible (Golafshani, 2003). In order to ensure the validity of this research, the researcher applied several techniques. Firstly, data sources and data collection methods triangulation were applied. Triangulation means utilizing more than one method to gather data on the same topic (Ahmed, 2007). This is a way of ensuring the validity of research through the employment of a variety of methods to gather data on the same topic, which includes using different types of samples as well as methods of data collection. However, the aim of triangulation is not necessarily to cross-validate data but rather to identify different dimensions of the same phenomenon (Ahmed, 2007). The researcher tried to include all stakeholders in the research: governmental, non-governmental, international organisations, and local people (cultural heritage practitioners, artists, craftspeople etc.). As for data collection methods, the researcher used interviews and textual analysis. Furthermore, the research was conducted in the language of the country under examination and/or of the participants, which also ensured the authenticity of the research. Finally, the preliminary findings of this research were sent to the research participants for checking. This assisted in maintaining the internal validity of this case study. As for external validity or generalisability, this research can contribute to the expansion of knowledge about the stakeholders' roles in preserving the cultural

heritage of nomadic people of Central Asia as well as the influence of Russian/Soviet colonisation on the cultures of Central Asian countries. It also contributes, more widely, to understanding the uses and abuses of cultural heritage. This means that the research can achieve analytical, rather than statistical, generalisability.

In terms of the reliability of this case study, a rich description of the data collection and data analysis processes help to maintain the consistency and strengthen the replicability of the research design. These processes have been described in detail above and would potentially allow any researcher to replicate this study. Moreover, the case study provides an in-depth description of the case settings. Therefore, a chapter on the contextual information relating to the case, namely Kazakhstan's past and present, has been included this thesis.

CHAPTER 4. RUSSIAN COLONISATION OF THE KAZAKH STEPPE AND DISRUPTED HERITAGE

The consequences of the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe and the ensuing colonial policy on the culture of the Kazakh nomads were far reaching: bringing about the breakdown of much of the traditional nomadic culture. Due to the Russian attempts to reorganize and change the main structure of Kazakh society, dramatic changes took place in all aspects of Kazakh culture. This chapter aims to examine in detail the effects of Russian colonial policy on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In order to achieve this, aspects of cultural heritage such as oral art and literature, holidays, festivals and amusements, language, ethnomedical practices, musical cultures, language and religious heritage are examined, before and after the Russian conquest. Initially by providing descriptions of the shared characteristic features of these traditional customs, then summarizing changes to them brought about during the Russian/Soviet period particularly as a result of colonial policies and practices.

4.1 The Kazakh tradition of oral art

Before the Russian conquest, Kazakh literature, like other Central Asian literatures, was based on folklore. As Winner (1958, p. 28) pointed out:

The Kazakh folklore tradition grew out of the vast and rich folklore heritage of Central Asia. Much of Kazakh folklore can actually be traced to the very early period considerably before the formation of the Kazakh federation as there are frequent references in the texts to events which occurred among the individual, and still independent tribes. As the Kazakh nation grew, there developed a most expressive and often powerful oral art which played an important part in Kazakh cultural activity and which lays before us much of the story of the Kazakh way of life.

Nomadic Kazakhs produced an almost inexhaustible amount of folklore, which appears in a wide range of genres from the simple song to ceremonial songs, tales, legends, fantastic stories, and finally the heroic *epos* (i.e. epic poetry transmitted orally) (Reichl, 1989). There is no doubt that this folklore heritage of the nomadic Kazakhs is an expression of their whole way of life and culture. For example, the ritual songs show the essence of definite, preassigned tribal and clan rites (Gabitov *et al.*, 2013). The tales and legends themselves demonstrate a strong tradition of tribal lore and mythology. The heroic *epos* played a crucial role in the life of nomadic Kazakhs as they presented a tradition of struggle and warfare for conquest or for defence against enemies (Sipos, 2001). The economic lifestyle of the nomadic Kazakhs was based on fighting over grazing lands with neighbouring nomadic tribes and settled populations to the south. Such a way of life led to the growth of an epic tradition where heroes, by bravery and force or by their supernatural powers, guided their people to victory and safety (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky, 1969).

To a large extent, the original authors of such folk productions remain unknown. Epics, songs, tales or legends honouring specific events were formulated or reproduced in improvisation during gatherings (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky, 1969). They were then transferred from generation to generation orally. There were particular bards (*aqyn, zhyraū*) who travelled from *aūyl*[4] to *aūyl* to recite tales in prose or verse or sang their songs or epics accompanied by musical instruments (Sydiqov, 1974). An *aqyn* was an improvising poet and singer (Margulan, 1993). The *zhyraū* was the one who specialized in the recital of epic songs (Qazybayuly, 2004). Both *aqyn* and *zhyraū*, relying absolutely on memory, often performed modifications in the words or their own interpretations of the folklore (Sydiqov,

[4] The *Auyl* is the migratory unit of the Kazakhs, which generally consisted of several extended families drawn from the same clan.

1974). They not only composed and performed their own songs, but also gathered them from other tribes and distributed them by recitation from memory.

Aytys was an essential part of every Kazakh celebration. The *aytys* reflects the musical and poetic ability of the Kazakh people. The literal meaning of *aytys* is "dialogue, conversation, speech" (Zholdasbekov, 2004, a). *Aytys* refers to improvisational oral poetry that must be sung or spoken with the accompaniment of the *dombyra* (Karakulov, 1992). Two people (*aqyns*) competed with one another in a verbal duel extemporizing a dialogue on topics chosen by the audience (Figure 14) (Berdibayeva *et al.*, 2012). According to Berdibayeva *et al.* (2012, p. 857):

"Aytys singers must have the quick ability to poetically find the answer, to prove the correctness, to reject pressure from the opponent, to find its weaknesses, and to throw into confusion is a remarkable art. All these characteristics may be only in the big talents who had a wide experience and skills in improvisations".

The content of the *aytys* is usually drawn from everyday life. The victor is the performer considered to have shown the most wisdom, inventiveness, wit and knowledge of history and cultural traditions (Zholdasbekov, 2004b); who has demonstrated originality in using metaphors and has left their adversaries literally speechless. In such competitions, the career of almost all the professional *aqyns* began. Only after defeating older and recognised *aqyns* in such competitions could the young *aqyn* claim to be a professional *aqyn* (Qazybayuly, 2004).

Fig. 14 *Aytys*



Source: Massaget, 2020

Kazakh ritual songs express the attitudes of the people toward outstanding events in their life. Marriage ritual songs can be divided into three types: the *syngsū* (sung by the bride when she was leaving the parental house), the *zhar-zhar* (sung by both males and females to applaud the groom and bride), and *bet ashar* (sung when the bride arrived at the home of groom) (Argynbayev, 1978). Most of the wedding songs were dramatic in character. For example, the literal meaning of the *syngsū* is the weeping of the bride (Qonyratbayev, 1994). According to Kazakh rules of exogamy, marriage can only occur between couples who are unrelated by blood for seven generations (Argynbayev, 1978). Thus, Kazakh girls often married into far distant *aūyls*. Moreover, girls were not married to their chosen ones (Hudson, 1938). In order to sing the *syngsū*, the bride with her friends visited all her relatives. In her song, she mentioned not only her personal grief but also the plight of womanhood in general as follows (Argynbayev, 1978):

A goose swims with the stream in a little brook,
A young woman must now forsake her native home.
If you drip blood into water, the water will carry it away speedily
And if you are married, a stranger will carry you far away

(Winner, 1958, p. 39).

The *zhar-zhar* was sung between young Kazakh men and young women in the form of dialogue. The new life of the bride is characterized from the position of both the man and the woman (Matyzhanov, 2007). From the point of view of young men, the bride has to abandon her family (*törkin*) and dedicate herself to her new family (*qayyn zhurt*) (Matyzhanov, 2007). On the other hand, young women described the loss of freedom of the bride and the sad parting from her native home (Argynbayev, 1978):

Girls: A pattern, just like a verse, is placed on the left, *zhar-zhar*,
The barren mares are being slaughtered for the feast, *zhar-zhar*.
But I shall implore my mother to beg my father, *zhar-zhar*.
To let me stay at home with my own people, *zhar-zhar*

(Winner, 1958, p. 39).

Young men: Beautiful is youth with its young fire, *zhar-zhar*,
Like a lovely bird, to strangers you will go, *zhar-zhar*.
Now in your father you must place no more hope, *zhar-zhar*.
You will be carried off by him who paid the *qalym, zhar-zhar*

(Winner, 1958, p.37).

The literal meaning of the *bet ashar* is "uncovering the face" (Figure 15) (Matyzhanov, 2007). This song shows the particular duties of the bride in her new house and how she has to respect her husband and his family. During the

performance of the *bet ashar*, the bride was expected to listen and bow to her new family (Matyzhanov, 2007)

> Rising in the early morning, little bride,
> Never walk upright, little bride.
> When cattle comes near the *zhurt*,
> Never hit at it with the *zhurt* stakes.
> Never speak lies, little bride,
> Grimacing with mouth and nose.
> Never pass your husband's elder brother, little bride
>
> (Winner, 1958, p.40).

Fig. 15 *Bet ashar* - "uncovering the face" of bride at the groom's home, Qyzylorda



Source: author's photo, 2017

There were several types of ritual song related to death. The *estirtū* told of the death of individuals (Arynov, 1990). It was followed by the song of consolation (*köngil aytu*). The *zhoqtaū* was the song of mourning which was performed by the

closest female relative of the deceased (Arynov, 1990). Mothers, wives, daughters or sisters of the deceased were required to execute a *zhoqtaū* every sunrise and sunset for one year (Sipos, 2001). The main purpose of the *zhoqtaū* was to outline the good qualities of the deceased and to convey grief over his or her death (Sipos, 2001):

> My gaze turned away from God,
> All colour disappeared from my face,
> When my prince and master went away.
> When spring came, also my bazar went away.
> The sun's rays were darkened,
> My white falcon flew away and turned around (.e., died)
>
> (Winner, 1958, p.45)

The heroic *epos* was the most important folklore type among nomadic Kazakhs. The hero of the *epos* represents the cultural representation of the ideal personality and the *epos* itself expresses the cultural ideals of the nomads, their representation of love, honour, and prestige (Reichl, 1989). The *Orkhon* inscriptions, which are two famous monuments, offer strong evidence of the early emergence of heroic *epos* (Figure 16). These inscriptions provide the history of the *Turkic Khaganate* (sixth-eighth century CE) which was a powerful federation of nomadic tribes, including tribes that later constructed the Kazakh federation (Zholdasbekov, 2001). The *Orkhon* inscriptions were devoted to the leader of the Turkic Khaganate, Bilge-Qaghan, and to his younger brother and famous hero, Kül-Tegin (Zholdasbekov, 2001). The inscriptions provide evidence of the struggle to achieve independence from the Chinese and fights against neighbouring tribes. More importantly, the inscriptions describe the heroic characteristics of Bilge-Qaghan and Kül-Tegin (Zholdasbekov, 2001). According to the

inscriptions, Bilge-Qaghan engaged in forty-seven campaigns (Zholdasbekov, 2001).

Fig. 16 The Orkhon inscriptions



Source: Uniface, 2020

Kazakh legends and tales are epic in character and can be divided into the following types: fairy tales, traditional love tales, children's stories, and animal stories. They are often concerned with the struggle for existence in Kazakh nomadic society (Sipos, 2001). Prevalent themes are the danger of storms and drought and the never-ending quest for better pasturelands and for a better future overall (Kendirbayeva, 1994). Kazakh tales and legends were transferred by professional wandering storytellers. They were able to tell the stories with various dramatic elements and imitate the sounds of nature and the sounds of animals (Sydiqov, 1974). During the performance of legends, the storytellers could identify themselves completely with the hero. Their performances were accompanied by the traditional Kazakh musical instruments: *dombyra, qobyz* and *syrnai* (Karakulov, 1992).

4.1.1 Kazakh oral art and literature during the Soviet period

Russian colonial policy resulted in Kazakh oral literature being transferred into written literature. This meant that Kazakh traditional nomadic literature no longer existed (Qonyratbayev, 1991). The Russian literacy campaign or "liquidation of illiteracy" policy was the main reason for the death of oral “literature” (Bacon, 1966).

In the early period of Russian colonisation, the ancient tradition of oral art continued to play a significant role in Kazakh life. Many of the ancient Kazakh epics, legends, and other oral forms were recorded and transferred into written form (Qonyratbayev, 1991). Between 1900 and 1920, groups of Kazakh éites lived with the idea that the traditional Kazakh literature should be revived and should become a vital part of the new culture (Qonyratbayev, 1991). They transferred it into written form, with some changes, and published a number of Kazakh ancient epics, such as *Aiman-Sholpan, Qyz-Zhibek* and *Enlik-Kebek* (Qonyratbayev, 1991). By their uncompromising attitude towards the national heritage, they played a significant role in the glorification and romancing of the old nomadic life in the traditional epics. However, Soviet policy concluded that the traditional oral art was in conflict with the ideal of Soviet society and that it needed to be forbidden or should only exist in an utterly changed form (Bacon, 1966).

Kazakh oral literature, especially epics, was forbidden for two reasons: for nationalist emphasis and for avoiding dissemination of socially undesirable information (Qazybayuly, 2004). In 1947 B. Stepanov, second director of the propaganda section of the Central Committee of the Kazakh Communist party, criticized Kazakh scholars, particularly Mukhtar Auezov, for the glorification of Kazakh epics (Auezov, 1991). Stepanov blamed Auezov for a "mistaken relationship to the past" and for the glorification of feudal traditions and for nationalistic views (Auezov, 1991, p.86). The epics, particularly *Edige* and

Alpamys, were attacked for showing Kazakh Khans and Islam in a positive way and for the idealisation of aggressive warfare (Auezov, 1991). Other Kazakh oral productions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were criticized for promoting the struggle against the Russians and the glorification of independence (Qazybayuly, 2004). In other words, Russian colonial policy encouraged Kazakh people to ignore the Kazakh ancient oral art tradition and instead to enjoy Soviet folklore.

The Kazakh tradition of oral art was changed by written literature. Kazakh poets and writers developed all types of literature such as poetry, drama, and prose (Auezov, 1991). Most of the Kazakh writers and poets graduated from the Russian high schools or universities (for example, Shoqan Uälihanov, Ybyray Altynsarūn, Abay Qunanbayev and others) (Auezov, 1991). They were influenced by Russian and Western scholars and writers. However, many restrictions were imposed on Kazakh writers and poets by the Russian Soviets (Auezov, 1991). In order to publish their works, they had to follow various rules. Kazakh writers or poets of the Soviet period tended to write about the settling of the nomads in collective farms and about agriculture (Winner, 1958). It is common to see, in the published sources, discussion of the "new happy life" of former nomads which provided security from the hazards of nature. Agriculture was considered as the best form of economy by the Russian administration (Qirabayev, 1998). For example, Abdyqadyrov's short story "*Tulpa*r" (The Winged Horse) recounts a struggle over pastureland and the effect that the persistent assaults of one tribe had on another (Berdibayev, 1971). In other words, the nomadic way of life was presented in a negative light.

The new Kazakh literature encouraged Kazakh people to work in industry. There were numerous published sources about the promotion of the oil, coal, and other industries (Auezov, 1991). After the building of the *Turksib* railroad in the Kazakh

steppe, many Kazakh poems illustrated the railroad as the best way to make the Kazakh land join with the rest of the Soviet Union (Auezov, 1991). Thus, with the help of literature, they encouraged the Kazakh people to work in the railroad industry.

> A group of scouts has come,
> But this time the Kazakhs welcome them.
> Like the legendary horse,
> The Turksib will be met and greeted by all the land,
> And it will warm our hearts with joy
>
> (Winner, 1958, p. 164).

If ancient oral literature promoted Islam and Sharia as the best religion and way of life, Soviet Kazakh literature was anti-Islam. Islam was viewed as not only the opponent of the Soviet Union, but also as the opponent of all advancements of mankind (Bacon, 1958). In addition, Kazakh poets and writers were forced by the Soviet policy to advocate against the old way of life of the Kazakh people (Berdibayev, 1971). The restricted position of women in traditional Kazakh society was the most common theme among writers (Auezov, 1991). They criticized the custom that forced Kazakh girls to marry the man who paid her *qalym*. For instance, Maylin's novel "*Shuganyng Belgisi (Faithful Gun)*" (1926), Müsürepov's short story "*Shugyla [Urgent]*" (1933), and Auezov's novel *"Abay Zholy (The Path of Abay)"* (1947), describe the life of unhappy women who were the victims of old traditions (Qonyratbayev, 1994).

After the Russian conquest of the Kazakh steppe, the rules of *aytys* were changed. According to the new rules, the winner was obliged to sing twenty-four couplets of four lines each (Auezov, 1972). The first six couplets had to be dedicated to the Russian rulers (Auezov, 1972). The next three couplets had to be committed to the new Russian rulers of the Kazakh steppe. In the following six couplets, the

aqyn was required to praise Russians and their "new happy life" that was given by them (Auezov, 1972). Finally, the last couplets could be about the topic that was chosen for the *aytys* (Auezov, 1972), despite the fact that the original idea of *aytys* was to express the truth and complain about the current issues that people were unhappy with by way of singing. Through the new rules for *aytys*, Russian colonial policy tried to control the Kazakhs (Auezov, 1972). Instead of expressing truths, *aqyns* were forced to praise Russians.

During the Soviet period, the folk songs of the Kazakh people also required to change their characteristics. Kazakh *aqyns* were obliged to praise the new Soviet *batyrs (herioes).*[5] If before, *batyrs* of folk songs were legendary or historical Kazakh heroes who defended their people from enemies, the new *batyrs* could be Party Leaders or Civil War leaders (Auezov, 1991). In addition, the new *batyrs* could be from any nations of the Soviet Union. Numerous songs and legends were produced about Soviet leaders, especially about Lenin and Stalin (Auezov, 1991). These new folk songs and legends kept all the early folklore characteristics. For example, in typical epic fashion, the new heroes were compared to a falcon, to a tiger, or to strong horse (Auezov, 1991). They were described as leaders who could lead the Kazakh people to a better life. For example, this song by *Bek aqyn* is about Stalin:

> Bold, beautiful and strong is the *zholbarys* (tiger),
> The striped hero of the steppe,
> But many times stronger,
> Many times braver than the *zholbarys* – are you?
> Sharp-sighted is the falcon, and the eagle of the steppe,
> Looking o'er the earth from soaring heights;
> But it is you who have brought the people these heights,

[5] Heroic warrior

More far-sighted than the falcon – are you?
The people know much wisdom,
Having come to the sun from darkness.
But the people follow you, for
Wiser than all on earth, - are you?

(Winner, 1958, pp. 160-161)

During Second World War, the Soviet regime used Kazakh oral traditions as a vehicle for agitation-propaganda (Yilmaz, 2012). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP), like the Soviet Union, used all kinds of art and literature, especially folklore, for political, ideological purposes (Tuohy, 1991). As Harris (2005, p. 391 p.) states:

"Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ideology views all Chinese folk music as explicitly political. Songs and even instrumental pieces may be judged reactionary, and therefore to be supressed, or they may serve as tools in the service of the Party's political needs, to be used as the raw material for development into new compositions and as vehicles for propaganda".

In 1930, in the "liberated" area of Kiangsi in Northwest China, "Revolutionary" tales and songs were distributed among the soldiers to enhance patriotism (Eminov, 1975). Even Chinese researchers stated that art and literature could be primarily an ideological tool to shape a new identity for the Chinese. As a result, folklore researchers were directed to collect the Chinese oral art and literature from various provinces (Eminov, 1975).

From the first weeks of the Second World War innumerable factories, plants and institutes were moved to Central Asia by the Soviet regime, including Kazakhstan (Masanov, 2011). In other words, Kazakhstan was mobilized to support the war effort. The Soviet regime constructed an agitation-propaganda Committee where

Kazakh intelligentsia, including writers, *aqyns*, and historians, played a significant role (Yilmaz, 2012). Although this contradicted the earlier policy of banning traditional literature, all forms of literature, especially folklore, were revived for political, ideological purposes. The main aim of this Committee was to encourage the Kazakh people to provide practical support to the Front. In order to achieve this aim, the heroic past of the Kazakh people was recreated (Yilmaz, 2012). Kazakh traditional heroic epic and legends were published and distributed among the Kazakh people for free. Moreover, Kazakh *aqyns* were promoted through official propaganda to create songs in traditional epic style (Winner, 1958). In their songs *aqyns* had to connect the heroes of the ancient epics with those who fought against the Germans at the front.

To sum up, after the Russian conquest of Kazakhstan, there were significant changes in the traditional literature of the Kazakh people. The ancient tradition of oral poetry and song was modified. Kazakh folk literature changed its characteristics. Kazakh literature was used as one of the instruments in Russian colonial policy.

4.2 Holidays, Festivals and Amusements

In traditional Kazakh nomadic life, folk celebrations (*meiram, toy, as*) marked important events. Like other countries where Islam was prevalent, it was traditional to feast on the two annual religious holidays (Eid): *Oraza Ait* and *Qurban Ait* (Bacon, 1966). *Oraza Ait* (Eid Al-Fitr) was celebrated at the end of the most important month for Muslims, the month of holy Ramadan, when believers fasted with the purpose of spiritual purification and atonement of sins (Bacon, 1958). The word "*Ait*" indicates "requital", and it is believed that Allah manifests mercy to people for every act of worship during the month of Ramadan (Derbisäli, 2010). Although not all nomadic Kazakhs fasted, this holiday was celebrated in every family (Bacon, 1966). During this holiday, Kazakhs

congratulated each other, and tried to forgive and meet each other. Most importantly, people tried to show mercy and help needy people in the form of gifts of food and cattle (*sadaqa*) (Derbisäli, 2010). Close relatives gathered and prepared festive tables (*dastarkhan*). Like other holidays and festivals, *Oraza Ait* ended with various games and entertainment (Derbisäli, 2010).

Qurban Ait (Eid Al-Adhu) was one of the important festivals for the Kazakhs. According to the Quran, this festival is associated with the Prophet Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac to Allah (Derbisäli, 2010). During this festival, Kazakh families were required to sacrifice a sheep (Figure 17). Some families combined their resources for a joint sacrifice (Derbisäli, 2010). Even economically disadvantaged families managed to sacrifice at least once in a lifetime (Bacon, 1966). The sacrificial meat was shared out among close relatives, and the most esteemeded part of the meat was given to the mullah. After the prayers and sacrifice, Kazakhs gathered in open areas, where they enjoyed special foods together (Derbisäli, 2010). Younger generations played national games and sung traditional songs.

Fig. 17 A prayer before sacrificing sheep, 1907



Source: From the Catalogue that represents photo-illustrative materials on the traditional culture of the Kazakhs kept in the oldest museum of Russia – the Peter the Great Anthropology and Ethnography Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 1907, Museum registration N1400

However, the most important festival among nomadic Kazakhs was *Nauryz*. Originally this festival came from pre-Islamic Iran and related to Zoroastrianism (Omarov, 1990). Since Kazakhs before Islam practiced Zoroastrianism, this festival did not lose its value even after Islam came to the Kazakh steppe (Myrzahanova, 2013). Zoroastrians were sunworshippers and, according to this belief, *Nauryz* is a festival celebrating the sun's return after the long winter and the incoming of spring (Myrzahanova, 2013). *Nauryz* is celebrated on the 22nd of March, the day of the spring equinox. This holiday is also known as "*Ulystyng uly küni*" which means "the Great Day of the Nation" (Omarov, 1990). *Nauryz* is celebrated not only among Kazakhs, but also among all Central Asian peoples. It is considered to be the "New Year" holiday. According to Kazakh legend, every year during *Nauryz* Eve (the night between the 21st and 22nd of March) the wise elder *Kadyr-Ata* strolls across the Earth and brings people happiness and wealth (Omarov, 1990). When the morning comes, he opens the door to the sky and lets spring come to the world. For the nomadic Kazakhs, *Nauryz* is associated with the first milking (Omarov, 1990). It was the symbol of new growth. The form of festivity was meant to reflect the deep affiliation with nature.

The celebration of *Nauryz* started with the traditional meeting at sunrise. Kazakhs congratulated each other on the coming New Year and wished each other warm words and sang songs related to this holiday. The presence of the number seven was important in this festival (Kämalashuly, 2005). In pre-Islamic Iran, *Nauryz* was established as the seventh and most significant rituals of Zoroastrianism (Omarov, 1990). Among Kazakhs it is reflected in the seven days of the week or time units of universal eternity. Thus, the main dish of this holiday is prepared from seven ingredients such as wheat, millet, milk, meat, salt, water and butter (Kämalashuly, 2005).

The traditional *Nauryz* table was special. It is believed by the Kazakhs that the more food they had on the table, the better and more efficient their life would be in the coming year (Kämalashuly, 2005). On *Nauryz* Eve, a bull was sacrificed and a special dish "*bell-koterer*" (posture straightening) was prepared from the meat. According to Kazakh traditions, the bull was regarded as one of the most powerful animals and meals prepared from its meat would give people strength and stamina (Kämalashuly, 2005). Every family would lay a *dastarkhan* (festive table). The Mullah would read prayers dedicated to the ancestors before and after the meal (Kämalashuly, 2005). At the end of the meal, the oldest men among them would give a blessing (*bata*) so that prosperity would never leave the family.

Entertainment was one of the crucial parts of this festival. Kazakhs played traditional games, sang folk songs and young unmarried people swung on an *Altybakan* (Figure 18), a large hanging swing with colourful decorations (Kämalashuly, 2005). A special part of the entertainment was wrestling, where the winners won respect among the people (Bazarbek, 1999). People who considered themselves to be smart enjoyed taking part in the competitions in tongue-twisting (*zhangyltpash*) or riddle solving (*zhumbaq*). The festivity was always followed by group games like traditional horse races (Bazarbek, 1999). Yet, the most remarkable and most-liked among the young were the games called "*Aikysh-uishysh*" (towards each other) and "*Audaryspaq*" where *dzhigits* (skilful horsemen) had to pull each other down from their saddles (Bazarbek, 1999). Both girls and boys could take part in these games. A girl would frequently attract a *dzhigit* to compete with her. According to the rules, if he won, he had the opportunity to marry her, and if she won he had to obey her and execute her every desire (Bazarbek, 1999). The celebration took place till sunset when, according to tradition, good destroyed evil.

Fig. 18 *Altybakan,* EXPO-2017, Astana



Source: author's photo, 2017

Another festival related to the celebration of the spring was called "*qymyzmuryndyq*". It had great popularity among nomadic Kazakhs as it was dedicated to the migration of a tribe or the whole *auyl* from the winter camp to the summer camp in the early spring (Kämalashuly, 2005). According to the tradition, the migration, accompanied by young people, was usually guided by the most beautiful girl holding the flag of the tribe (Kämalashuly, 2005). They were followed by other people and their cattle. The festival was celebrated until late at night in the new camp, gradually substituting one game for another (Kämalashuly, 2005).

4.2.1 The celebration of the holidays and festivals of Kazakh people during the Soviet period

A significant condition for the construction of Soviet culture was the creation of new holidays and festivals that would meet the concepts of the Soviet values. The

development of the Soviet holidays and festivals was based on the priorities of the ideological work of the party. During the shifting from capitalism to socialism (1928-1932) all the old festivals, traditions and rituals were condemned as anti-revolutionary, thus presumably in conflict with the new socialist regime (Caşu, 2014). Holidays and festivals that were created during this period had an historical and revolutionary nature and emphasised twork values such as the anniversary of the October Revolution (7-8 November) or the Day of the Fighting Forces of the International Proletariat (1 May) (Serhy, 2006). Between 1934-1936 the Soviet administration declared the "victory of communist ideas" (Caşu, 2014). In order to reframe the so-called harmful traditions of the past as philistinism and address the 'detrimental' impact of the mosques on the society, the new holidays and festivals were embedded in the arsenal of propoganda and agitation section (Serhy, 2006).

After the Russian conquest of the Kazakh steppe (1861), great changes occurred in the celebration of the holidays and festivals of the Kazakh people. Everything which was related to Islam, including celebrating Islamic holidays, was forbidden by law (Kämalashuly, 2005). Thus, the Kazakh people were not allowed to celebrate the two main Islamic holidays Eid Al-Fitr (*Oraza Ait*) and Eid Al-Adhu (*Qurban Ait*). Those who tried to celebrate these Islamic holidays were punished by the Russian authorities (Kämalashuly, 2005). *Nauryz* was, instead, promoted as one of the most significant holidays during Soviet times by the Soviet administration (Eitzen, 1999). *Nauryz* is not related to Islam (see Chapter 6). *Nauryz* was characterised as representing the unity of the Soviet Union nations and was encouraged simultaneously as a multi-national holiday and national occasion. It was a popular holiday in Kazakhstan and was celebrated over several weeks not only among Kazakhs but also among all nationalities that lived in Kazakhstan, including Russians and other Slavic people (Eitzen, 1999) (Figure 19).

Fig. 19 Celebrating *Nauryz,* 2020



Sourse: Stan kz (2020)

The next public holiday to be promoted during the Soviet period was International Women's Day. The main meaning of this newly created "official heritage" holiday was to respect women and women's rights (Rolf, 2009). International Women's Day (8th March) obtained its official status as a public holiday in the 1970s and 1980s and was widely celebrated among all nationalities of the Soviet Union (Rolf, 2009). This holiday was initiated to highlight "women's equal opportunity" and their contribution to the development of the Soviet State (Rolf, 2009) (Figure 20). On this holiday, the Soviet authorities tended to emphasize that Kazakh women had not had equal rights and only had a low position in society before Russian rule and only gained an equal position after Russian rule. Therefore, Kazakh women were expected to be proud to live in the Soviet Union and celebrate this holiday (Kämalashuly, 2005). On International Women's Day Kazakhstani men were supposed to distribute tulips to their wives, mothers, close women relatives and colleagues. On that day, men undertook all the home responsibilities and were encouraged to understand what it was like to be female in Kazakhstan (Rolf, 2009).

Fig. 20 The Soviet-Era International Women's Day Poster, 1932

March 8: A day of rebellion by working women against kitchen slavery. Say no to the oppression and vacuity of household work!



Source: Starove, 2021

International Worker's Day or May Day became one of the dominant holidays in Kazakhstan after the Russian conquest. At first, it was designed to emphasize Bolshevik rule and later the cohesion of the Soviet Union (Rudnev, 1979). This holiday had the multi-ethnic imagery of an international workers' state. On International Worker's Day parades were organised in the boulevards and squares in all the cities of Kazakhstan. In the evening, there were mass entertainments with the participation of famous actors and singers (Rudnev, 1979). As Stalin described Kazakhstan as a "laboratory of nations", this holiday was intended to show that Kazakhstan was a home for many nationalities (Demko, 1969, p.61). It was customary on this holiday to organise concerts where each nation demonstrated their traditional dances and songs in colourful national costumes (Rolf, 2009). Moreover, it was common to all Central Asian countries, including

Kazakhstan, to celebrate notable Soviet Union holidays such as New Year's Day and Victory Day (celebrating the united Soviet victory in the "great patriotic war" or Second World War) (Figure 21).

Fig. 21 Celebrating Victory Day, Astana, 2018



Source: Sputnik.kz (2021)

The Soviet administration was used holidays and festivals as a tool in creation a new society. One of the most important saspects of celebration festivals and holidays was the Soviet attempts to build a unified country out of ethnically diverse and geographically dispersed territories. During celebrations the Soviet administration employed print media, documentary films, museum exhibitions, radio broadcasts, and popular songs to unite citizens from all gographic areas into the imagined Soviet land (Caşu, 2014). Celebrations of festivals and holidays took place as the purges and political repression of the Soviet élite intensified and most of the Soviet population suffered from poverty (Caşu, 2014). Thus, the Soviet administration utilised holidays and festivals to divert attention form the excesses of the regime. Moreover, holidays and festivals were supposed to help in the

transformation the Soviet Union from a "backward" peasant society to an advanced industrial one (Zelenchuk, 1976). Stalin promised Soviet workers a better standard of living in substitution for their hard work and stated: "*life has become better, comrades; life has become more joyous, and when you are living joyously, work turns out well*" (Karen, 2000, p.15). Overall, participating in festivals and holidays was considered as an appropriate behavior for model Soviet people.

Although the maintanance of the Soviet holidays and festivals varied, mostly all holidays and festivals were promoted during mass meetings. The Soviet officilas assembled the Kazakh Soviet citizens, usually at their school or workplace or in communal living quarters to propoganda the meaning of holidays and festivals and their link to the current policy (Choi, 2002). In such meetings the Kazakh Soviet officials praised those who achived something important for the Soviet Union and encouraged others to even greater achievments in the future (Karen, 2000). Overall, the celebrations of holidays and festivals occured between three distinct groups: the Soviet administration that established official policies on celebrations, the Soviet cadres who managed celebrations at the local level, and the citizens who took part in them.

To sum up, after the Russian conquest of the Kazakh Steppe, there were tremendous changes in the celebration of holidays and festivals. Kazakh people were not allowed to celebrate the two main religious holidays: Eid Al-Fitr (*Oraza Ait*) and Eid Al-Adhu (*Qurban Ait*). Although Nauryz remained a public holiday, the main purpose of this holiday was changed. If originally the main aim of *Nauryz* was to express the deep affection for nature, after the Russian conquest it was to celebrate multi-ethnicity and the unity of the Soviet Union. The Kazakh people started to widely celebrate holidays such as International Women's Day,

International Worker's Day, New Year's Day, and Victory Day that were not relevant to the national identity and distinctiveness of the Kazakh nomadic people.

4.3 Kazakh Ethnomedical Practices

Folk or traditional medicine plays a vital role in healing illnesses in many countries, contributing to meeting many primary health care needs. Some organisations like UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO) have recognised the cultural foundation of folk medicine. The *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003) included folk or traditional medicine as an integral part of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Folk or traditional medicine is defined by the WHO (2020) as follows:

The sum total of the knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health, as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness.

Usually, folk or traditional medicine contains plant-, animal-, and mineral-based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques, or exercises employed singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose, and prevent illness (WHO, 2019). This form of medicine relies on a worldview that accepts the mental, social, spiritual, physical, and ecological features of health and well-being. Folk or traditional medicine is viewed as the common heritage of indigenous people and is regarded as vital in various areas such as indigenous knowledge, traditional healing practices, pharmacopoeia and shamanism (Holliday, 2008). Kazakh traditional medicine embraces all of these areas and can be considered as a particular example of nomadic traditions.

Kazakh ethnomedicine is distinguishable for its rich and diverse heritage, which brought together both pre-Islamic shamanistic traditions and Islamic practices

(Oskenbay, 2013). Shamans and mullahs were considered as doctors, acting to expel evil spirits. According to Kazakh beliefs, evil spirits were considered to lie at the root of every disease (Toleubayev, 2005). Kazakhs believed that shamans *(baqsy)* had a special connection with spirits. The term *baqsy* came from *chagatai* and means healer or witch doctor (Ualihanov, 1985). The Kazakhs believed that, with the help of spirits, shamans could treat people, tell fortunes, interpret dreams, and find lost things and cattle. Shamans were viewed as a medium between the earthly and spiritual realms (Ualihanov, 1985).

Many Kazakhs paid great attention to the transmission of shamanic abilities. These were usually transmitted from a former shaman to someone who belonged to the next generation or to the generation of their grandchildren (Arinova, 2011). According to particular Kazakh traditions, the ancestral spirits had to choose a person to succeed a person as a shaman. A person chosen by the ancestral spirits was obliged to accept this mission (Arinova, 2011). Penkala-Gawęcka (2003, p.39) noted: *"When after the shaman's death one of his descendants fell seriously ill, it was taken as a sign given by the spirits, clear both to the future baqsy (shaman) and to all members of the community. Put in another way, within the traditional frame just getting ill with specific symptoms elicited recognition of this suffering as the call of spirits and entering the liminal phase of the rite of passage"*. The transmission of shamanic abilities took a long time because, during the process, a chosen one was taught and tested by the ancestral spirits. When the candidate was fully ready to serve as a shaman, he or she received a blessing from the ancestral spirits or from an older and experienced shaman (Arinova, 2011).

According to the beliefs of many Kazakh people, shamans held power over natural phenomena and were able to perform miracles. Therefore, even after the spread of Islam across the Kazakh steppe (eleventh century CE), shamanic beliefs, especially in the forms of healing, were practiced among the Kazakhs (Ualihanov,

1985). Usually, shamans were men, but some were women. By the late nineteenth century, the Kazakhs began to rely more on Muslim clerics in times of illness (Moldabekov, 2003). Muslim clerics were responsible for conducting circumcisions, and preparing amulets *(tumar*) to ward off the evil eye. Kazakhs also applied to mullahs to pray for their recovery from a disease (Moldabekov, 2003). It is hard to identify which method of healing, medicinal or mystical, the Kazakhs applied more frequently.

Kazakhs traditionally held all sorts of demons responsible for human and animal illness. The view of nomadic Kazakhs was that evil spirits were the main causes of human and animal disease (Ualihanov, 1985), settling in the bodies of people in order to hurt them. It was widely believed that disrespecting spirits stimulated their fury, which then led to suffering being imposed on people (Ualihanov, 1985). In these cases, the Kazakhs relied on shamans and mullahs as they were considered able to make contact with the spirit realms and to drive out evils from within people. The evil eye (*köz tiyu*) was also another factor to which diseases were attributed (Basilov, 1992). The evil eye can be explained as a form of hazardous magic. Some Kazakhs believed that those who wanted to harm someone could inflict disease by giving the evil eye (Basilov, 1992). "Evil tongue" (*till tiyu*) was also considered a cause of disease. Based on nomadic Kazakh beliefs, people could recite evil wishes against someone (Basilov, 1992). Both the evil eye and evil tongue were considered the main causes of childhood diseases. In these cases, many Kazakhs turned to shamans and mullahs to order amulets. While shamans made amulets from animal bones and birds' feathers, mullahs prepared pendants that contained verses of the Quran written by hand and were sewn into a triangular pouch (Ualihanov, 1985).

In Kazakh ethno-spiritual medicine, invoking the evil/spirit causing the disease was the first step of healing. Kazakh shamans used ritual items in the form of

musical instruments to communicate with the evil/spirits (Gabitov, *et al.*, 2013). The *qobyz* was the main ritual musical instrument, a two-stringed musical instrument made of horsehairs (Gabitov, *et al.*, 2013). Shamans did not allow other people to touch their ritual instruments (Zhaqsylyqov, 2006). From the middle of the nineteenth century, the *dombyra* (a two-stringed musical instrument), and the *asatayaq* (a musical instrument with iron rings on the top) were also used as ritual items (Karakulov, 1992). Kazakh shamans drove out evil/spirits using a special canticle. They also wielded a knife and struck ill people with a lash in order to expel the evil/spirits thought to be causing the disease (Ualihanov, 1985).

In the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakh people, animals played a crucial role in healing practices. For example, to fully cure someone from an illness, a goat or lamb was slaughtered (Arinova, 2011). In addition, animals played an important role in the treatment of various diseases. In the treatment of catarrhal diseases, some Kazakhs rubbed the throat and breast of the patient with warm *kordiuk* (sheep tail fat) and turpentine (Arinova, 2011). In order to treat infertility in women, some Kazakhs rubbed their stomachs with fat from the slaughtered animal (Oskenbay, 2013). Tuberculosis and chronic bronchitis were treated by drinking badger fat.

Moreover, there were folk doctors among the Kazakhs, each of whom used different methods to diagnose and heal illnesses. Folk doctors were classified according to the methods of treatment they used. Those who treated people using grass and medical products were known as *däriger*, surgeons were called *otashy,* and bonesetters were known as *synyqshy* (Toleubayev, 2005*)*. Folk doctors known as *baqsy* (Figure 22) generally used plants as medicaments. For instance, they were known to apply wormwood (*zhusan*), elecampane (*qarandyz)*, rhubarb (*saumaldyq, qymyzdyq*), strychnine (*kushela*), juniper (*arsha*), hawthorn fruits

(*dolana*), blackcurrant (*qaraqat*), licorice (*miia tubiri*), black henbane (*menduana*), and dog rose roots (*itmuryn*) (Toleubayev, 2005). Folk doctors also frequently applied medicaments of animal origin, such as bear and swan bile and badger, marmot, goose, horse, and mutton fats, as well as produce including fresh meat, horse milk (*koumiss*), camel milk (*shubat*), butter, and honey (Moldabekov, 2003). Knowledge about remedies based on plants and animals passed from generation to generation, and increased when information about medicaments from China, Tibet, India and the Near East was transferred to Kazakhstan along the Silk Road (Toleubayev, 1997). In addition, the propagation of Islam across Kazakhstan led to the spread of Arab works on empirical medicine, such as those of Ibn Sina (Toleubayev, 1997). This development contributed to an improved knowledge of human anatomy among Kazakh folk doctors. Based on breathing, pulse rhythms and other signs, they were able to diagnose illnesses and prescribe treatments (Moldabekov, 2003).

Fig. 22 Folk doctor *Baqsy,* Almaty, 2000



Source: Qazaqstan Tarihy (2021)

Kazakh ethnomedicine divided all illnesses into two categories: external (*syrtqy auru*) and internal (*ishki auru*) (Toleubayev, 1997). For example, wounds, ulcers, dislocations and skin rashes were considered to be external illnesses, while illnesses that were not immediately visible were classified as internal (Toleubayev, 1997). Kazakh shamans and folk doctors also used other techniques for healing, such as massage therapy, hypnosis and nutrition therapy (Ualihanov, 1985). According to Michaels (2003), some Kazakhs were able to conduct surgical procedures before the spread of biomedicine. In order to treat headaches connected to high blood pressure, Kazakh shamans and folk doctors practiced bloodletting (*qan alu*) from hypodermic veins (Michaels, 2003). During this procedure, they used a special iron tool. Leaches were also widely used during healing therapies.

4.3.1 The Russian medical and public health policy towards the Kazakh ethnomedical practices

When the Soviet government's colonisation and modernisation policy came into effect (1930), they considered Kazakh ethnomedicine barbarian. In particular, the image of the Kazakh shamans was viewed as a reflection of the wildness and backwardness of the local population (Penkala-Gawęcka, 2013). Shamans' healing techniques were characterised as ineffective and harmful tricks. Shamans were usually depicted by the Soviet government as individuals with serious mental disorders (Penkala-Gawęcka, 2013). However, it should be noted that some Russian doctors admitted that particular healing methods in Kazakh ethnomedicine might be effective and sometimes could be better than methods of standard Russian medicine (Michaels, 2003). Nevertheless, Russian scholars were generally concerned about Kazakh ethnomedicine and the Soviet regime sought to eradicate such practices.

Different methods were used in this attack on Kazakh ethnomedicine. Soviet-controlled newspapers characterised the Kazakh healers (shamans, mullahs and folk doctors) as greedy charlatans (Arinova, 2011). Thus, instead of relying on traditional medicine, the Kazakhs were encouraged by the Soviet authorities to turn to biomedicine through lectures, posters and pamphlets. For example, one health educational poster from 1930 compared the methods of diagnosis of both ethnomedicine and biomedicine (Michaels, 2003) (Figure 23). The poster shows a Russian man shining a flashlight down on a crowd of Central Asians in traditional dress. The diagnostic equipment depicted on his desk – a microscope, laboratory instruments, and test tubes - were intended to demonstrate his scientific authority (Michaels, 2003). The poster text reads: "*The traditional healers such as religious leaders, folk healers, and mullahs harm the health of workers. Do not believe their tricks! Rely on treatment at Soviet hospitals*!" (Michaels, 2003). In addition, there was widespread propaganda aimed at Muslim women to use biomedicine during pregnancy and childbirth, with various health education posters illustrating the danger of ethnomedicine with regard to childbirth (Arinova, 2011) (Figure 24). Overall, in all biomedical propaganda, the Soviet government was presented as the saviour of the Kazakhs from the harmful, backward and weak ethnomedicine.

At the time, the establishment of biomedicine in the Kazakh steppe was presented as modernisation. From the 1870s, Russian doctors were sent to the Kazakh steppe to treat military personnel (Abylkhozhin, 1997) (Figure 25). Soviet doctors were described as heroes that "performed a holy service" (Abylkhozhin, 1997). Therefore, doctors were usually rewarded with prizes and prestigious medals in Kazakhstan, the distribution of which was covered by Soviet media (Michaels, 2003). For example, one doctor was awarded 1,000 rubles to improve her house in recognition of her hard work (Michaels, 2003). These kinds of awards were also supposed to encourage Kazakhs, nomadic or otherwise, to use biomedicine rather than ethnomedicine.

Fig. 23 Soviet Propaganda Poster, 1930

"The traditional healers such as religious leaders, folk healers, and mullahs harm the health of workers. Do not believe their tricks! Rely on treatment at Soviet hospitals!",



Source: Pikabu (2021)

Fig. 24 Soviet Propaganda Poster, 1951

Grow up healthy



Source: Pikabu (2021)

Fig. 25 Kazakh women consulting a doctor, 1950



Source: Massaget (2021)

As many Kazakhs rejected treatment from Russian doctors, the Russian colonial administration encouraged Kazakhs to gain biomedical education and become doctors themselves (Figure 26). The Soviet administration offered scholarships for the Kazakhs to gain education in medical institutions. Accordingly, many Kazakh élites graduated from medical institutions in Russia (Michaels, 2003). The establishment of the Kazakh Medical Institute (KazMI) in 1930 also contributed to a rise in the number of Russian-educated Kazakh doctors (Michaels, 2003). As the result, more Kazakhs started to apply to study biomedicine. Despite the growing focus on biomedicine during the first decades of the Soviet regime, traditional healing methods were not abandoned (Penkala-Gawęcka, 2013). Traditional Kazakh healers continued to treat people illegally. However, from the 1940s the majority of Kazakh people relied on biomedicine (Penkala-Gawęcka, 2013) and professional ethnohealers were only to be found in southern parts of Kazakhstan.

Fig. 26 Kazakh doctor promoting biomedicine, Almaty region, 1955



Source: Massaget (2021)

In summary, before the Russian and then Soviet colonisation, Kazakh ethnomedicine was an essential part of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The arrival of the Russian colonisers disrupted this. Kazakh ethnomedicine was characterised in terms of backwardness, ignorance and weakness. Thus, the nomadic Kazakhs were encouraged to turn to biomedicine, as it was viewed as a mark of progress and modernity. Biomedicine contributed to building a pan-Soviet identity based on European positivist notions of progress. Bereft of superstition and devotees of the power of science, many Kazakhs believed in the Soviet state's and Communist party's power to lead the people toward ever-higher stages of economic and cultural development.

4.4 Kazakh Musical Cultures

Music played a significant role in the lives of the nomadic Kazakhs, who produced a wide range of musical instruments. Today, there are more than 50 types of

musical instruments made by Kazakhs that are widely used among modern musicians (Zhubanova, 1997). Approximately 400 different types of antique Kazakh musical instruments are preserved in various Kazakhstani museums (Abdirahman, 2012). The design and size of these musical instruments was, generally, highly suitable for the nomadic way of life. They were simple in structure, compact in size, and could produce various sounds. They were made from locally sourced natural materials, mostly manufactured by nomadic craftsmanship: wood, leather, horsehair, horns, and stones (Kunanbayeva, 2002). Most of these musical instruments were used as an accompaniment to singing although purely instrumental performances were also given. The nomadic Kazakhs orally transmitted their musical culture from generation to generation and musicians enjoyed a very high status in Kazakh society.

Music served the everyday requirements of nomadic society and accompanied most major religious and household ceremonies. The development of musical instruments was closely connected to the religious systems that prevailed during certain periods in the lives of the nomadic Kazakhs (Ergaliyeva *et al.*, 2012; Rancier, 2014; Sadykova, 2013). For example, the shamanic conception of the world is reflected in the music performed by a musical instrument known as the *qyl-qobyz*. The *qyl-qobyz* (or simply *qobyz*) is a two-stringed musical instrument carved from a single block of wood, then half-covered with camel skin (Figure 27) (Ayazbekova, 1999). Both strings are made from forty horsehairs. The bow of the *qyl-qobyz* is also made from horsehair. This instrument can replicate natural sounds such as the wind or the howling of wolves, so the *qyl-qobyz* has always been linked to nature (Qosbasarov, 2001). For this reason, the *qyl-qobyz* was used during shamanic healing processes.

The arrival of Islam in Kazakhstan in the eighth century CE introduced a new system of concepts and traditions which affected the instrumental music of the

nomadic Kazakhs. From the ninth to tenth centuries onward, the *dombyra* was the most widely used musical instrument among the nomadic Kazakhs (Rouland, 2007; Zhubanov, 1976). This musical instrument is regarded as a key symbol of Kazakh nomadic culture and identity and can be found in almost every Kazakh household. One Kazakh proverb says: "There is no song without *dombyra*. There is no beauty without *dombyra*". The *dombyra* is the Kazakh version of the two-string long-necked plucked lute commonly played in Central and Inner Asia (Zhubanov, 1976). The *dombyra* is made from hard and soft woods, strings and frets, while the general design and size of the instrument has changed over time and across regions (Figure 28). Usually, two types of *dombyra* are most commonly linked with the Kazakh people (Rouland, 2007). The *shertpe dombyra*, mostly used in the eastern Kazakh steppe, has a smaller resonator and a shorter neck than the *tokpe dombyra* which is mostly utilized in the western Kazakh steppe (Muhambetova, 1976). The *dombyra* is considered by the Kazakh people a central part of everyday musical life, appearing in a variety of social contexts both as a solo and ensemble instrument and as an accompaniment to singing, epic narration and poetic improvisation. The *dombyra* also has a spiritual meaning, thus it was kept on the walls of yurts (see Chapter 6). Generally, every nomadic Kazakh was able to play this instrument to at least an amateur level. Professional compositions in the *kuy* genre were performed by men. *Kuy* is an instrumental genre which requires virtuoso knowledge of the *dombyra* and a deep understanding of that instrument's range of expressions.



Fig. 27 The Kazakh musical instrument *qyl-qobyz, 1894*

Source: From the Catalogue that represents photo-illustrative materials on the traditional culture of the Kazakhs kept in the oldest museum of Russia – the Peter the Great Anthropology and Ethnography Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 1894, Museum registration N255

Fig. 28 The Kazakh musical instrument *dombyra*



Source: author's photos, 2017

The main purpose of *kuy* is to connect the audience with their origins and historic traditions. The music needs to tell the stories and legends from the past and to transmit knowledge and skills related to Kazakh culture. *Kuy* shows profound feelings and thoughts about the meaning behind the lives of the Kazakh people. Among the most archaic samples, *kuy*-legends can be outlined such as "*Aqqu"* (swan), "*Nar*" (camel), *"Zhetim Qyz"* (girl-orphan), *"Zhorgha Ayu"* (bear) and *"Aqsaq Qulan"* (lame antelope) (Rayimbergenov, 1984). All these transmit stories about the ancient history, culture, traditions and totemic beliefs of the nomadic Kazakhs. Phrases such as "the *dombyra* tells", "the *sybyzghy* says" and *"qyl-qobyz* tells" are prominent in the Kazakh language. Usually, after finishing their performances, the musicians would say "*Depti"*, which means "the *dombyra* has said so" (Mukhambetova, 1990). It was a great compliment for musicians if their audience would say "His *dombyra* (or other musical instruments) speaks". Hundreds of legends state that each performance of Kazakh musical instruments has to convey important information. For instance, Kazakh folklore includes the story of the death of Djoshy Khan, the first son of Genghis Khan, who died when hunting antelopes (*kulans)* (Zhubanov, 1963). No one dared to report this devastating news to Genghis Khan. A famous talented musician (*kuyshi*) performed "lame antelope" (*Aksak Qulan*), which describes the story of Djoshy Khan being killed by an antelope when trying to fire an arrow (Zhubanov, 1963). Thus, the history of the *dombyra kuy* is tightly interwoven with the history of the Kazakh nomadic people.

Apart from the *dombyra*, the *zhetigen and sybyzghy* are also among the core musical instruments of the Kazakh people. The *zhetigen* is an instrument with seven strings strung across a sheep's vertebrae (Figure 29) (Zhubanova, 1997). An ancient Kazakh legend describes its origin story: an old man made each string of horsehair to flag the death, during an extremely harsh and long winter, of one of his seven sons, and by the end of the winter all seven sons were dead and the

zhetigen was finished (Sadykova, 2013) The *sybyzghy* is a wind instrument made of two reed or wood flutes tied together (Figure 30) (Balabekov, 2000). It was one of the most widely used musical instruments due to its simple form and the widespread availability of the materials from which it was made. However, it is not an easy instrument to play. *Sybyzghy* music can be one of two voice-melodies. If the first voice is extracted from the instrument, the second voice is the guttural sound of the performer (Sarybayev, 1978). Thus, it is necessary for performers to be talented in the simultaneous performance of both voice-melodies.

Fig. 29 The Kazakh musical instrument *zhetigen*



Source: Author's photo

Fig. 30 The Kazakh musical instrument *sybyzghy*





Source: author's photo, 2017

4.4.1 Kazakh musical heritage during the Soviet period

Soviet colonial politics also affected the musical cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In the January 1934 issue of *Sovetskaya muzika,* Stalin's article titled "The Development of Cultures National in Form and Socialist in Content" was published, which was intended to shape a cultural revolution (Frolova-Walker, 1998). Levin (2002, p.190), while conducting research on the musical practices of the Uzbek people under communism, stated that the primary aims of Soviet cultural policy were "combating the legacy of feudalism, embodying atheism, reifying officially sanctioned national identities, and nurturing cultural evolution among peoples who, in the Eurocentric Marxist-Leninist view, lagged behind European Russia's high level of cultural development". Soviet musicians had to control their music in a way that was not "national in content", or their music would be labelled as "bourgeois nationalistic art" (Dunn and Dunn, 1967). Only the outer forms, the technical manner, allowed to reflect the nationality of each republic, and even this was short-term cession, until all the national tributaries could merge into a single body of international Soviet culture, socialist in both form and content. Each republic was expected to develop and cultivate a "national" music that combined elements of local folk music and Western European art music (Levin, 1980).

The cultural policy of the Soviet state included a false claim about the absence of professional music and musicians among the Kazakh people. According to this "scientific" concept, professional Kazakh music first appeared in the twentieth century as a result of the progressive socio-historical transformation brought by the Soviet revolution (Kapayeva, 2004). From the 1920s to the 1930s, inordinate transformations occurred in the development of Kazakh culture (Muhambetova, 1995). As a result, two strands developed in the musical culture of Soviet Kazakhstan. The first was connected with the traditional professional music of the

Kazakh people, while the second was connected to the professional music of a Western nature that was created in the Soviet era (Zhumashev, 2002). Western music was perceived by the Soviets as the only possible form of professional musical culture. As an illustration, one propaganda poster showed a Central Asian girl playing the violin, embodying the heights of Western culture, while the shade of Beethoven looks on (Figure 31). This demonstrates Soviet belief that the professional musical culture of any nation should be built according to the Western model.

Fig. 31 Soviet Propaganda Poster, Unknown year
Peoples of the Soviet Union - to the Heights of World Culture,



Source: Pikabu (2021)

Zatayevich collected Kazakh folk songs and instrumental music from famous Kazakh musicians. The most authoritative Kazakh musicians of that period (1920s), such as Amre Kashaubayev, Nausha Bukeikhanov, Qali Baizhanov, Qalibek Quanyshbayev, Ghabbas Aitpayev and Maghira Shamshudinova, assisted Zatayevich in his research (Zatayevich, 2002). As a result, Zatayevich's seminal book *A Thousand Songs of the Kazakh People* was published in 1925. The main purpose of this book was outlined in its introduction:

To you, my dear friends, I devoted and return this work to you, completed with your help during the years of hunger, cold, and epidemics. You know that I always

had the point of view that it was not I that was collecting your wonderful songs, but you yourselves, by my mediation, amassing them, in order to preserve this national treasure from oblivion and distortion…Save, learn, and rejuvenate your national spiritual riches, develop and adorn them with the achievements of the highest universal culture, to which you shall strive, so that Kazakh national music may be renewed and flourish from the very depth of humanity (Rouland, 2005, p.538).

As Zatayevich lacked even a basic knowledge of the Kazakh language and musical heritage, he made several mistakes in his commentaries and interpretations. Zatayevich was, for example, wrong about the works of singer and composer Musa. Knowing nothing about the words in Musa's songs, Zatayevich saw in his melodies only "frivolous gaiety and jokery" (Kapayeva, 2004). However, behind such "jokery" were in fact caustic satirical observations of those oppressing the people. In retrospect, Zatayevich's work on the history of Kazakh music can be seen more as an abstract collection of material than as a genuine study of Kazakh musical culture. Nevertheless, Zatayevich made a substantial contribution to the preservation of the musical cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

The next stage of the transformation saw the opening of centres of musical education. The Soviet administrators understood the necessity of musical schools in which Kazakhs could learn the forms and techniques of Western musical culture and deemed it necessary to create musical schools for Kazakh children where they could receive European musical education after which they would, it was hoped, produce Kazakh symphonies and operas in a Western style (Muhamediuly, 2009). As a result, in 1933, a musical drama college was opened in Almaty (Kuzembayeva and Eginbayeva, 2005). Moreover, in 1944 the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR created the Kazakh National Conservatory, which was the leading institution for musical education in Soviet Kazakhstan (Gizatov, 1995). This

conservatory was modelled on the Moscow and Leningrad conservatories. Besides the teaching of Western music styles, these centres of musical education were experimental workshops for the "perfection" of traditional Kazakh musical instruments. The Head of the Kazakh National Conservatory, Ahmet Zhubanov, established an ensemble of *dombyra* players (Figure 32), later reorganised as the Kazakh National Orchestra (Balabekov, 2000). With enormous contributions from composers such as Zhubanov, Brusilovskii, Orlov, Kurganov, Hamidi and Zhandarbekov, this orchestra became the famous Qumanghazy Orchestra of Kazakh Folk Instruments, which was one of the leading orchestras of the Soviet Union.

Fig. 32 Ahmet Zhubanov (in the middle) with an ensemble of *dombyra* players



Source: Qazaqstan Tarihy (2021, b)

The formation of the Conservatory and other musical education centres significantly changed the traditions of the professional music of the nomadic Kazakhs. Young Kazakh musicians who graduated from the Conservatory were, on the whole, quite different from their traditional predecessors (Amanov and

Mukhambetova, 2002). Before the Soviet intervention in Kazakhstan, the traditional professional musicians had a broad range of musical skills. They were able to perform the melody of the *kuy* or songs after their first hearing and produce their own works. At the same time, traditional professional musicians were poetic improvisers, and had to tell legends in the form of music. They had virtuoso vocals, because performing of Kazakh legends demanded strong, beautiful voices having a wide ambitus (Tursynov, 1976). However, the newer Kazakh musicians who had gone through Westernised training lacked such abilities. They were unable to retell legends, to improvise on musical instruments, and/or to write their own compositions. The main focus of the newer system of musical education was on being able to play your own part in the orchestra under the conductor's baton (Tursynov, 1976). The Soviet government, however, insisted that the professional music of the Kazakh people had not first appeared until the 1930s (Kapayeva, 2004). Soviet newspapers and journal articles stated that the Kazakh opera and orchestras of folk instruments were the greatest achievements of Kazakh musical culture to date and represented the first stage of professional music in Kazakhstan. One of the contributors to this research, a famous *dombyra* player and singer of folk songs in Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n8), stated:

In the first decades of the establishment of the Soviet Union, folk music of the Kazakh people was regarded as the ideological reflection of the feudal mode of life. All of the musical instruments of the Kazakh people were doomed to die together with feudalism. The traditional musical instruments of the nomadic Kazakhs like the qobyz, asatayaq and dauylpaz were dubbed the musical instruments of shamans. Before the Soviet Union, the dombyra was considered as the main and sacred musical instrument of the Kazakhs. It could be found in every Kazakh yurt hung in an honourable place. However, during the Soviet period, it was very hard to find a dombyra anywhere. When I was a child just two families in my village had the dombyra at home. Despite this fact, I have learnt to play it.

When I was a student at the Conservatory, the Russian students always laughed at me saying "Are you playing on one stick which has two strings?".

Folk musicians in villages (*auyl*) were classified as non-professionals and had no chance of making a living through their art. Musicians who played Kazakh musical instruments by ear were considered amateurs. The classification of a "folk professional" was not on the list of specialisations established by the Soviet administration and no state organisation paid folk musicians (Balabekov, 2000). Consequently, to live as a folk musician, as many had done before this time, was financially impossible and illegal as such musicians could be accused of parasitism and punished by imprisonment (Muhambetova, 1995). As a result, traditional folk musicians turned to other work to earn their living and, as such, many worked as teachers, tradesmen or librarians.

The traditional music of the Kazakh people could only exist in Westernised form. Ahmet Zhubanov formed and developed the Orchestra of Folk Instruments of the Kazakh people in European form (Gizatov, 1995). According to one respondent of this research (see Table 1, n6), a leading conductor and composer in Kazakhstan:

Many thanks to Ahmet Zhubanov for conserving the folk instruments of the Kazakh people by organising the Orchestra of Folk Instruments. During the Soviet period, folk musical instruments and the whole musical culture of the Kazakh people were considered as "backward" and "primitive". So, the organisation of the Orchestra of Folk Instruments of the Kazakh people in European form was the only way to safeguard the musical culture of the Kazakh people. The orchestra was organised based on the example of the Andreev Orchestra of Russian Folk Instruments, which itself was formed in the form of a European symphony orchestra. In order to expand the sound range of the musical instruments and to reinforce the register, Ahmet Zhubanov changed some features of the traditional

musical instruments of the Kazakh people. The changed qyl-qobyz had, instead of two strings of hair, four violin strings (Figure 33). This prima-qobyz replaced the violin. The improved sybyzghy replaced the flute. Ahmet Zhubanov also improved and divided the dombyra into prima, tenor and bass dombyra. Overall, he united the bow, fingered, wind and percussion instruments of the Kazakh people into one orchestra. Nowadays, many traditional musicians argue that Ahmet Zhubanov changed the whole system of the traditional musical culture of the Kazakh people. This is because the instrumental music of the nomadic Kazakhs acted only in solo performance and musical instruments were never played in ensemble or orchestra. I do not agree with this statement, because the Kazakhs played musical instruments in ensemble. For example, I have seen a picture where the famous Kazakh dombyra performer Dauletkerey played the dombyra in ensemble with other musical instruments such as sybyzghy, syrnay and zhetigen. Overall, we have to take into account that through the formation of the Orchestra, Ahmet Zhubanov gave a second birth not only to the musical instruments, but also to the musical culture of the Kazakh people.

Fig. 33 The Stylized Kazakh musical instrument *qobyz*



Source: author's photo, 2017

From the 1940s onward, the totalitarian Soviet regime had a strong, pervasive influence on Kazakh musical culture. As was the case in other spheres of social life, Kazakh musical culture was subject to censorship (Kaipova, 2002). All cultural performances had to praise the Soviet regime and the friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union, and should inspire the people to work hard for the common State. The Ministry of Culture of the Kazakh SSR adopted a law encouraging through musical performances Kazakhs to work in agriculture, manufacturing and mines (Kapayeva, 2004). In the period 1951-1953, numerous Kazakh folk songs were withdrawn and banned, mainly on grounds of "ideological incontinence" (Muhambetova, 1995). A famous singer in Kazakhstan, when interviewed for this research (see Table 1, n7), stated:

The Soviet government mainly supported genres such as opera, ballet, symphony and choir. Kazakh songs started to be produced in the style of Russian romance. All the concerts and theatre programmes were strictly checked by the secretaries of ideology. The most favourable Kazakh opera was "Dudaray" written by Brusilovskii in 1953. The main idea of this opera was the friendship between Kazakhs and Russians. Kazakh music in the Soviet period lived isolated from the outside world. Although the European music style was promoted by Soviet administrators, it was really Russian music. Soviet Kazakh musicians did not learn or perform Western classical music.

The Soviet administration strongly encouraged Soviet Kazakhs to visit theatres, which emerged as significant forums for promoting Soviet cultural views. The first Russian theatre opened in Kazakhstan in the 1890s in Oral, followed by others in the 1910s in cities such as Pavlodar, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semipalatinsk, Vernyi, and Petropavlovks. In the 1930s, Russian theatres were built in almost every city of Kazakhstan. Famous Russian opera, ballet, and drama performances were given to the audiences of Soviet Kazakhstan. As the majority of the rural population were

not fluent in Russian, the Soviet administration also understood the need for Kazakh theatres. As a result, the first Kazakh Dramatic Theatre was established in 1926 in Kzyl-Orda, the capital city of the Kazakh SSR (Amanov and Mukhambetova, 2002). Dmitry Matsutsin directed its orchestra and ran a school to train musicians and actors. *Enlik-Kebek,* written by Muhtar Auezov, was the first play performed in this theatre (Amanov and Mukhambetova, 2002). This play is about the conflict between love and tradition. The main characters of the play were unable to be together, because Enlik was sold for bride price (*qalym*) to a neighbouring tribe and Kebek was left in despair. Plays such as *Qyz Zhibek*, *Aiman-Sholpan*, and *Qambar-Nazym* were approved the most frequently by the State (Amanov and Mukhambetova, 2002). The main idea of these theatre performances was to present the feudal mode of life, conflicts between social groups, and the struggle of the Kazakhs against religious and customary law negatively. The Soviet administration used the theatres to promote its propaganda of a happy new way of life.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that these state institutions such as Conservatory, theatres, music clubs, schools and colleges all made a substantial contribution to the preservation of the musical cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Both Kazakh and Russian musicians recorded, notated, arranged, harmonised, and researched traditional Kazakh music. Traditional songs and dances were recorded and performed professionally (Djumaev,1993). Meanwhile, Kazakh students were sent to conservatories in Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev (Fuki, 2020). This contributed to the promotion of Kazakh musical heritage, not only among the Soviet Union but also other countries. To illustrate this point, the famous folk singer Amre Kashaubayev was sent to Paris as part of the Soviet delegation. His performances were held during the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in the summer of 1925 (Rouland, 2005). Amre performed traditional Kazakh songs such as "*Balqadisha*", "*Qaratorgai*",

"*Dudaray*", "*Qanapia*", "*Agash Ayaq*" and others which were accompanied by the *dombyra* in Saint George's Drama Theater (Kendirbaeva, 1994). The French composer and music expert Paul Le Flem recorded and positively reviewed Amre's performances in the 1925 issue of the Paris Week newspaper (Rouland, 2005). Without the Soviet recordings and studies, it would have been hard to preserve the Kazakh musical heritage as nomadic Kazakhs kept no written record of traditions.

To sum up, the musical cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has passed through various phases largely affected by corresponding changes in the goals and content of the cultural policy of the Soviet Union. During these transformations, the musical cultural heritage of the Kazakh people lost its traditional forms and values. However, traditional Kazakh music appears to have survived the Soviet Union better than some other elements of Kazakh culture. After the establishment of the Soviet Union, many types of traditional Kazakh culture, such as hunting with birds of prey, jewellery-making, clothes-making, making of traditional felt products, and folk medicine all lost their previously high status. But the folk music of the Kazakh people continued to develop even under the Soviet policy to promote purportedly Western music. This was because Kazakh music transferred the same moral idea and socialist education that kept traditional motifs, impregnated with a Soviet authority, that transformed the Kazakh world. Moreover, music culturally linked Russians and Kazakhs. In addition, Russian ethnohistorians made their mark in the preservation of Kazakh musical heritage by collecting music and folk songs.

4.5 The Kazakh Language

Language has a crucial role in the identities of groups and individuals. Besides being part of a nation's cultural heritage, language constitutes a complex reflection of it (Irvine, 2015). Language serves as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage. Thus, the loss of a language might lead to the loss of cultural heritage (Smeets,

2004). In the 2001 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, language was defined as a significant part of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity (UNESCO, 2001). Article 5 of this Declaration states that: "*All persons have the right to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in the mother tongue*" (UNESCO, 2001). The Declaration claims the equality of all human languages and encourages linguistic diversity through respecting the mother tongue wherever possible (UNESCO, 2001). However, during Soviet times, the Soviet Union countries, including Kazakhstan, faced the imminent extinction of their ancestral languages.

Bacon (1966, p. 189) pointed out that: "*every language reflects, and is in some of its features linked up with, the culture of the people speaking it, and is liable to undergo changes in these particular features in accordance with changes in the culture of the people*". Therefore, discussing what happened to the language of the Kazakh people could help to understand Kazakh culture and the changes it has undergone. Before the Russian conquest of Central Asia and the establishment of new languages by the colonists, the languages spoken by the Kazakhs belonged to the Turkic language family (Isayev, 1977). Turkic languages spoken in Central Asia are divided into three dialects: Northwest (Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Karakalpak, Kipchak-Uzbek, Tatar); Southeast (Uygur, Uzbek-Sart); and Southwest (Turkmen) (Isayev, 1977). The various Northwest dialects were so similar that there were no significant barriers to communication between different variations (Isayev, 1977). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Tatars operated as translators between Russians and people who spoke Turkic languages. Nomadic movements tended to prevent Turkic speech from diverging in the region to a significant extent.

Before the Russian conquest, most Central Asians were illiterate. However, the oasis cities designed scripts for use among the small educated élite. Chagatai was

a language of Turkic literature that prospered in Central Asia between the fifteenth and seventeenth centurie finally dying out in the twentieth century (Bacon, 1966). Chagatai is named after the second son of Chenghis Khan, who ruled in the west of Asia. Before the Russian conquest, all Central Asians used the Arabic alphabet for writing (Bacon, 1966). Thus, literate Kazakhs were able to read the literature of not only other Turkic peoples, but also the classic literature of Persia. Using the same alphabet allowed the Kazakhs to be connected culturally with other parts of the Islamic world (Bacon, 1966).

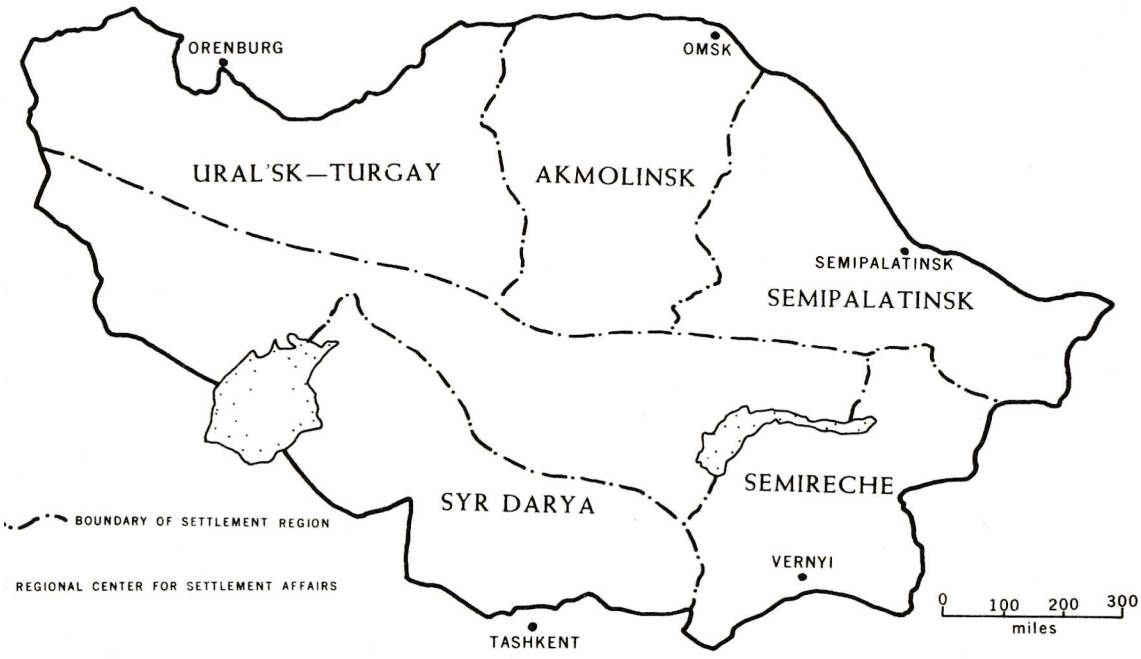
4.5.1 Language shift

However, in the early twentieth century, the Soviet government prohibited the Central Asian people from using the Arabic alphabet (Sebba, 2006). Using this alphabet separated Central Asians from Russians and provided them a means of expression with the Muslim world outside the boundaries of the Soviet Union. In 1925, all literature printed in the Arabic alphabet was banned in Central Asia (Sebba, 2006). In 1926, the Latin alphabet was adopted for all of the Turkic languages of the Soviet Union as a common alphabet (Comrie, 1981). All school textbooks, newspapers, journals and books were subsequently published accordingly (Abylkhozhin, 1997). As schoolchildren knew only the Latin alphabet, they could not read the classic literature of Central Asia, written in the Arabic script. In 1940, the Latin alphabet was replaced by the Cyrillic alphabet (Comrie, 1981). It was explained by the Soviets that using the Cyrillic alphabet would allow Kazakhs to learn the Russian language easily. As a result of these changes, many old Kazakh words that came from Persian and Arabic languages were lost (Abylkhozhin, 1997). Moreover, with the introduction of the Cyrillic alphabet, new Russian words and terms were commonly adopted in the Kazakh vocabulary.

The migration of Russian peasants to Kazakhstan (1896-1916) can be considered as a means of Russian colonisation and one of the main causes of the Russification

of the Kazakh people (Fierman, 2005). The Russian peasantry was legally bound to the Russian gentry (Demko, 1969). By migrating to Kazakhstan, peasants were granted their freedom. During the period of serfdom in the Russian Empire (1721-1917), the land belonged to the government, church or Russian gentry (Aadne, 1996). It was impossible for peasants to own land. Migration to Kazakhstan meant the allocation of lands to peasants to own (Demko, 1969). Moreover, after migrating to Kazakhstan, peasants were not obligated to pay taxes, unlike in Russia where the tax burden was high (Aadne, 1996). Ultimately, migration to Kazakhstan was a great opportunity for Russian peasants to change their lives. Demko (1969, p. 57) pointed out: "*The huge reserves of agricultural land in Kazakhstan as well as those in Siberia, offered to many peasants the only hope of escape from indebtedness and hunger*". The Russian Empire declared five regions of Kazakhstan available for migration (Figure 34). As a result, by 1926, 3 million Russian peasants had migrated to Kazakhstan, and by 1959 this figure had increased to 6 million (Abylkhozhin, 1991).

Fig. 34 Settlement regions of Kazakhstan in 1905



Source: Demko (1969, p. 61)

One of the main goals of *korenisaciya* (indigenization) was to establish Russian as the national language of Kazakhstan (Fierman, 1998). In order to achieve this goal, Russian was developed as the dominant language in major spheres: government, education, health, and all public discourse. Fierman (2006, p. 98) pointed out: *"…the party supported Russian not only as a common lingua franca, but also as a key component of a common Soviet cultural foundation. In these capacities, the Russian was assigned a central role in fostering rapprochement (sblizhenie) of the many nationalities inhabiting the USSR*". The Soviet government thought that linguistic and other differences among nationalities could be gradually diminished, thereby bringing the various republics of the Soviet Union closer together. According to Stalin's definition of a nation, each nation of the Soviet Union shared not only a common economy and psychological make-up, but also a common territory and language (Comrie, 1981).

To promote mass literacy, the mother tongue of the Kazakh people was considered the most effective language during the first stage of colonisation (Fierman, 2006). Soin the early Soviet years (1917-1924), the Kazakh people were schooled in their native language. However, Russian-language schools had better facilities and generally offered more opportunities in terms of education and subsequently of employment (Grenoble, 2003). Therefore, without hesitation, people from ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan (Ukrines, Belarus, German, Uzbek) sent their children to Russian-language schools (Bridges, 2014). In 1938, Russian was established as a compulsory subject in all schools in Central Asian countries (Grenoble, 2003). Moreover, Russian was proclaimed as the second official language of all republics of the Soviet Union. As a result, in urban and ethnically mixed areas, Kazakh-language schools became mixed language schools or were transformed into Russian-language schools (Khazanov, 1995). According to Khazanov (1995), about 700 Kazakh-language schools were closed during the Soviet period (1924-1991). By the late 1980s, 52.4 percent of schools in Kazakhstan were Russian, 14.6

percent were mixed, and 31.9 percent were Kazakh (Table 3) (Fierman, 2006). Within Kazakhstan, all universities were located in majority Russian areas. Entrance examinations for universities were held in Russian and those who studied in Kazakh-language schools in rural areas mostly failed these exams (Fierman, 2006).

Tab. 3 Schools in Kazakhstan by language in academic year 1988-1989

Type of school	All areas %	Urban areas only %	Rural areas only%
Pure Russian	52.4	72.7	47.3
Pure Kazakh	31.9	11.3	37.1
Mixed	14.6	15.1	14.5

Source: Fierman (2006, p.105)

By 1955, departments of Kazakh language and literature had been closed in several universities of Kazakhstan (Qozybayev, 1992, b). Kazakh academics were required to speak Russian. Even academics and teachers of the Kazakh language had to use Russian. According to the 1959 Education Law of the Soviet Union, Kazakh families were given the freedom to choose the language of education for their children (Qozybayev, 1992, b). In fact, this law meant that Kazakh families were expected to send their children to the Russian-language schools (Qozybayev, 1992, b). The Kazakh people were told that their children's futures would be better if they knew the Russian language. Only two universities in Kazakhstan taught in the Kazakh language: the Kazakh Agricultural Institute and the Women's Pedagogical Institute in Almaty (Khazanov, 1995). Both institutions were largely attended by students from rural Kazakh-speaking areas. According to Khazanov (1995), only 13.6 percent of students in Kazakhstan were being taught at either of the two remaining Kazakh-language universities by 1990. Many youths from predominantly Kazakh-speaking regions went to Tashkent (the capital city of Uzbekistan) where several universities taught in Kazakh (Dave, 2007). In the urban and Russian-majority areas, the Kazakh language was taught for no more

than the minimum number of hours stipulated by law (Grenoble, 2003). Mostly, in such schools there were neither qualified teachers nor suitable textbooks to teach Kazakh. Moreover, Kazakh lessons were often taught at the end of the day (Qozybayev, 1992, b). As a result, although many Russians lived in Kazakhstan for many decades, they did not speak Kazakh and were not willing to learn this language at all (Fierman, 2006). As Table 4 shows, among all of the capital cities of the Soviet republics, the lowest level of proficiency in the titular language among the Russian dwellers was in Almaty (Dave, 2007).

Tab. 4 Proficiency in the titular language among Russians dwelling in capital cities of Soviet republics, 1989

Capital city	Number of Russians	Proficiency in the titular language	Percent
Almaty (Kazakhstan)	660,522	3,819	0.6
Ashkhabad (Turkmenistan)	129,507	2,248	0.7
Baku (Azerbaijan)	213,936	26,081	12.2
Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)	340,799	1,963	0.6
Dushanbe (Tajikistan)	194,459	4,442	2.3
Yerevan (Armenia)	21,754	9,313	43.3
Kiev (Ukraine)	534,798	252,749	47.3
Chisinau (Moldova)	174,577	19,364	11.1
Minsk (Belarus)	316,471	78,371	24.8
Riga (Latvia)	430,555	84,394	19.6
Tallinn (Estonia)	197,187	30,347	15.4
Tashkent (Uzbekistan)	699,262	24,595	3.5
Tbilisi (Georgia)	124,824	43,035	34.5
Vilnius (Lithuania)	116,618	36,827	31.6

Source: Dave, 2007

In the administrative sphere, Russian was also the dominant language. Almost all top-level and skilled positions in the government administration and in the party organisations were occupied by Russians (Grenoble, 2003). To establish full control, the Soviet government sought to develop an intelligentsia and proletariat among the Kazakh population. The ability to speak Russian was one of the main requirements for top-level positions (Grenoble, 2003). Therefore, in the majority of cases, Kazakhs who had studied in Russian attained these positions. Compared to other Central Asian countries, Kazakhs were more fluent in Russian, and thus had more representatives in their own national party organisations (Dave, 2007).

Russian was the official language for documentation. In 1949, the Soviet government declared that all official meetings in all governmental and public organisations had to be held in Russian (Fierman, 1998). All government directives, decrees, and official documents had to be issued only in Russian (Fierman, 1998). Moreover, Russian was the dominant language in all public discourse. Kazakhs had to speak Russian in order to buy food or to use public transport (Qozybayev, 1992, b). Even Russian doctors refused to serve Kazakh-speaking people or insisted that translators be brought in. Without the Russian language, it was impossible for Kazakhs to benefit properly from public services (Qozybayev, 1992, b). Consequently, as the census of 1989 showed, approximately 65 percent of Kazakhs were fluent in Russian as a second language (Table 5). This percentage was the highest of any Turkic-speaking nationality (Dave, 2007).

As Table 5 shows, among the Soviet republics, Belarusians had the highest percentage of Russian language fluency, followed by Ukrainians, Latvians and Kazakhs. Among Central Asian countries, the Kazakhs had the highest rate of fluency in Russian language. This might suggest that Kazakhs underwent

Russification to a greater degree than any of their Central Asian neighbours (Qozybayev, 1992, a).

Tab. 5 Russian Language Fluency, 1989

Nationality	Total %	Urban %	Rural%	Capital%
Ukrainian	71.7	81.8	54.4	89.2
Belarusian	80.1	89.0	66.0	92.0
Estonian	34.6	42.1	23.7	49.4
Latvian	68.3	74.7	58.7	80.7
Lithuanian	37.7	42.1	29.3	50.0
Moldovan	57.6	81.4	45.7	86.9
Armenian	44.6	51.7	28.6	60.9
Georgian	32.0	40.1	22.7	33.1
Kazakh	64.2	77.8	55.7	90.7
Kyrgyz	37.2	67.1	29.9	85.4
Tajik	30.5	49.5	23.7	62.9
Turkmen	28.2	43.2	13.7	60.2
Uzbek	22.7	43.2	13.7	64.3

Source: Dave, 2007

Kazakhstan was promoted as an international republic by the Soviet government. In 1954, Nikita Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for 1953-1964, initiated the Virgin Land programme (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010). The main aim of the programme was to alleviate the food shortage plaguing the Soviet populace by increasing the amount of land being farmed. Northern Kazakhstan was chosen for its fertile and unploughed land (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010). This programme brought 1.5 million Slavic peasants and workers to Kazakhstan between 1950 and 1960 (Masanov *et al.*, 2001). During the Second World War, Stalin deported a number of ethnic groups to Kazakhstan such as Germans (600,000), Koreans (70,000), Crimean Tatars

(150,000), and Meshet Turks (20,000) (Masanov *et al.*, 2001). Such measures led to approximately 60 percent of Kazakhstan's population being composed of Russophone (Slavic) nationalities by 1959 (Table 6). Kazakhstan was labelled the most international Soviet republic by Khrushchev who highlighted Kazakhstan as "a planet of hundred nationalities and languages" and a "laboratory of international friendship" (Fierman, 2009). However, although bilingualism was formally encouraged within the Soviet Union, in fact it was the colonial language (Russian) that was the dominant language in every sphere of life (Qozybayev, 1992, b).

Tab. 6 Ethnic populations of Kazakhstan according to national census

Ethnicity	1959 %	1970 %	1979 %	1989 %
Kazakhs	30.0	32.4	36.0	39.7
Russians	42.7	42.8	40.8	37.8
Ukrainians	8.2	7.2	6.1	5.4
Germans	7.1	6.5	6.1	5.8
Tatars	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.0
Uzbeks	1.5	1.6	1.8	2.0
Others	8.4	7.3	7.1	7.3

Source: Bridges (2014, p.154)

The majority of Kazakh families not only chose Russian-language schools for their children, but also spoke only in Russian with them at home. Their children spoke Russian without an accent and Russian was treated as their mother tongue (Abylkhozhin, 1997). It became normal for young Kazakhs to respond exclusively in Russian to questions asked to them in Kazakh by their grandparents. Young Kazakhs started to speak Kazakh in a foreign accent and some could not speak Kazakh at all (Abylkhozhin, 1997). Young Kazakhs at this time thought that the Kazakh language did not have a future. In the 1980s approximately 90 percent of

Kazakhs who lived in urban areas were literate in Russian, while only 10-15 percent were literate in Kazakh (Fierman, 2006).

Speaking Russian was promoted as prestigious. The Russian language was associated with education, literacy, progress and culture (*kulturnost*) (Fierman, 2006). It evoked a sense of belonging to a larger (European) civilization. In contrast, speaking Kazakh in Russified urban settings was associated with being "illiterate" (*negramotnye*), "cultural backwardness" (*nekulturnye*), and “lagging behind” (*otstavanie ot progressa*) (Abylkhozhin, 1997). Speaking Kazakh in the Russophone urban areas often invoked negative stereotypes such as "tribalism" and "nationalism" (Abylkhozhin, 1997). Russified Kazakhs often looked down on the language and culture of the Kazakh people and used the term "villager" (*auylbay)* to describe those who practiced either (Abylkhozhin, 1997).

Consequently, the term *mankurt* arose to refer to Russified Kazakhs who were ashamed to speak their mother tongue (Qozybayev, 1992, a). Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov published a novel regarding the *mankurt* in 1980 entitled *The Day Lasts Longer than a Hundred Years.* According to Aitmatov (1988, p.126):

The mankurt did not know who he had been, whence and from what tribe he had come, did not know his name, could not remember his childhood, father or mother—in short, he could not recognize himself as a human being. Deprived of any understanding of his own ego, the mankurt was, from his master's point of view, possessed of a whole range of advantages. He was the equivalent of a dumb animal and therefore absolutely obedient and safe.

The term *mankurt* is often used as a metaphor in Kazakhstan for those who have discarded their tradition, culture and especially language. Older generations of Kazakhs often say that the *mankurt* discarded their identity and language in order to embrace Russian and Soviet influence. There is a saying among Uzbeks which

goes: "If you want to become a Russian, first become a Kazakh". According to Dave (2007, p.231): "*When you find one Russian in the company of ten Uzbeks, he will have to either speak Uzbek, or remain quiet. But as soon as one Russian enters a room full of Kazakhs, they will switch to Russian instantaneously*".

The concepts of "language death" and "endangered languages" can be considered central issues discussed not only among linguists and anthropologists, but also among all academics interested in issues of cultural heritage and identity (Brezinger, 2012). Simply put, a language dies when nobody speaks it anymore. A language is endangered when it is used less and less throughout a community, with some of its original functions either dying out or slowly being replaced by other languages (Crystal, 2000). A language is also endangered when it is less used in educational, political, and other public spheres, as its role is taken over by more dominant languages. According to certain scholars (Brezinger, 2012; Broderick, 2011; Crystal, 2000; Dorian, 1981), it is vital to understand the reasons behind such endangerment. Languages go into decline or even disappear through cultural assimilation. This happens when one culture is affected by a more dominant culture, and starts to lose its character as a result of its members adopting new behaviours. This dominance can be an output of colonialism (Brezinger, 2012). The dominance of colonised culture can be manifested through military superiority or it may happen for economic reasons. In both cases, language rapidly becomes a symbol of such dominance as the language of the coloniser becomes the official language (Brezinger, 2012).

When one culture assimilates with another, people speaking the endangered language usually face some kind of political, social, or economic pressure. Such pressure could be "top-down", in the form of motivation, advice, or law established by a government or national body, or such pressure could be "bottom-up", in the form of secular trends or pressures from within society (Crystal, 2000).

Both types of pressure lead to the appearance of bilingualism whereby people become progressively fluent in the language of the dominant culture while still remaining competent in their native language. However, after a while, this bilingualism declines, with the endangered language being replaced by the dominant language (Dorian, 1981). Consequently, younger generations grow progressively proficient in the dominant language and may even consider there to be no need to speak in their native language at all. Frequently, younger generations feel a sense of shame about speaking their native language (Broderick, 2011). Meanwhile, the older generations find fewer opportunities to speak their native language in front of their children. As a result, bilingualism can become monolingualism, which puts the endangered language at risk of extinction.

Despite the Soviet government's efforts to replace Kazakh with Russian in all spheres, the Kazakhs managed to preserve their native language. The Soviet system, with its unmitigated policy of Russification and colonisation, pushed Kazakhs to integrate with Russian culture, including language. The Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe and its effects on the Kazakh language can be considered a significant illustration of the impact of colonisation on the language of colonised countries. By relocating the Russian peasants into the Kazakh steppe, twice changing the alphabet, closing Kazakh schools, reducing Kazakh language classes, and proclaiming Russian as the official language in documentation, the Soviet administration exerted “top-down” pressure to diminish the Kazakh language. At the same time, having proficiency in the Russian language promised high status, enlightenment, and integration into a larger civilization, all of which reflected the “bottom-up” pressure exerted on the Kazakh language. As a result, the majority of the younger generations, especially those who were born after the establishment of the Soviet Union, became unable to speak Kazakh.

4.6 Kazakh religious heritage

Religion plays a significant role in cultural development. The religious heritage of a people, the beliefs that form their worldview about God, humanity and the universe, and how they relate to each other, have all played a crucial role in how a culture has come to be what it is today (Borgman *et al.*, 2009). Religious cultural heritage consists of a range of tangible and intangible elements such as religious beliefs, religious buildings, religious monuments, religious sites of archaeological or historic significance, religious landscapes, ancient works of art, ethnographic items, ritual items, ceremonial traditions and a whole range of religious knowledge (Doe, 2014). Such religious cultural heritage could be described as the variety of sacred cultural elements proceeding from different religious traditions which are deemed worthy of protection and preservation in terms of their social, cultural and/or religious significance (ICCROM, 2020). Broadly speaking, religious cultural heritage can be defined as a form of inheritance to be kept safely and handed down to future generations (Astor *et al.,* 2017). The Soviet anti-religious propaganda led to the disruption of the religious cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In order to describe the consequences of this disruption, it is important to outline the religious beliefs and traditions of the Kazakh people that were practiced before the Soviet Union was established.

Before the arrival of Islam (eighth century CE), Kazakhs followed various faiths that were characteristic of the indigenous people of Central Asia (Abylkhozhin, 1997). These included Tengrism, shamanism, Zoroastrianism, and the cult of ancestors and saints. Due to the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakh people, the main concept of Tengrism, specifically an intimate relationship with nature, was highly important. In Tengrism the acknowledgement of spirits *(aruaq)* occupies a special place. For instance, according to Tengrism everything in nature, including rivers, trees, land, animals and humans, all have their spiritual keepers (Abylkhozhin,

1997). As Kaynar and Sakhitzhanova (2016, p. 112) noted: "*Kazakhs believe that apart from the physical body a man has a soul, which is no less in need of food, and the food for the soul is the spirit of the ancestors Aruah. It is believed that all human actions are reflected in his soul, and if a person does evil, betrayal, retreating from the curse, then it offends Aruahov spirits, and thus Tengri*". Tengrism is tightly bounded with shamanism which was, and in a few cases still is, practiced among Kazakhs.

Shamanism is one of the most important elements of Kazakh religious traditions dating back to the pre-Islamic period. According to Ualihanov (1985), for nomadic people shamanism represented the first level of religion. Thus, for the Kazakhs, as a nomadic people, adopting shamanistic beliefs came naturally. Proponents of the cult assumed that shamans had a connection with another world. Kazakhs believed that shamans were able to treat people in a medical sense, to find missing things and cattle, and to perform miracles. Therefore, shamans had a special position in Kazakh society and even after the spread of Islam they retained some influence (Privratsky, 2001). The pre-Islamic beliefs of the Kazakh people included the cult of tombs and caves. Indeed, the Cave of Shaqpaq Ata was regarded as sacred (Oskenbay, 2013) (Figure 35). Women visited this cave in order to be treated for barrenness. The tomb of Beket-ata in Western Kazakhstan was also considered a sacred place (Figure 36). Pilgrims went there to pray and to be blessed (Oskenbay, 2013). When nomadic Kazakhs were in difficult situations, for example, during war or when suffering from disease, they asked the spirits to help them. Consequently, all luck was attributed to the extent to which ancestors' spirits were protected. In addition, they were afraid of the anger of their ancestors' spirits.

Fig. 35 The Cave of *Shaqpaq Ata*



Source: Ruh.Kz (2021)

Fig. 36 The Tomb of *Beket Ata*



Source: Ruh.Kz (2021)

Arab conquests in the eighth century CE brought Islam to the southern part of the Kazakh steppe (Bulutay, 2000). However, it was several centuries before Islam became widely practiced here. This slow and relatively late arrival of Islam into the region helped to preserve the pre-Islamic beliefs among the nomadic Kazakh people (Bulutay, 2000). In the nomadic context, the Kazakhs' Islamic practices were different from countries of the Middle East and even from the practices of other Central Asian countries. For instance, due to their nomadic way of life (living in yurts, seasonal movement, etc.), the Kazakhs did not cover the faces of

women and women never lived in seclusion (Orynbekov, 1997). Young men and girls had substantial freedom in terms of communication. Compared with the Middle East and other Central Asian countries, the scarcity of mosques, madrasas (Muslim schools), and mausoleums in the Kazakh steppe allowed pre-Islamic religious traditions to be preserved (Orynbekov, 1997). All pre-Islamic belief systems, namely Tengriism, shamanism, Zoroastrianism, and the cult of ancestors and saints, joined Islam and supplemented it, forming a unique type of Kazakh Islamism.

The Soviet government and Soviet scholars claimed that Kazakhs were not real Muslims. Indeed, according to Bacon (1958), although Kazakhs were Sunni, few actually knew the difference between Sunni and Shi'a. Many of the mullahs had little knowledge regarding their religion. It appeared as though the "five pillars" of Islam were not practiced among the Kazakh people. Bacon (1966, p. 42) illustrated how Kazakhs practiced the "*five pillars" of Islam as follows: "1. The name of Allah was more often heard in shamanistic incantations than in the profession of faith. 2. Prayers was performed in the occasion of a mullah's visit but never five times a day nor on Friday at a mosque; the nomads had no mosques. 3. There was no need for almsgiving; families took care of their own, and a poor man found a home with the family to which he hired out. There were some religious mendicants, but they seem to have made their way by fortune-telling and magical practices rather than as recipients of alms. 4. There was no fasting. 5. Very few Kazakhs made the pilgrimage to Mecca; those who did become hajii acquired so much prestige from this voyage that they were accorded the status of sultans*".

However, Kazakh and Western scholars who had conducted fieldwork and observations in the Kazakh steppe claimed that, although the Kazakhs retained some pre-Islamic beliefs, they were still Muslims. For example, according to Wilford (1961), who lived in the Kazakh steppe from 1914 until 1919, the Islamic

dogma was keenly embraced by the Kazakhs. Wilford (1961, p. 102) noted: "*Their speech was full of references to Allah - mainly in salutations and conventional platitudes - and of the most obscene expressions and violent oaths imaginable. Both of the latter were used impartially for quarrelling and jesting. The normal greetings were "Salam aleikoum" (Peace be with you) and "Aleikoum salaam (And on you peace)", which are not unusual in the Moslem world*". Hudson (1938) also conducted research-fieldwork in the Kazakh steppe and pointed out that the Kazakhs were Muslims who practiced the five pillars of Islam. Moreover, one respondent of the current research, who is head of the Religious Affairs Administration, claimed that the Kazakhs were true Muslims who incorporated into their lives rituals and customs that were undeniably Islamic (Figure 37).

Fig. 37 Kazakhs practice ablution before prayer in the steppe (1907) (left to right)



Source: From the Catalogue that represents photo-illustrative materials on traditional culture of the Kazakhs kept in the oldest Museum of Russia – the Peter the Great Anthropology and Ethnography Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 1907, Museum registration N1707

4.6.1 Soviet religious policy and actions in the Kazakh steppe

After the establishment of the Soviet Union, one of the main goals of the new government was to create an entirely new culture. It was orientated toward building an urban-oriented, proletarian, and atheist society (Tuminez, 2000). In order to build an atheist society, it was necessary to liquidate all the perceived religious backwardness that was practiced in parts of the Soviet Union (Tuminez, 2000). The founder of the idea of building an atheistic society was Karl Marx, who first proposed his anti-religious theory in 1844 (Husband, 1998). He claimed that: "*Religious distress is at the same time the expression of real distress and the protest against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people*" (Marx *et al.*, 2008, p.8). Lenin shared Marx's view regarding oppression causing religion and that capitalism was the main adversary (Marx *et al.*, 2008, p.8). Lenin believed that building an atheistic society was impossible without eliminating capitalism. Compared to Marx, Lenin was angrier and more militant (Marx*et al.*, 2008, p.8). Stalin also shared Lenin's view regarding the building of an anti-religious society and proposed that anti-religious workers abandon philosophical sophistication in favour of a common-sense approach when dealing with peasants (Husband, 1998). Although Marx did not propose violence against religion, Lenin did support such action (Husband, 1998). Stalin and his anti-religious campaigns also encouraged violence.

The late 1920s and the early 1930s saw an assault on Islam and all Islamic traditions in the Soviet Union. In 1927, the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union declared a decree "on shariat and adat courts" which forbade the application of Muslim and traditional law (Mahat, 2007). As discussed above, in 1925 the Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin alphabet. One of the main reasons for this change was religion. The Arabic alphabet was removed in order

to diminish the influences from the Muslim world on Central Asian countries (Mahat, 2007). This change also affected the religious practices of the Kazakh people. In particular, they became unable to read the Quran and other religious books written in the Arabic language (Mahat, 2007).

During Soviet rule in Kazakhstan, the Islamic mosques and madrasas were closed, destroyed, or converted into other facilities such as factories, museums, food houses or even prisons (Orynbekov, 2005). According to one subject of my research (see Table 1, n14):

My grandfather was an imam of Kazaly mosque. In 1930 this mosque was converted into a food house. All religious books, including the Quran were forcibly burned. From 1927, imams were persecuted, arrested and many were executed. My grandfather was one of those who was executed, because he tried to save the Quran from being burned. Although eating and raising pigs were prohibited by Islamic Sharia law, my grandmother and their children were obligated to raise pigs.

The teachings of Islam were ridiculed, condemned and labelled the invention of feudal ruling classes to keep the poor in subjection (Husband, 1998). Imams and the Islamic clergy were denounced as exploiters, criminals and corrupters of morals. Believers were subjected to physical violence and criminal sanctions for the performance of religious rituals (Husband, 1998). The five daily prayers were performed only by older generations. For Friday prayers, believers gathered in private homes (Keller, 1992). Overall, Muslims were considered as enemies of the people and civilization.

The main purpose of the Soviet ideology was to defend the interests of the Soviet government and to extend its influence into all spheres of personal and social life. Therefore, scientific atheism was promoted as the ideology of the Soviet Union

(Tuminez, 2000). Soviet scientific atheism can be characterised as a philosophical negation of God, where all religions and religious values were rejected (Shahrani, 1994). Soviet atheism did not treat religion as a private matter. As Bercken (1989, p. 274) notes: *".... even the individual's belief in God, even a church which has withdrawn from society in pietism and liturgical cult, do not fit in the ideological monoculture of Soviet society*". Thus, Soviet scientific atheism can be considered as a categorical and radical type of atheism as it rejected other types of atheism as inconsistent and unscientific (Bercken, 1989). The claim of inconsistency was based on the fact that other types of atheism rejected religions only in theory but in real life did not take any serious measures (Bercken, 1989). The claim of being unscientific was founded on other types of atheism that did not rely on the dialectical-materialistic ontology (Bercken, 1989). Scientific atheism was promoted and protected by the Institute of Scientific Atheism of the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Shahrani, 1994). Atheistic books and publications became widely available, while it was impossible to find religious books on the commercial market. Scientific atheism was promoted via the media, while public debates with religious believers were prohibited (Shahrani, 1994). Atheism was taught in the universities, schools and even in the kindergartens.

The Soviet ideology, however, embraced some Muslim family principles. Muslim women married early and their divorce rate was the lowest in the Soviet Union (Mahat, 2007). Compared with European women (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, etc.) of the Soviet Union, Muslim women had more children (Mahat, 2007). In fact, according to a survey carried out in the 1970s among married women of the Soviet Union in order to identify their ideal number of children, Muslim women wanted six or more children, while European women wanted two or three (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1983). In particular, Kazakh women commonly had between six and 14 children (Bulutay, 2000). This meant that the

Muslim population of Central Asia could grow at about three times the rate of the European population. This birth rate of Central Asian Muslims was seen as a possible threat to the Russian hegemony. Therefore, in order to lower birth rates, the Soviet ideology proposed a social programme for Muslim women (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1983). They were encouraged to become involved in the labour force and in social and political work. The Soviet social programme offered "ideal" living conditions for working women, including better child-care facilities and child allowances (Mahat, 2007). Propaganda was issued that depicted an ideal family with one to three children, where both parents worked in the factory or industry of some kind. This Soviet campaign succeeded as the birth rates among Kazakh families reduced significantly, especially in urban areas (Mahat, 2007).

Contrary to the original aetheistic Soviet ideology, during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945), Islam was one of the tools used to mobilise the Central Asian people to defend the "Motherland". From the beginning of the war, Islamic religious leaders gathered several times at conferences, where Islam was established as an official religion of a substantial part of the Soviet population and policies were announced (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1983). Moreover, in 1943 the Muslim Spiritual Directorate for Central Asia was set out in Tashkent. Some mosques and madrasahs reopened (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1983). In 1948, a handful of the Muslim clergy were trained, and a few carefully selected pilgrims were allowed to make the hajj to Mecca (Rakowska-Harmstone, 1983). As part of these relaxations in the treatment of Islam, the Central Asian Muslims were obligated to pay Islamic taxes (*zakat and fitr*) for the needs of the war (Mahat, 2007). According to Sharia law, Muslims have to protect their homeland, their families and belongings during times of war. The Soviet government obliged imams to encourage Central Asian Muslims to defend the "Motherland". Consequently, imams told stories of prophets and their fellow campaigners, inviting all Central Asian people to defend the homeland (Mahat, 2007). Those who died in the fighting were considered

martyrs. However, from the mid-1950s Islam was made illegal again. The vigorous atheistic campaign of 1959-1964 initiated by Khrushchev led to the prohibition of all religious activities (Ro'i, 1996).

Despite the fact that the Soviet Union was largely successful in eliminating Islamic practices and teachings, it could not prevent most Kazakhs from perceiving themselves as having an Islamic identity. As Olcott (1995, p.21) pointed out: "*the consciousness of having an Islamic heritage was one of the elements which for the Central Asians continued to define their identities - even if a particular individual knew almost nothing about religion and observed none of its tenets*". After conducting a survey in Kazakhstan, Akbarzadeh (1997, p.73) pointed out that *"…. two-thirds of the Kazakh believers could not correctly translate the sentence "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet" from the Arabic*". It should be noted that shahada is the first and most significant pillar of Islam. Being a Muslim was understood as an integral part of the identity of the Kazakh people. Yet 70 years of Soviet atheism decimated Islamic institutions of learning, leaving both imams and the population largely unfamiliar with traditional Islamic teachings.

Conclusion

Soviet cultural policy aimed to develop a new culture and society. For 74 years (1917-1991), Soviet society experienced various phases of development, starting with the seizing of political power by the working class and the construction of a socialist society. As can be seen from this chapter, initially, all cultural heritage of Russia and the other Soviet states was rejected. Having classed this cultural heritage as bourgeois, the Soviet government sought to frame the proletarian culture of the newly formed Soviet Union as entirely fresh (Kapayeva, 2004). Then the cultural policy of the Soviet Union concentrated heavily on the building of a culture along purely socialist lines. By eliminating any cultural inequality

between the different republics of the Soviet Union, the cultural policy of the Soviet government focused on the establishment of a common (Russified) model of culture (Kaipova, 2002). A final phase of cultural construction was dedicated to transforming a socialist culture into a communist one. There was the widespread opening of cultural educational centres where the various Soviet republics could learn about Western culture. According to the cultural policy, Russians were described as "the leading people" of the Soviet Union. They were "*the first among the equal members of the soviet family of peoples*" (Pierce, 1960, p.2).

This process of transformation had a significant effect on the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Nevertheless, Kazakh people did not lose their sense of ethnic identity, and did not merge with the Russian people (Akiner, 1995). Although the major part of the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people ceased to exist, there was an evolution of the traditional cultures, with selective borrowing of new elements and modifications stemming from the traditional culture of the region.

CHAPTER 5: THE ROLE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN IN REVIVING, PROTECTING AND PROMOTING THE TRADITIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE OF THE KAZAKH PEOPLE

This chapter analyses the role and activities of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in reviving, protecting and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. It examines why and how traditional Kazakh cultural heritage has been revived and the ways in which it has been preserved and promoted. The main motivations of the State in reviving and promoting the nomadic cultural heritage are examined, such as determining and reinforcing national identity, developing tourism, and promoting nation branding. The chapter also illustrates the main challenges that the Kazakhstan Government faces in safeguarding its people's traditional nomadic cultural heritage, including corruption, nationalism and cultural policy inherited from the Soviet Union, as well as the low salaries of the cultural heritage workers. However, the complex demographic composition of Kazakhstan is identified as the main challenge to building a national identity and to promoting its traditional cultural heritage. The chapter consequently deals with the question of whether it is possible to build a multicultural nation by developing and promoting the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups without emphasising one over the others.

5.1 Reinforcing national identity

In Kazakhstan, the State is the most powerful actor in reviving and preserving the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. It is the State that decides what should be preserved and promoted as well as why and how, which forms of cultural heritage to support, which monuments to build or destroy, which symbols and ceremonies to prohibit and which to create (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic

of Kazakhstan, 2017). The State regulates the activities of international agents or other stakeholders involved in preserving and promoting its cultural heritage. This kind of "top-down" approach to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage occurs not only in Kazakhstan but also in all other Central Asian countries (Adams, 2010). Such an approach is commonly applied in Central Asia since the states in this region have endured decades of Soviet totalitarian rule and, regardless of the democratisation processes to varying degrees in these now-independent states, they are still considered by many to be, at the least, not entirely democratic. Kuzio (2002) stated that the deconstruction of the post-Soviet states is an ongoing and potentially endless process. This is because generations of Sovietisation in all spheres of these states, from administrative and political through to social, economic and cultural, continues to have a significant influence on these countries today (Iazeva, 2009). In Kazakhstan, like all other Central Asian countries, the majority of people who were political leaders during Soviet times have continued to hold positions of authority following the collapse of the Soviet Union. As an illustration of this trend, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev,[6] was elected as the First President of Kazakhstan in 1991 following independence, and remains in power to this day (Akiner, 1995). The human resources employed in the rebuilding of the governmental apparatus, as well as the political leaders themselves, were trained during Soviet rule. Therefore, the Soviet "top-down" policy has survived

[6] Nursultan Nazarbayev was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR in 1984. In 1989, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Kazakh SSR elected Nazarbayev to the post of the First Secretary. In 1991, at the first nation-wide election, he was elected as the First President of Kazakhstan. On March 2019, Nazarbayev announced his resignation as President of Kazakhstan. His resignation as President notwithstanding, he has been granted the honorary status of *Elbasy* the First President of Kazakhstan, the Chairman of the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, and "Nur Otan" political party. Therefore, in this research, Nazarbayev is named as the First President of Kazakhstan

in Kazakhstan as a framework for all governmental policies during the early years of independence.

Although the current political leaders of Kazakhstan and all other Central Asian countries generally renounce communistic ideology today, they still employ Soviet-style nationalistic policies. Nationalism has been at the heart of nation-building processes and, to some extent, the cultural heritage policy of Kazakhstan. The nationalistic approach of Kazakhstan in the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan will be discussed in this chapter. It is therefore essential to define "nationalism" before proceeding. For the purpose of this research, the definition of nationalism given by Mann (2005) is accepted, thereby avoiding a long theoretical debate on what is a largely epistemological issue which is beyond the scope of this research. Mann (2005, p. 137) defined nationalism as "*an ideology which asserts the moral, cultural and political primacy of the nation*". According to Mann (2005), one of the assertions of nationalism is that the interests and values of a nation take priority over all other interests and values. Hobsbawn (1983) divided nationalism into two perspectives: "top-down" and "bottom-up". The "top-down" perspective is where nationalism is created by the state while the bottom-up perspective is when nationalism is created by the people. The Government of Kazakhstan has been criticised by Western scholars for its implementation of "top-down" nationalism since independence (Cummings, 2010; Laruelle, 2018, a; Ro'i, 1996; Scriven, 2013; Spehr and Kassenova, 2012).

After declaring its independence, one of the main tasks for the Government of Kazakhstan was to fill an ideological gap by giving the population a new national identity to legitimise its political power. National identity is a mechanism providing people with a sense of individual and collective values. Smith (1991, p.14) defined the main features of national identity as: an historic territory or

homeland; common myths and historic memories; a common public culture; common legal rights and duties; and a common economy with territorial mobility for its members. Identity meanwhile is a vague and abstract concept, but one that is crucial to a nation's solidity and substance (Smith, 2006). Nations generally comprise similar individuals who have to know who they are, their origins, their particularities, and how they are similar to each other to distinguish themselves from other nations and their people. Fuller (1994, p.145) pointed out: "*only when a nation has a sense of its place in history, geography, and culture can it begin to act with certitude*". Thus, cultural heritage plays a crucial role in reinforcing national identity.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, all five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan) became independent and started to determine their futures by slowly beginning to unravel their respective identities. One of the main issues for all five of post-Soviet Central Asian countries was determining their national identities (Rees and Williams, 2017). For the newly independent Central Asian countries, there were several views about their place in the region. Did they relate to the Asian world, the Muslim world, the Turkic world, or all three? Or did each country need to find its own destiny and identity distinct from that of their neighbours? In the process of determining the national identity of Kazakhstan, the actions of several countries had a decisive influence. Perhaps most prominent was Turkey, which was the first country to formally recognise the independence of Kazakhstan (Yemelianova, 2014). Turkish politicians such as former President Turgut Ozal and his successor Suleiman Demirel promoted a Pan-Turkic identity. Turkey proposed a cultural "Pan-Turkism" rather than a political one with the aim being the cultural integration of the five post-Soviet Central Asian nations (Khalid, 2007). Moreover, this proposed "Pan-Turkic" identity was attractive to these newly independent states all of which had a limited democracy with powerful

presidential influence, and where the Islamic religion only had a limited role in institutional policy, unlike most other Muslim countries. However, due to the heavy political influence of neighbouring Russia, Pan-Turkic identity did not really succeed.

As well as Turkey, other countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, also sought to interfere in the religious and cultural affairs of the post-Soviet Central Asian states (Haghayeghi, 1994). The main aim of these countries was to gain access to the natural resources of the Central Asian region (Rorlich, 2003). All of these countries proposed the revival of an Islamic identity across the Central Asian region. However, these proposed Islamic identities were totally different to those which had been practiced in the Kazakh steppe before the Russian conquest. Iran proposed radical Islam, which combined elements of fundamentalism and anti-Western imperialism in its approach to both politics and society (Haghayeghi, 1994). On the other hand, the Saudi Arabian authorities proposed conservative Islam with no anti-Western tenets. Although predominately Muslim, Kazakhs have traditionally demonstrated a liberal attitude towards religious practices. As a result, the process of Islamic revival has been less active in Kazakhstan than in any other post-Soviet Central Asian country with the exception of perhaps Kyrgyzstan (Weller, 2013). For Kazakhstan, where Slavs outnumber the ethnic Kazakhs, the revival of Islamic identity was perceived as dangerous by the Government of Kazakhstan as it could have threatened their development of a multi-ethnic policy. As a result, the Government of Kazakhstan, with the support of its own political élite, rejected these proposed identities and decided to accept an identity inherited from their ancestors (Mkrtchyan, 2014). Consequently, Kazakhstan placed its nomadic heritage at the core of its national identity.

After gaining its independence in 1991, the Government of Kazakhstan faced a number of challenges in the economic, political and social spheres which absorbed

all of its resources. Only by 1998, seven years after independence, did the revival of cultural heritage become a serious issue in Kazakhstan (Nadirbekov *et al.*, 2016). At the national level, in order to revive national identity and add meaning to independence, several ambitious projects were undertaken. There is no doubt that, after gaining independence from the Soviet Union, one of the main points on the agenda for Kazakhstan was to reform its national identity to ensure the legitimacy of its independence and render its independence meaningful. In order to achieve this goal, in 1995, under the initiative of the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev, "A core document (Certificate) of the Foundation of Historical Awareness of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was established in 1995 (Melich and Adilbayeva, 2013). Its main aim was to prove that Kazakhstan was a country of rich history dating back millennia and that its ancestors were not "barbarian nomads" but rather nomads who contributed towards a rich civilisation. As part of this project, the history of Kazakhstan was rewritten with selected components of national identity inserted along the way (Melich and Adilbayeva, 2013). It is relevant to note here that critics of collective memory such as Crowley (1964), Osborne (2000), and Phillips (2013) consider historians as storytellers who foist their viewpoints on their reports, for their privileged positions as narrators allows them to dictate how people, events, and issues in a narrative are considered. Smith (1999) states that during the construction of collective memory, for most communities, especially postcolonial nations, myths are historical narratives which communities truthfully believe to be "what really happened". Myths not only tell the story of how communities came to be, but also present how they are yet to fully realise their potential (Halbwachs, 1992).

The newly published post-independence history textbooks for schools and universities dated Kazakhstan's history back to prehistoric times, thereby tightly connecting the history of the country with that of the territory (Mendikulova, 1997; Nysanbayev, 2004; Tatimov, 1993; Qozybayev, 1991). By doing so,

Kazakhstan represented its ancestry as primordial, in common with all post-Soviet Central Asian countries (Baigunakov and Sabdenova, 2014). It should also be acknowledged here that the previous five-volume book "The History of the Kazakh SSR" (1979, 1 volume) also dated Kazakhstan's history back to the Stone Age. These new textbooks were written by historians from the Institute of History and Ethnology with financial support from the Government. In some ways these new textbooks continue the history written during the Soviet period but deviate from the older texts by outlining the Kazakhs' resistance to the Russians and then the Soviets.

Strengthening national identity and understanding modernization processes played a significant role in various major events and themes identified by the Government to individual years. The year 1997 was declared the *Year of the Memory of Victims of Repression*, while 1998 was proclaimed as the *Year of National Harmony and History*, 1999 was the *Year of the Succession of Generations*, and 2000 was classified as the *Year of Culture* (Horne and Stan, 2018). These steps, all of which were declared by the decree of Nazarbayev, the First President of Kazakhstan, together represented a new important stage in the cultural life of the country. At governmental level, a complex of actions aimed at the development of folk and professional art was planned and realised, while cultural support was provided to villages for the preservation of cultural heritage. In 1998, the country had only two opera and ballet theatres, 33 drama theatres, four musical comedy theatres, four theatres for young people, five puppet-show theatres, 73 permanent cinemas and 266 mobile cinemas, but by the late 2000s there were 48 theatres, 62 concert organizations, 3539 libraries, 154 state museums, 2259 clubs and similar institutions, eight cultural and historical reserves-museums (National Digital History of Kazakhstan, 2013). As stated by Gillis (1994), when building collective memory communities rely on various sources of materials that contain remembered experiences as referred to by

members of communities and in narratives of history reflected in books, libraries, museums, archives, films, music and television. In the case of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan also paid great attention to the digital processing and recording of national musical heritage in 2001. The Ministry created a project anthologising traditional Kazakh music *"Mangilik saryn: kazaktyn 1000 kui, 1000 ani"* ("Immortal melodies: 1000 *kui,* 1000 songs") (National Digital History of Kazakhstan, 2013). The project brought to life numerous works following the various stages of collection, preparation, processing, restoration, digitalization and release of CDs of authentic performances of traditional Kazakh music presented as evidence of the history of national culture (Dowding, 2014). Many traditional songs and music played on traditional national instruments were recorded on digital media, the majority of which had been almost forgotten among Kazakhs.

However, the most significant project promoted by the Kazakhstan government in terms of forming and strengthening national consciousness and identity was the adoption of the State programme "Cultural Heritage" in 2003 (Tursynbayeva *et al.,* 2015). This programme was launched at the initiative of Nazarbayev, First President of Kazakhstan, through the Ministry of Culture (Tursynbayeva *et al.,* 2015). The aim of the programme was outlined in a speech given by the First President: *There are no Egyptian pyramids or a Roman Coliseum in our country, but the role of nomads, who lived in the ancient territory of Kazakhstan, is invaluable not only for Eurasia but also for the entire history of the world. We must show the greatness of steppe civilisation to the world… This is one of the main objectives of the programme "Cultural Heritage*" (The State Historical and Cultural Reserve-Museum "Berel", 2016). In order to achieve its aim, the programme paid significant attention to the "study, systematisation, restoration and preservation of the whole complex of cultural heritage, both material and intangible" (The State Historical and Cultural Reserve-Museum "Berel", 2016).

The implementation of the programme started in 2004 and was initially planned to span two years. It proved fruitful though and was extended to another two periods: 2007-2009 and 2009-2011. Around 11.7 billion Kazakh *tenge* (national currency of Kazakhstan, around £24.6 million) was allocated from the national budget for the operation of the programme between 2004 and 2011 (Official Source of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2016).

Kazakhstan was the first of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries to realise a programme of such scale. According to an interviewee for this research, who worked on this programme and today has a leading position in the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n1):

Time has shown that the State Programme "Cultural Heritage" has found wide support from the entire Kazakh people, who with great enthusiasm took this large-scale action as a landmark step in the development and establishment of a new independent state. The program "Cultural Heritage" gained great resonance not only in CIS countries, but also further afield. The State Programme "Cultural Heritage" has been realized according to several objectives: restoration of historical-cultural and architectural monuments that have special importance for national culture; restoration of the archaeological sites and conduct of archaeological research; publication of a series of publications on the literature, history, archaeology, ethnography and culture of Kazakhstan; and the conduct of scientific research and the organisation of scientific conferences in the sphere of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Although this programme was criticized for being focused on only the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, in fact, during the period of 2004-2011, monuments of history and culture not only of the Kazakh people, but also of other ethnic groups living on the territory of the country, were restored. For example, the building of Zharkent mosque in Almaty region, which bears traditions and elements of Uigur arts and crafts, and a house

in Uralsk where at the beginning of the twentieth century the great Tatar poet Gabdulla Tukay lived. Boznesensky Castle in Almaty and Boe-Nicholas Church in Turkestan are two further examples of many. There is no doubt that the Government of Kazakhstan pays great attention and allocates significant amounts of money for the preservation and safeguarding of the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. This programme also was criticized for being focused on the preservation of tangible cultural heritage. We have a whole department which is responsible for the preservation of the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. This department contributes to the organisation of concerts of folk music, exhibitions of folk handcrafts and various events regarding elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. I am glad that the people of Kazakhstan do such tremendous work for the preservation of rich elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. Several times I have proposed that the Government of Kazakhstan needs more financial support for intangible cultural heritage. Intangible cultural heritage represents the cultural diversity and identity of the nomadic Kazakhs. Nowadays, elements of intangible cultural heritage have become vulnerable to deterioration. In particular, the Russian colonisation and Soviet regime disrupted the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. Moreover, rapid social change and globalisation have made this situation even more pressing. Thus, the Government of Kazakhstan has to increase the value it attaches to intangible cultural heritage and its safeguarding.

5.1.1 The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the main executive body of the Republic of Kazakhstan when it comes to managing the fields of culture. The Ministry has gone through various transformations since the country gained independence in 1991 (Table 2) (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, a). Its name has changed almost every

two years, leading to its priorities fluctuating over time. Significant time and resources have been used, arguably wastefully, in drafting new regulations frequently, transferring or dismissing members of staff, and in reorganising the work plans and hierarchy and associated responsibilities. The period of 2003-2005 was the most fruitful in terms of reviving and conserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (Baigunakov and Sabdenova, 2014). During this period, the Ministry was named "The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan" (Table 7) (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, a). In 2014, the First President signed an executive order to establish "The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan". This change has positively affected the revival and development of traditional Kazakh sports and games. One particular department in the Ministry is called "Traditional Kazakh Sports" and this is orientated toward preserving and developing traditional nomadic Kazakh sports and games.

Tab. 7 Different titles of the Ministry since independence

Year	The name of the Ministry
1990-1992	The State Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Culture
1992-1997	The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
1997-1998	The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
1998-1999	The Ministry of Education, Culture and Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan
1999-2003	The Ministry of Culture, Information and Mutual Understanding of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2003-2005	The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2005-2006	The Ministry of Culture, Information and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan

2006-2013	The Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2013-2014	The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan
2014-present	The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Source: The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, a

5.1.2 The “Law on Culture" of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The “Law on Culture" of the Republic of Kazakhstan was enacted in 2006. It is the main legal document regarding the protection, safeguarding, development and use of culture in the Republic of Kazakhstan (World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), 2018). The Law provides a definition of the cultural heritage of the people of Kazakhstan. In order to understand why the Government of Kazakhstan preserves and promotes the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, it is necessary to outline the definition of culture set out in this law (2006). Article 1, paragraph 4, of the ”Law on Culture” defines culture as a set of tangible and intangible values created by mankind with the purpose of harmoniously satisfying particular aesthetic needs and interests and promoting patriotism. From this definition, it can be seen that culture is viewed as a tool to achieve human perfection (World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), 2018). Moreover, culture in this context is connected with the idea of patriotism. Consequently, culture is regarded as a way of building and improving a sense of national identity. As culture is viewed as an aesthetic expression, it appears here to be targeting emotional reactions from the people. As the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people was disrupted by Russian and the Soviet colonisation, the whole process of reviving and promoting cultural heritage has an emotional connection. Appealing to such emotions thus promotes a sense of national identity.

The “Law on Culture” clearly states that the responsibility for safeguarding and protecting the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan should be shared between the public sector and society. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan is authorised to ensure the safeguarding of national cultural heritage. This legal document also notes the duties of the general population in protecting and safeguarding historical sites and traditions and promoting respect for Kazakh cultural heritage as well as the cultural heritage of other ethnic groups and communities within the country (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017, a). The definition of cultural heritage written in Article 1, paragraph 3 is also worth considering (World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), 2018). This article defines cultural heritage as a set of items/things of cultural value with national significance. Thus, the concept of items/things of cultural value is used to explain the concept of cultural heritage. All of the objects considered to be indicative of the cultural values of Kazakhstan are items of tangible cultural heritage and there is no mention of intangible cultural heritage. Although intangible cultural heritage is acknowledged within the definition of culture, it is not included within the definition of cultural heritage. However, in 2011, the Government of Kazakhstan adopted the "Conception of Protection and Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Kazakhstan" (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017, b). This defines intangible cultural heritage as: "*customs and rituals, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills (as well as the related tools, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces) that are recognised by communities, groups and in some cases by individuals as a part of their cultural heritage. The intangible cultural heritage is transmitted from generation to generation and is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature, and their history. It provides people with a sense of identity and continuity and promotes respect for cultural diversity and human creativity*" (The Ministry

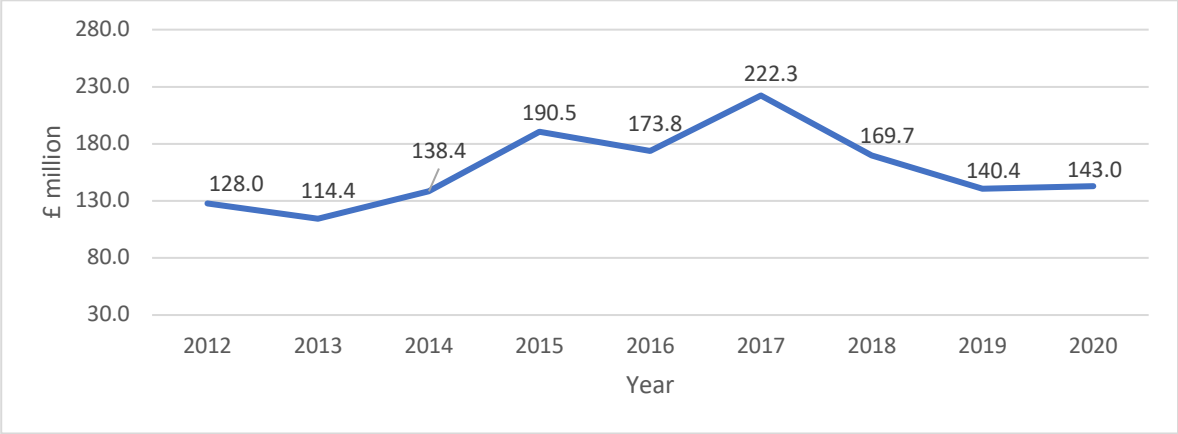
of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017, b). It should be noted that this definition of intangible cultural heritage echoes the one provided by UNESCO in the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003). Moreover, in accordance with this definition, intangible cultural heritage is to be used as a tool to strengthen and promote a sense of national identity.

5.1.3 Financial support

In order to protect and promote the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan in accordance with the “Law on Culture" (2006), the Government allocates necessary finances from its budget (Figure 38). The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan is responsible for spending this budget allocation (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, b). The Government, with support from international cultural organisations (such as UNESCO) and foreign countries who have invested in Kazakhstan (such as China and the United States) finances almost all cultural activities, ranging from the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage sites to the organisation of traditional cultural events and the physical maintenance of concert halls (The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, b). The Government is the main source of financial support for all cultural institutions such as museums, theatres, libraries, archives, and cultural educational institutions. Professional practitioners working in contemporary art have stated that the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan has always ignored contemporary art and that popular culture has been viewed with suspicion (Denison, 2009). In contrast, most of the interviewees in this research working in the Kazakh traditional cultural heritage stated that the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan pays more attention to contemporary art and popular culture. Figure 38 details the specific amounts of money allocated by the Government to the preservation and

promotion of cultural heritage, with this peaking in 2017 when the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev proposed a new national programme concerning the "spiritual revival" of the State.

Fig. 38 The fluctuations in amounts of money allocated by the Government of Kazakhstan for the protection and promotion of cultural heritage



Source: The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018, b

5.1.4 The President's programme of "Spiritual Revival"

In April 2017, the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev launched a new national programme called "The Course towards the Future: Modernisation of Kazakhstan's identity" which concerned the spiritual revival of Kazakhstan (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017). Under this programme, the Government launched a national programme called "Spiritual Revival" (*Rukhani Zhangyru*) in 2017 (Official Source of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017). Here, the First President outlined two important elements of this revival, namely political reform and economic modernisation. According to the First President, Kazakhstan had entered a new period in its history which he referred to as the third modernisation of Kazakhstan, which would include the reviving of a national identity and the traditions of the Kazakh people (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan,

2017). The First President outlined that even highly modernised societies have culture and traditions which are rooted in the distant past. Thus, he asserted, for successful modernisation it would be necessary to preserve the national culture and traditions. According to the First President: "*However, this does not mean preservation of everything in the national culture. We need to separate those aspects which give us confidence in the future and those that hold us back*" (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017). Yet, the First President did not clearly identify in his national programme what aspects of cultural heritage and traditions were to be preserved and which were not. Nevertheless, any actions of the Government to revive and preserve the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people would be based on this programme. According to an interviewee (see Table 1, n1) in this research who works at the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, local sponsors (businessmen, executives of large corporations and oil and gas companies) also financially supported this programme.

5.2 The challenges in safeguarding Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage

5.2.1 Corruption

Although the Government allocates a significant proportion of its budget to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, corruption represents a formidable barrier obstructing the implementation of national programmes to revive the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In general terms, corruption is one of the most significant problems faced by Kazakhstan (Satpayev, 2014) and harms the development of every sector in Kazakhstan, including the cultural sector (McMann, 2014). Corruption ordinarily entails acts of using public offices and resources for private gain. In Kazakhstan, the most endemic type of corruption is found in the transferring of funds between state structures and

national companies with opaque arrangements resulting in large sums going unaccounted (Knack, 2007). International agencies and nongovernmental organizations such as Transparency International (TI), the Economist Intelligence Unit, the World Competitiveness Yearbook, and the World Economic Forum regularly collect data and produce corruption indices based on the perceptions of entrepreneurs based in Kazakhstan. According to TI's Corruption Perceptions Index, Kazakhstan is one of the most corrupt countries in the world. In the 2017 index, which assessed 180 countries, Kazakhstan was ranked 122nd (Transparency International – Kazakhstan, 2018). Kazakhstan scored 3.1 out of a possible 10, with 10 meaning no corruption at all and zero meaning corruption is rife (Transparency International – Kazakhstan, 2018) (Table 8). Moreover, *The Global Competitiveness Report on Kazakhstan from 2017*, prepared by the World Economic Forum, showed that corruption was the biggest problem to affect doing business in Kazakhstan (World Economic Forum, 2017) (Figure 39). These globally respected measurements of corruption indicate the seriousness of corruption in Kazakhstan.

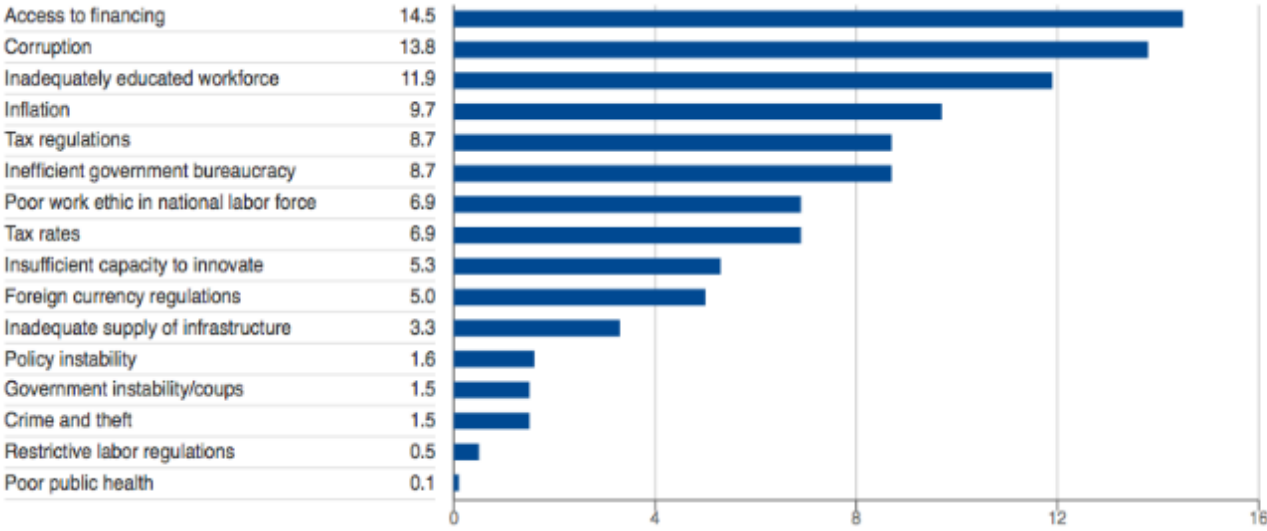
Tab. 8 Kazakhstan's rank of curruption as well as its score for each year (2012-2017)

2017 Rank	Country	2017 Score	2016 Score	2015 Score	2014 Score	2013 Score	2012 Score
122	Kazakhstan	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.8

Source: Transparency International – Kazakhstan, 2018

In Kazakhstan, the uncovering of corruption scandals involving government officials has become a common occurrence. The Kazakh Civil Service Affairs and Anti-corruption Agency registered 1,835 corruption-related crimes in 2017 and prosecuted 320 individuals (Satubaldina, 2018, a). Compared to the number of cases in 2016, this represented a fall of 18% (Satubaldina, 2018, a). One of the biggest corruption scandals to have occurred in Kazakhstan was revealed in 2015

Fig. 39 Most problematic factors affecting doing business in Kazakhstan



Source: World Economic Forum, Executive Opinion Survey, 2017

and concerned Talgat Yermegiyayev, the former chairman of Astana EXPO-2017, a state-owned joint stock company (Satpayev, 2014). The reputation of Astana EXPO-2017, which was formed as part of the First President's attempt to promote Kazakhstan's culture, tourism and technology to the world, was undermined by a corruption scandal involving its top managers. Yermegiyayev embezzled around £17.8 million from the state budget which had been allocated for the organisation of Astana EXPO-2017 (Paolo, 2015; Sorbello, 2015). The majority of corruption cases in Kazakhstan are related to bribery. Another relevant example arose when the Kazakh Civil Service Affairs and Anti-corruption Agency arrested the Director of the Administrative Department of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Erenai Darzhibayev, in 2018. He was detained after taking a bribe of around £30,000 (DayNews.kz-International Information Portal, 2018). Although the Minister of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan stated that there was no corruption in this Ministry, this case of corruption was found to involve seven of its officials including Darzhibayev (Anti-corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021).

5.2.2 Low salaries

Low salaries represents another significant barrier hindering Kazakhstan's development of its traditional cultural heritage. The Government treats all cultural heritage workers as public servants who are not well renumerated. As a result, the most talented people, especially musicians and artists, move to other countries (Bektas, 2014). Most of the interviewees in this research stated that their salaries were barely enough to feed their families. Therefore, they were open to any offers of work from other countries unless their renumeration increased. One interviewee, a conductor (see Table 1, n6), stated that low salaries represented one of the main barriers hindering the promotion of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The majority of traditional Kazakh musicians receive low salaries and thus take other opportunities to supplement their salaries, such as participating in private events like weddings and birthday parties (Auesbay, 2014). Most of them teach at private/state music schools in addition to their main jobs. Most of the interviewees claimed that they could understand why other people would give up their careers as musicians to pursue small businesses instead. Some of the interviewees who worked during the Soviet period noted that cultural workers, especially musicians and artists, had been treated as part of the élite during Soviet times. Those who worked in the cultural sphere earned some of the highest salaries in the country and houses were provided for them by the Soviet government. Therefore, some of the interviewees were nostalgic about the Soviet era when they were able to go to a sanatorium with their families as cultural workers once a year for free. During Soviet times, cultural élites were accustomed to living comfortably on a state salary and producing work that was highly valued by the people as well as by the government, so the need for many such workers to pursue small businesses instead represented a sort of collapse in their morale.

Nevertheless, the Government has realised a number of national programmes aimed at reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. These programmes are examined below.

5.3 Reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people

5.3.1 National symbols

During the first stage after gaining its independence, the Government of Kazakhstan focused on strengthening Kazakh national identity by updating the cultural and artistic landscape. Relevant actions here included deconstructing the legacies, symbols and policy approaches of the Soviet period and promoting the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. In 1992, Kazakhstan adopted new state symbols including for its emblem, flag and anthem (Akiner, 1995). More than 600 people took part in a competition announced by the Government of Kazakhstan for the development of state symbols. As a result, the winners of the competition created the designs of the state symbols that reflect the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. As stated by Becker *et al.* (2012), Butz (2009), Hawkins (2010) and Sibley *et al.* (2011), national symbols induce certain national values, because they are often connected with core values and ideological concepts adopted by the nation. The State's emblem (Figure 40), for example, clearly demonstrates the nomadic traditions and culture, as it contains a circle with a *shanyraq* (the roof of a nomadic dwelling known as a yurt) in the centre (Ferret, 2016). The *shanyraq* is a symbol of welfare, calmness and peace. The *shanyraq* props form the sun's rays connecting to two mythical horses. These horses symbolise peacefulness and readiness to defend the motherland (Ferret, 2016). The image of a star indicates that Kazakhstan is open to all countries of the world for co-operation and partnership (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019, b). The State's flag meanwhile was designed by an acclaimed

artist, Shaken Niyazbekov. The light blue colour of the flag represents the colour of both sky and water, symbolizing the unity between both (Figure 41) (Morozov, 2005). Moreover, this symbolises how nomadic Kazakhs lived in unity with nature. The golden sun, eagle and traditional ornamental motif carry deep philosophical meaning. A soaring eagle symbolises courage, far-sightedness, and an aspiration to aim high (Ferret, 2016). Hunting with eagles is an integral part of the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The Kazakh ornamental motif also gives the flag a more nationalistic tinge.

Fig. 40 National Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Source: Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019, b

Fig. 41 National Flag of the Republic of Kazakhstan



Source: Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2019, b

5.3.2 Replacement of Soviet sculptures and monuments

Among the most visible changes made by the Government were the replacement of Soviet sculptures and monuments with new ones that reflected Kazakh history and nomadic culture. As stated by Till (2003), monuments and sculptures are used by states in the process of nation-building. During the Soviet period, monuments were used as a propaganda tool to build Soviet ideology. In particular, monuments of Stalin and Lenin were prominent in every Soviet city, and in many towns and villages (Sichyns'kyi, 1958). Hundreds of monuments of Stalin and Lenin were erected across Kazakhstan in stations, parks and central squares. Moreover, monuments of Stalin and Lenin were viewed as ritual objects (Hitchens, 2011). It was traditional for newly married couples, graduates or even kindergarten children to be photographed in front of the local Lenin monument (Figure 42). After Kazakhstan gained independence, Soviet monuments and sculptures were demolished and replaced (Ploskonka, 2015). New monuments and sculptures were erected to honour indigenous heroes, writers, poets, musicians and even the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev. For example, the monument of Lenin

that once stood in the city of Oral was replaced with a monument of the famous Kazakh writer and poet Abay Qunanbayev. Although most Soviet monuments and sculptures in Kazakhstan were demolished, the tradition of paying homage to symbols of state power persists (Ploskonka, 2015). It is still common for people or groups to have photographs of significant moments taken in front of monuments and sculptures. As an illustration of this custom, the 1983 photograph below, taken in the city of Zhambyl (currently known as Taraz), is from the author's family album (Figure 42). University students commonly took photos in front of this Lenin monument. After gaining independence, this was replaced with a statue of local hero Baidibek Batyr. Another photograph from the author's family album was taken at the same place but in front of the statue of Baidibek Batyr in 2018 (Figure 43).

Fig. 42 University students in front of the Lenin memorial, Zhambyl



Source: author's family album, 1983

Fig. 43 Family photo in front of the statue of Baidibek batyr, Taraz



Source: author's family album, 2018

Monuments and sculptures continue to be used as tools of propagandising a national ideology. They are crucial parts in constructing the Kazakh national identity. As an illustration, the Monument of Independence erected in Independence Square in Almaty is a national monument symbolising Kazakhstan's independence and its people's identity. The monument is 28 metres high with a winged snow leopard, known as a *barys* in Kazakh folklore, on top (Qural, 2018) (Figure 44). The *barys* is a symbol of freedom and independence. On top of the *barys* is a representation of the "Golden Man" or "Golden Warrior", a Scythian warrior from around the fifth century BCE who was found in 1969 in a tomb near Yssyk settlement, about 60 km east of Almaty (Qural, 2018). His costume was made of more than 4000 separate gold pieces, many of them finely worked with animal motifs with a 70cm high headdress bearing skyward-pointing arrows (Aqyshev, 1978). According to Kemal Aqyshov, the archaeologist who discovered the "Golden Man", the skeleton found inside the costume was that of

a young Scythian prince killed in battle (Aqyshev, 1978). The Scythians were a nomadic tribal people who inhabited the Pontic-Caspian steppe. Russian and Western historians tend to date the history of the Kazakh people from the fifteenth century and the formation of the Kazakh Khanate (Nadirbekov *et al.,* 2016). However, Kazakh historians widely claim that the history of the Kazakh people dates back 2500 years. They argue that the Scythians are the ancestors of the Kazakhs. The "Golden Man" being found in the territory of Kazakhstan is used as the main piece of evidence to “prove” such a claim (Nadirbekov *et al.,* 2016). The "Golden Man" has become a symbol of the national identity of the Kazakh people. Therefore, the Monument of Independence with the statue of the "Golden Man" on top of it is essentially an attempted amalgamation of cultural identity, linking the distant past to the present. In addition, the Government has erected monuments and sculptures in all cities and towns that reflect the nomadic cultural traditions of the Kazakh people. There are sculptures of horses, traditional Kazakh games (Figure 45), jewellery (mostly different types of rings and bracelets) (Figure 46), yurts, traditional Kazakh musical instruments and dancing girls in national Kazakh costumes decorating almost all cities and towns in the country. All of these sculptures and monuments were built with the financial support of the Government of Kazakhstan. In this way, monuments and sculptures in Kazakhstan are repeatedly used as tools for building a national identity.

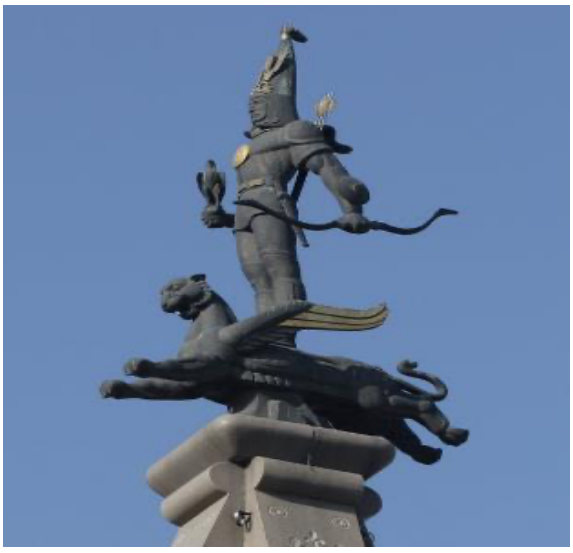


Fig. 44 Statue of the "Golden Man", Almaty

Source: author’s photo, 2017

Fig. 45 Sculpture of the national game – Kazakh *kuresi,* Almaty



Source: author's photo, 2017

Fig.46 Sculptures of pieces of national Kazakh jewellery – ring and necklace, Nur-Sultan



Source: author's photo, 2017

5.3.3 Elements of nomadic heritage in architectural design

The nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is also evident in the architectural design of various buildings, particularly in the capital city of Astana. The capital city of Kazakhstan was moved from Almaty to Astana in 1997 (Anacker, 2004). Almaty had served as the capital city of Kazakhstan from 1929 until 1997 (Anacker, 2004). Thus, Almaty's architecture comprises a mixture of Soviet historical and cultural landscapes, which might have an influence on the ideological preferences of the people of Kazakhstan. Although the ideological concept behind Astana's architecture entails keeping a balance between civic and ethnic identity construction, a significant emphasis has been placed by the Government of Kazakhstan on the incorporation of nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (Köppen, 2013). The roofs of most buildings of national importance have been designed in the shape of traditional Kazakh nomadic yurts. For instance, the architectural design of the first residence of the President of Kazakhstan in Astana (currently the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan), the current residence of the President of Kazakhstan *Aq Orda*, and the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan have all been made in the shape of a yurt. The image of the Kazakh yurt is also found in the architectural design of a large entertainment centre called Khan Shatyr (Khan's Tent) (Figure 47). Khan Shatyr was designed by British architect Norman Foster in 2010 (Manassova *et al.,* 2016). The yurt is considered a symbol of unity and family. Therefore, these buildings of national importance have been designed to symbolise the unity of all nationalities and ethnicities that live in Kazakhstan. As the yurt represents the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, it also symbolises that the ethnic Kazakhs are culturally the dominant group within the country.

Fig. 47 Entertainment centre Khan Shatyr, Nur-Sultan



Source: The Entertainment Centre Khan Shatyr, 2021

5.3.4 The repatriation programme *Oralmandar*

Another of the approaches used to revive and promote the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has been the repatriation programme which was adopted by the Government in 1992. Repatriation is defined by Dowling and Shuler (1990) as "the (process of) return to one's place of origin". Repatriation programmes commonly refer to the titular nation. After gaining independence (1991), the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev invited all ethnic Kazakhs who had fled the totalitarian Soviet regime to return to their homeland of Kazakhstan (Dubuisson and Genina, 2011). As a result, from 1992 to 2012, approximately one million ethnic Kazakhs, referred to locally as *oralmandar*

(repatriates), migrated back to their homeland (Dubuisson and Genina, 2011). The returning ethnic Kazakhs mostly migrated from Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and China. They were provided with housing, education, and financial incentives to return. Despite living outside Kazakhstan for many years, these ethnic Kazakhs had nevertheless preserved their ethnic language and culture (Müsürepov, 2000). Moreover, the *oralmandar* were considered to be more nationalistic and more linguistically and culturally pure than the Kazakhs who had stayed put and experienced the "Russification" of Kazakhstan under the Soviet Union. Among the many groups composing the Kazakh diaspora, ethnic Kazakhs from Mongolia represented the highest rates of repatriation (Post, 2007). Of the 120,506 Kazakhs living in Mongolia in 1989, around 60,000 of them migrated to their homeland between 1992 and 1999 (Post, 2014). The majority of the Kazakh diaspora lived in Bayan-Ulgii in Mongolia. This place was not industrially developed, so the Kazakhs living there were able to lead a traditional nomadic life (Finke, 1999). They lived in traditional nomadic dwelling yurts and moved from one place to the next with their cattle. Ethnic Kazakhs in Mongolia conform to gender roles whereby men care for the livestock and women maintain the household. Men usually ride horses and hunt with golden eagles while women commonly produce traditional felt products (Finke, 1999). In other words, traditional Kazakh customs and practices still exist in their purest form in Bayan-Ulgii (Mongolia) today.

With the migration of these *oralmandar* to Kazakhstan, the Government aimed to revive the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people which had been disrupted or even lost during the Soviet period. As a result, professional yurt making, hunting with birds of prey and producing traditional art were revived through the Kazakhs who migrated (Maukaruly,1997). For instance, the ancient Kazakh dance *qara zhorga* was revived by the Kazakhs who returned from China. Meanwhile, a professional camp for hunters with birds of prey was opened by

Ruslan Abyl who returned from Mongolia (Maukaruly, 1997). This camp contributes significantly to the revival and development of hunting with birds of prey, a tradition which was almost entirely lost during the Soviet period. Moreover, the Government hopes that these *oralmandar* will also contribute to the revival and promotion of the Kazakh language (Beiisuly, 2001). According to the "Law on Migration" the *oralmandar* were only allowed to settle in the northern regions of the country (UNDP, 2006). This is because the northern regions of Kazakhstan are mainly inhabited by Slavic people and have the highest rate of emigration (Commercio, 2004). During the Soviet period, the northern regions of Kazakhstan were heavily "Russified" and the Russian language is more dominant there than in other parts of the country. From the Government's point of view, through the settlement of the *oralmandar*, who in general have poor proficiency in Russian, the Kazakh language could start to compete with the dominant Russian language (Commercio, 2004).

The testimony of one interviewee for this research, who is a well-known yurt maker and decorator in Kazakhstan, supports the government's view that these returning migrants are re-energising Kazakh cultural heritage (see Table 1, n37):

I was born and grew up in Mongolia. My grandparents migrated from Kazakhstan to Mongolia during the forced collectivization period. To some extent, I am happy that according to the will of destiny my family lived there. The Mongolian Kazakhs are the last survivors of a fast-disappearing nomadic civilisation that is a crucial part of world heritage and can hardly be found elsewhere. My father was one of the best-known livestock herders, raising more than five hundred sheep, and over one hundred horses and camels. So, we used to live a nomadic lifestyle moving from summer quarters to winter quarters. The Mongolian Kazakh boys are taught the skills of shepherding and hunting with birds of prey, while the girls learn from their mothers the tasks and duties of the yurt. Setting up the yurts is the

responsibility of women and children, therefore, from my childhood I am familiar with setting up yurts. My sisters and I were taught the skills of women's craft which include the embroidering of women's wear, carpets, and ribbons decorating the walls of the yurts, and the preparation of painted rush mats and appliquéd *felt carpets. When the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev launched the repatriation programme, there was a long discussion about whether to migrate to Kazakhstan or to stay in Mongolia. This is because my family had a good reputation in Mongolia: mother - aytysker (performer of oral art), father - aqyn (poet), two sisters - writers and younger brother well-known aitysker. In 1994, the First President of Kazakhstan invited my little brother to migrate to Kazakhstan in order to develop and teach the arts of aytys (oral art). So, my siblings and parents migrated to a northern region of Kazakhstan and have contributed to the reviving and promoting of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. My little brother is well-known aytysker; he is growing a young generation of aytysker (performer of oral art). My two sisters are working on researching and transcribing the oral literature of the Kazakh people. I migrated to Kazakhstan with my kids in 2005. The Government of Kazakhstan helped to move my yurts with me. According to the Migration Law, we were allowed to migrate only to the northern regions of Kazakhstan. As my parents and siblings were settled in the capital city of Kazakhstan, I also settled there. However, it was very hard for me to adapt there. There were several reasons for that: housing, unemployment, limited Russian knowledge and discrimination from local people. The capital city was very Russified and was not welcoming for us. I am happy that I moved to a southern region of Kazakhstan instead. With my kids I am now involved in the production of traditional handmade products and making yurts and yurt decorations. I am also running master classes on making yurts and yurt decorations. I am currently finishing my book about assembling and dismantling yurts and am looking for a publisher. I was invited to teach the skills of yurt making*

at the Kazakh National Academy of Arts. This is a great pleasure for me to teach young generations the applied arts of the Kazakh people. Due to the Russian colonisation and the Soviet ideology imposed under the Soviet era, nowadays yurt making is a dying part of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Therefore, the Government of Kazakhstan needs to encourage the migration of more ethnic Kazakhs from Mongolia, China and Uzbekistan. The Kazakh diasporas of these countries have preserved the traditional skills of yurt making as they still live in them.

However, the repatriation programme launched by the Government of Kazakhstan has been criticised by Western scholars for its nationalistic approaches (Barcus and Werner, 2015; Diener, 2005; Finke, 1999; Kuscu, 2012). According to the "Law on Migration" which was enacted in 1992 and amended in 1997, non-ethnic Kazakhs were not allowed to be repatriated (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018). The "Law on Migration" defined repatriated person as those of native ethnicity who were given the right to return to their historic homeland. According to the programme's critics from other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan, by accepting the "Law on Migration", the Government has discriminated against other nationalities and ethnicities who consider Kazakhstan their homeland (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018). The critics of the programme claimed that the main aim of the Government was to restore an unbalanced ethnic composition within the country, with ethnic Kazakhs dominating (Commercio, 2004). At the time of independence (1991), ethnic Kazakhs only represented 40.1% of the country's population (Rowland, 2001) (Table 9). Kazakhstan's demography has significantly changed since then in favour of the ethnic Kazakhs to the point that they made up 70% of the population by 2017 (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a). This demographic shift has occurred due to various factors, including the high birth rate among ethnic

Kazakhs, the emigration of other nationalities (mostly Slavs and Germans) and the repatriation programme. Another source of criticism has concerned the location to which people have been repatriated – specifically the northern regions of the country where the majority of the population is of Slavic ethnicity (Sarsembina, 2002; Shapegul, 1993). By settling the returning migrants in the northern regions, the Government has aimed to reduce the effects of Russification there (Diener, 2005). This part of the repatriation programme somewhat contradicts the multinational programme of the Government, which has long proclaimed that Kazakhstan, compared to fellow Central Asian states, is more diverse and has a substantial Slavic population.

Tab. 9 Kazakhstan Population 1989 (census)

	% of Total Population	% of Rural Population	% of Urban Population
Kazakhs	**40.1**	**57.1**	**27.1**
Russians	**37.4**	**19.9**	**50.8**
Ukrainians	**5.4**	**4.4**	**6.2**
Germans	**5.8**	**6.9**	**5.0**
Others	**11.2**	**11.7**	**10.9**

Source: Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a

5.3.5 Language revival

The revival and promotion of the Kazakh language has been one of the main items on the agenda for the Government of Kazakhstan since independence. The first official document designed to increase the status of the Kazakh language was actually accepted before independence, by the Government of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic in 1989 (Dave, 2007). This law aimed to establish Kazakh as the state language and preserve Russian exclusively for international communication. This law also aimed to revive and promote the use of Kazakh at

all levels of education and all spheres of society (Dave, 2007). However, the immediate revival of Kazakh in all spheres was impossible because the dominant language had long been Russian. Due to the multicultural policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the First President of Kazakhstan had to strike a balance between the use of the Kazakh and Russian languages. The "Law on Languages", which was enacted in 1997, stated that Kazakh would be given the status of the State's language (CIS-Legislation, 2019). In the 1989 law, the Russian language had been presented as the language of international communication, but this was later revised following independence (CIS-Legislation, 2019). Article 7 of the 1995 Constitution maintained that: "In state organizations and organs of local administration, the Russian language is officially used on a par with Kazakh" (Art. 7.2) (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020, a). Dr Bhavna Dave (2007) from SOAS, University of London, claims that this new description of the Russian language was just as vague as any of the previous descriptions. In other words, the Kazakh language was established as the only official language of Kazakhstan.

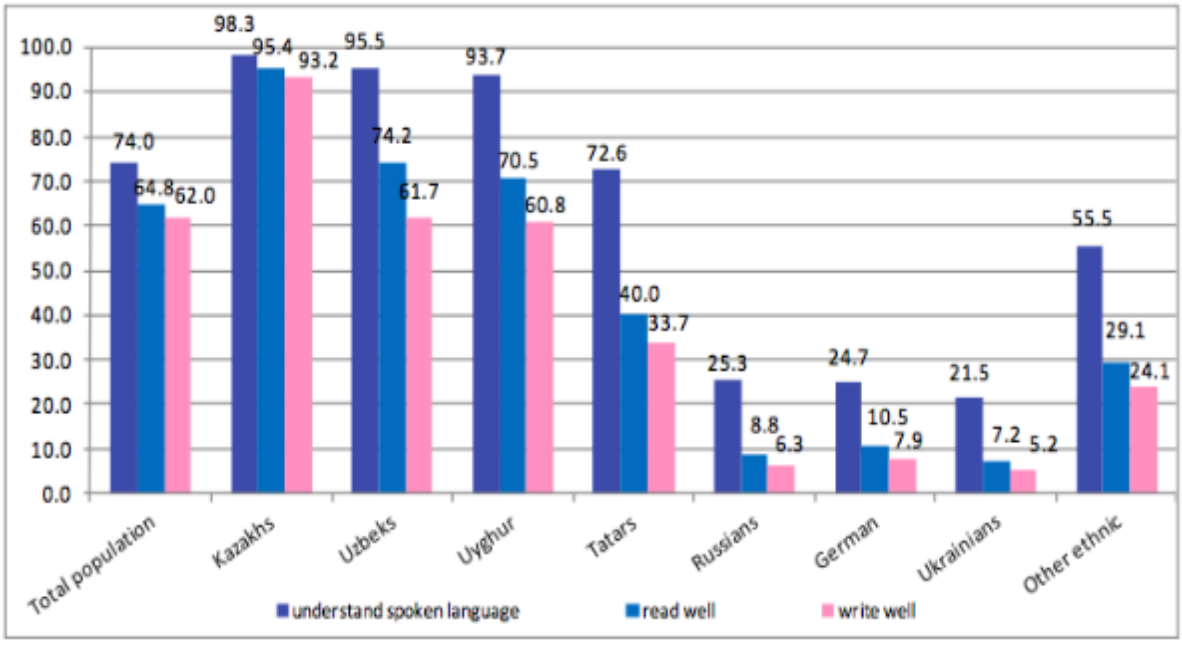
The Government's language policy has been widely discussed and criticised by the minority populations of Kazakhstan. Western media and scholars have claimed that Kazakhstan has simply copied the Soviet Union's language policy (Dave, 2007). Indeed, knowledge of the Kazakh language became obligatory for admission into all governmental and administrative positions. The critics of the policy have argued that the Government has ignored both the ethnic and demographic realities of the population of Kazakhstan, with the majority of the population speaking Russian as their first language (Dubuisson, 2017). The Kazakh language was established as a core subject in all educational levels while parents started to teach their children Kazakh as their first language and started to send them to Kazakh-language schools. Most parents transferred their children from Russian-language schools to Kazakh-language schools to "*ensure that the*

child gains proficiency in a language that will be handy no matter what direction the political pendulum swings" (Dave, 2007, p.255). To use my own experience for purposes of illustration, I was born in 1986 during the Soviet period and for most of the children of my age who lived in an urban area Russian was considered their first language. Therefore, I went to a Russian-language nursery. However, when I went to school in 1992, a year after Kazakhstan gained independence, despite my having little knowledge of the Kazakh language, my parents decided to send me to a Kazakh-language school. Today they explain their decision was motivated by a desire to promote the Kazakh language as a prestigious language which would allow me to find a good job. As a result of the Government's language policy, the number of students attending Kazakh-language schools rose by 10% during 1990-1994, while the number of students attending Russian-language schools declined by 8% (Fierman, 2006). Consequently, in higher education, the Kazakh language emerged as a core language and the use of Russian reduced considerably.

The Government's language policy has had some negative effects. An uncompromising demand for Kazakh language fluency did not seem to fit with the actual needs of society. A significant number of Russian-speakers of different ethnicities became concerned, not only about their own futures in Kazakhstan, but also their children's futures (Dadabaeva and Adibayeva, 2010; Ferrando, 2008). As a result, between 1991 and 2004, more than 3 million people of different ethnicities emigrated from Kazakhstan, most of them being of Slavic or German ethnicity (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a). Consequently, Kazakhstan experienced not only a dramatic population dip but also a significant loss of professional workers and educators.

Despite this, the Government has made substantial efforts to strengthen the status of the Kazakh language by introducing new laws. For instance, the State Program of Development and Promotion of the Languages in Kazakhstan for 2011-2020 concerns the development of full-scale functioning of the Kazakh language in all spheres of society (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020, b). According to the census data of 1989, approximately 75% of the population experienced difficulties in utilising the Kazakh language (Rowland, 2001). Moreover, nearly 95% of Kazakhstan's population spoke Russian, but only 20% were fluent in Kazakh. Two decades later, according to the census data of 2009, about 74% of the total population of Kazakhstan knew the Kazakh language (Rowland, 2001) (Figure 48). Moreover, about 98.3% of ethnic Kazakhs understood spoken Kazakh, 95.4% could read it well and 93.2% could write it well (Rowland, 2001). Thus, since independence, the Government has gained legitimacy by adopting new laws making Kazakh the state's main language.

Fig. 48 Extent of Kazakh language skills (%) (Census 2009)



Source: Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, a

5.3.6 Switching alphabets

A crucial part of the revival and strengthening of the Kazakh language has been the Government's plan to switch from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin alphabet. In 2006, at the XII session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the First President announced that the Cyrillic alphabet would be completely replaced by the Latin alphabet by 2025 (Melich and Adibayeva, 2013). Shifting the alphabet has been a part of the Government's language planning agenda since Kazakhstan declared its independence in 1991; however, Kazakhstan's demographic imbalance, as well as its economic and political instability, have delayed this transformation (Rees and Williams, 2017). The First President explained that there were several reasons behind the alphabet transfer. He argued that the removal of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet in favour of the Latin alphabet would have a considerable and positive impact on Kazakh culture (Suleimenova, 2009). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a number of heads of Turkic countries discussed ways of cooperation on reviving and preserving their common Turkic cultural heritage. In 1991, the Turkish government organised a summit of the Turkic-language countries, where the transformation from the Russian Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin alphabet in post-Soviet Turkic states was discussed for the first time (Landau, 2010). As a result, countries like Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan officially announced they would be switching to the Latin alphabet (Uzman, 2010). The heads of these countries emphasised that having a common alphabet (Latin) would contribute to reviving and promoting common Turkic cultural heritage which had been disrupted by Russian and Soviet colonisation (Landau, 2010). Moreover, the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev noted that the transfer to the Latin alphabet would bring Kazakhstan closer to the rest of the world’s technical and educational levels and would therefore positively contribute to its overall modernisation (Fierman, 2012). The transfer to the Latin alphabet demonstrates that the First President of Kazakhstan aims to

geopolitically distance Kazakhstan from Russia and reinforce its co-operation with the Turkic-language world. It also shows that the Government of Kazakhstan aims to remove various legacies from the Soviet period.

As shown previously (see Chapter 4), the written Kazakh language has used several alphabets throughout history: Old Turkic (Runic), Arabic, Latin and Cyrillic. It should be noted that each of these alphabets are totally different from one another (Alpatov, 2017). Moreover, the incentives and circumstances which led to each of them being adopted were very different. While some of the alphabets had been accepted freely, others were forcibly adopted (O'Callaghan, 2004). Moreover, each of the alphabet transfers throughout the history of the Kazakh language had significant influences on its development. Constantly changing the alphabet for the Kazakh language may have affected language users, too, and may have influenced their particular linguistic attitudes. Indeed, many language scholars state that success in the introduction of a language variation, language feature or second language will depend on the linguistic attitudes of people (Beisenova, 2013; Suleimenova, 2009).

According to an interviewee for this research who is a linguist at the research centre "*Otyrar Kitaphanasy* (*Otyrar* Library)" (see Table 1, n12):

My main function at this centre is to translate old Kazakh books written in Arabic script into Kazakh language. All of these old books were written in Kazakh language but in Arabic script. Our research centre has done tremendous work in the translation and publication of old manuscripts. These manuscripts are very helpful for researchers to revive and promote the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The Government of Kazakhstan established our centre and allocated significant funds to translate old Kazakh books written in various scripts (Runic, Arabic, and Chinese). So, to respond to your question: What are your thoughts about the planned shift from the Cyrillic alphabet to the Latin alphabet?

To be honest, it is a very hard question for me to answer. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, several Turkic countries like Turkey, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan had already shifted to the Latin alphabet. I want to outline that these Turkic countries were not adopting a new alphabet but rather going back to a formerly utilised alphabet. In the 1920s, Turkey successfully shifted to the Latin alphabet. During this period, only 20% of the Turkish population was literate. According to our research, currently 99.8% of the Kazakh population is literate. This might positively influence the successful adaptation of the Latin alphabet. On the other hand, Uzbekistan has failed in the Latinisation process. It has tried for almost twenty-five years, but Uzbekistan still has not fully transferred to Latin. For me, this is because Uzbekistan's population cannot fully understand the new script. To be honest, when chatting via mobile and computer devices I always use the Latin alphabet instead of Cyrillic. I did my Master's degree at the Ankara University in Turkey. I did not have Cyrillic scripts on my computer and had to use Latin to chat with my family and friends. Here, I think that the Latin script became more convenient to use, as it is available worldwide. Also, when I studied in Turkey, many of the Turkish Kazakh diaspora mentioned that they were not able to read Kazakh books and journals due to the alphabetic barrier. From this perspective, switching from the Cyrillic alphabet to Latin may increase the communication and unification between the Kazakh diasporas worldwide. However, the Government of Kazakhstan has spent significant amounts of money to translate and publish old books into Kazakh Cyrillic script. Moreover, almost all books of great Kazakh writers and poets have been republished in the Cyrillic alphabet. I do not know what will happen with these publications and how much effort will be needed to republish them in the Latin alphabet.

There have been various serious public debates regarding the Romanisation of the Kazakh-language alphabet. Proponents claim that changing to the Latin alphabet could serve as a bridge with the West and could increase the status of the Kazakh

language globally (Beisenova, 2013; Fierman, 2012). Opponents, however, argue that a total change from one alphabet to another is a complicated task, demanding significant effort in economic, cultural and linguistic areas (Beisenova, 2013). Economically, an alphabet change requires considerable expense, including the republishing of all textbooks, the re-education of all teachers and the general public, and the replacement of public signs. Culturally, such a change can cause a rupture with those who were raised during the Soviet Union (Smagulova, 2008). In particular, some people such as writers, poets and mathematicians who had been taught in Cyrillic-based Kazakh were worried about the cost of republishing books that were published during the Soviet period. During the Soviet period, a significant number of Kazakh élites (writers, poets, scholars, artists, musicians, etc.) tried to revive and promote the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people through their works. Linguistically, the alphabet change requires a trained body of experienced philologists who can promote the new alphabet in the public domain.

According to an interviewee for this research who is the head of a linguistics centre (see Table 1, n10):

The main aim of our linguistics centre is to teach all governmental workers the Kazakh language. This linguistic centre is fully funded by the Government of Kazakhstan and each region of Kazakhstan has this kind of centre. Lively debates about Latinisation increased after the First President's programme "Future Orientation: the Spiritual Revival" where he assigned the task of changing the alphabet to government bodies in 2017. According to the First President, the final version of the Latin alphabet was to be prepared by 2018, after which Romanised textbooks would be produced in 2018 to teach first-year school students in the Latin alphabet. Ultimately, the whole of Kazakhstan's society is to be transferred to the Latin alphabet by 2025. In order to promote and increase positive attitudes

among the public regarding the Latin alphabet, our linguistic centre has been organising special classes. We go to all towns and villages which are related to our region and organise different lectures and seminars about Latinisation. As a linguist, I fully support the Government's idea regarding the alphabet change. The alphabet change gives an opportunity to Kazakhstan to promote and increase the status of the Kazakh language. It might increase the motivation of the Kazakhstani people to learn the language as well. Switching to the Latin alphabet could be considered a significant tool to increase the sense of national identity and to unify both Kazakh- and Russian-speaking Kazakhs. Switching the Kazakh alphabet to Latin contributes to changing from a Soviet colonial identity, which still largely dominates the national consciousness, to a Kazakh national identity. This definitely helps to break the "colonised mind" stereotypes that the non-Russian orthography was ungrammatical or illiterate. Moreover, by switching to the Latin alphabet, we can solve all orthography and orthoepy problems in Kazakh which were revealed during the Soviet period. Kazakh orthography and orthoepy were created on the foundations of Russian grammar and phonology which violated the language structure of the Kazakh people. Indeed, the direct translation of Kazakh sentences from Russian is a major problem for the Kazakh language. All of these problems can be solved with the adaptation of the Latin alphabet. The results of our lectures and seminars show that the learning of a new alphabet will be easy for the Kazakhstan population. Since the Soviet period, the people of Kazakhstan have gained basic knowledge of English and German and are thus familiar with the standard Latin alphabet.

Three modified Latin alphabet versions were proposed and discussed within the Government as well as in the public domain. Kazakh language scholars, linguists and IT programmers are all actively involved in the modification process. Moreover, the people of Kazakhstan are also actively engaged and have openly expressed their opinions about the different alphabet versions (Altynsarina,

2018). The first modified version of the Latin alphabet had 32 letters and many of them included apostrophes to emphasise distinct sounds (Figure 49). However, the people of Kazakhstan organised petitions online to remove the apostrophes, saying that it made the writing and reading more complicated. As a result, the apostrophes have been removed and in order to stress distinct characters, digraphs and diacritics would be used. Eventually, the third version of the Latin alphabet (Figure 50) was approved by the Government. Despite there being no official legal document putting it into action, the shift from Cyrillic into Latin has already begun in the public sphere (Figure 51). Some governmental organisations have started to use the Latin alphabet on different signage and logos of government buildings and channels. For example, on 12 September 2018, the Government, in collaboration with the authors of the national emblem, decided to change the name of the country Kazakhstan, which when written in Cyrillic was "*Қ а з а қ с т а н*", to the Latin version of "Qazaqstan" on the national emblem (Sputnik, 2018). Moreover, local business owners have started to use the Latin script to advertise their companies (Figure 52). As a result, there are a significant number of banners in the Latin script that have been unveiled in every region of Kazakhstan. It should be noted that many people who have done this have little knowledge about the modified Latin version of the alphabet. Although the modified alphabet has been accepted by the Government, it is still under discussion (Altynsarina, 2018). Some of the advertising banners do not adhere to any of the three proposed versions of the Latin alphabet. Therefore, there is some risk that the language structure of the Kazakh people will again be compromised. Moreover, in November 2018, Kazakhstan held a nationwide examination to test government workers and students on their proficiency with the new Latin-based alphabet (Berkaliyeva, 2018). This move was criticised by many in the population because the final version of the new alphabet was still under discussion.

Fig. 49 The first modified version of Latin alphabet

№	Написание	Звук		№	Написание	Звук
1	A a	[а]		17	N’ n’	[ң], [нг]
2	A’ a’	[ә]		18	O o	[о]
3	B b	[б]		19	O’ o’	[ө]
4	D d	[д]		20	P p	[п]
5	E e	[е]		21	Q q	[қ]
6	F f	[ф]		22	R r	[р]
7	G g	[г]		23	S s	[с]
8	G’ g’	[ғ]		24	S’ s’	[ш]
9	H h	[х], [h]		25	C’ c’	[ч]
10	I i	[і]		26	T t	[т]
11	I’ i’	[и], [й]		27	U u	[ұ]
12	J j	[ж]		28	U’ u’	[ү]
13	K k	[к]		29	V v	[в]
14	L l	[л]		30	Y y	[ы]
15	M m	[м]		31	Y’ y’	[у]
16	N n	[н]		32	Z z	[з]

Source: bilimdiler.kz (2021)

Fig. 50 The third modified version of Latin alphabet

#	Letter	Cyrillic version		#	Letter	Cyrillic version
1	A a	[а]		17	Ń ń	[ң]
2	Á á	[ә]		18	O o	[о]
3	B b	[б]		19	Ó ó	[ө]
4	D d	[д]		20	P p	[п]
5	E e	[е]		21	Q q	[қ]
6	F f	[ф]		22	R r	[р]
7	G g	[г]		23	S s	[с]
8	Ǵ ǵ	[ғ]		24	T t	[т]
9	H h	[х], [h]		25	U u	[ұ]
10	I i	[і]		26	Ú ú	[ү]
11	I ı	[и], [й]		27	V v	[в]
12	J j	[ж]		28	Y y	[ы]
13	K k	[к]		29	Ý ý	[у]
14	L l	[л]		30	Z z	[з]
15	M m	[м]		31	Sh sh	[ш]
16	N n	[н]		32	Ch ch	[ч]

Source: bilimdiler.kz (2021)

Fig. 51 N3 IT-School-Liceum, Qyzylorda city



Source: author's photo, 2018

Fig. 52 Flower shop, Almaty city



Source: author's photo, 2018

5.3.7 Films

Like their predecessors the Government of Kazakhstan uses films to glorify the nomadic past of the Kazakh people. Throughout the political education of the masses of the Soviet Union, films contributed to legitimise communist ideology (Miller, 2006). In 2005, the Government converted the Kazakhfilm studios into a joint-stock company in which the State held the largest share (Abikeyeva, 2013). The State also allocated funds to update the production facilities of the Kazakhfilm studios. These investments and changes ultimately meant that Kazakhfilm was working according to government orders (Nogberk, 2013). Moreover, writers and directors were essentially obliged to work on themes approved by the Ministry of Culture. Such "top-down" government participation in terms of dictating topics for film production led to films being used as ideological tools to impose the Government's vision of Kazakh nationhood and identity on the people (Johnson, 2006). The Government financially supported several film projects, some of which were very costly. The most famous of these were named *Koshpendiler* ("Nomad") (2005) and *Jaujurek myng bala* ("Warriors of the Steppe") (2012). *Koshpendiler* ("Nomad") was produced by three directors (S. Bodrov, I. Passer and T. Temenov) with an American cast (Isaacs, 2015) (Figure 53). The Government of Kazakhstan invested £32 million in its production, making it the most expensive film ever made by Kazakhfilm studios (Fedorenko, 2012). The film tells the story of how Kazakh tribes united against the Dzungar enemy and defeated them in the eighteenth century. This exposition of history could be regarded as a government effort to build an official regime-approved representation of the nation's formation and the ethno-genesis of Kazakh national identity, as well as encouraging patriotism and strengthening the national consciousness.

Fig. 53 *Koshpendiler* ("Nomad"), 2005



Source: Nomad the Warrior (2011, 00:23)

However, the film failed to achieve the international success that the First President Nazarbayev said he expected on his visit to the Kazakhfilm studios in 2009 (Kosenov, 2012). The film has been criticised by both national and international audiences. Within Kazakhstan, it has been criticised for involving American actors. Many critics noted that American actors could not really pull off their roles and reflect the soul of the great Kazakh warriors (Abikeyeva, 2013). Meanwhile, international audiences criticised the film for its one-sided mythologization of Kazakh history (Abikeyeva, 2013; Isaacs, 2015; Norris, 2012; Pratt, 2015). Many emphasised that the story of Ablay Khan, the famous Kazakh statesman and warrior, as portrayed through "Nomad", shows how the Government has tried to build a myth that the Kazakh nation was based on ethnic exclusivity (Norris, 2012).

Jaujurek myng bala ("Warriors of the Steppe") was made to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence from the Soviet Union

(Figure 54). The Government of Kazakhstan allocated over £9.5 million to this film which commits to the core theme of Kazakh unity, namely the struggle and fight against the Dzungars (Dalton, 2012). Compared to "Nomad", "Warriors of the Steppe" was more successful among Kazakhstani audiences. The director of the film, Aqan Satayev, involved only actors from Kazakhstan (Abikeyeva, 2013). The film is considered by its critics as a clear attempt by the Government through Kazakhfilm studios to foster both Kazakh patriotism and a commonly accepted understanding of how the nation was defended (Abikeyeva, 2013; Dalton, 2012; Isaacs, 2015; Pratt, 2015). Moreover, the film ends with a statement declaring that the events depicted in "Warriors of the Steppe" marked the beginning of the Kazakh people's "long fight for freedom", a struggle which it says only finished when the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev finally led the country to "real independence" 300 years later (Isaacs, 2015). Clearly, the Government of Kazakhstan utilises Kazakhfilm studios to promote the nomadic past of the Kazakh people, and its national identity in order to stir up patriotic feelings.

Fig. 54 *Jaujurek myng bala* ("Warriors of the Steppe"), 2012



Source: Tania Mark (2017, 09:49)

5.4 Enhancing the tourism industry

Tourism is one of the most widely expanding industries in the world today and, for some countries, especially developing ones, it is the main or even only source of national income, employment and wealth (Echtner and Prasad, 2003). Therefore, there is now widespread agreement within Kazakhstan about the need to promote sustainable tourism and sustainable development. According to the World Tourism Organisation (2019), sustainable tourism can be defined as "*leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological process, biological diversity and life support systems*". Meanwhile, the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) defines sustainable development as that which "*meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (WCED 1987: chapter 2, para. 1). Tourism is a labour-intensive sector and accounts for a considerable amount of employment, especially in the service and construction industries (Bujdosó *et al.*, 2015). This sector creates jobs for unskilled labour, including migrants from economically disadvantaged areas. Boosting the development of the tourism industry can result in immediate growth in employment, leading to the strengthening of the population's welfare and an increase in living standards (Bujdosó *et al.*, 2015).

The Government of Kazakhstan is aiming for Kazakhstan to become one of the 50 most competitive countries in the world and the hub of Central Asia's tourism industry. It also seeks to increase tourism's contribution to national GDP (Zhidkoblinova, 2013). Although Kazakhstan is not among the leading travel destinations in the world, its tourism industry has continued to grow over the years. The Travel and Tourism Competitive Index 2017 issued by the World Economic Forum (2017) ranked Kazakhstan in 81st position out of 136 countries

and estimated the number of international tourist arrivals in the country in 2015 to be around 4,559,500 (World Economic Forum, 2017). Kazakhstan has been a member of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) since 1993 (UNWTO, 2018, b). UNWTO General Secretary Francesco Frangialli pointed out that Kazakhstan had started to make considerable progress in promoting its image as an attractive, tourist-friendly and dynamic Eurasian destination (Ospanov, 2012). Frangialli noted that Kazakhstan has significant potential to develop its cultural heritage and nature-based tourism due to its geographic features and its location on the Silk Road.

5.4.1 Heritage tourism

Heritage is one of the most important components of tourism. Heritage tourism offers a sustainable alternative to mass tourism. Jiang and Homsey (2008) defined heritage tourism as "*a fulfilling experience for the tourists themselves that includes traditions, local customs, history and culture*". Meanwhile, Salazar and Zhu (2015, p.241) described heritage tourism as "*marketing device used by tourism operators who create different products that refer to historic towns, archeological ruins, ancient monuments, religious sites and living culture*". Timothy (2011) combined these two definitions by stating that heritage tourism entails travellers seeing or experiencing built heritage, living culture or contemporary arts. Heritage tourism includes both tangible and intangible elements and can be experienced in both rural and urban settings (Sangchumnong and Kozak, 2018). Today, heritage tourism is one of the fastest-growing types of tourism in the world (Poria *et al.*, 2001). According to the UNWTO (2018, a), cultural heritage tourism (of which heritage tourism represents a large component) makes up 40 percent of all tourism worldwide, and is growing at around 15 percent annum, which is nearly treble the rate of growth for mass tourism. Therefore, the Government has identified heritage tourism as a niche

within cultural tourism and has marked it out as a useful and sustainable avenue down which to expand its tourism economy in the future.

5.4.2 Silk Road tourism

Among potential paths toward the development of the national heritage tourism sector, much attention is paid to Silk Road tourism. The territory of modern Kazakhstan is located in the middle of the Silk Road's ancient corridors (Mantayeva *et al.*, 2015; Tiberghien *et al.*, 2018). From the third and second centuries BCE to the eighteenth-century CE the territory of modern Kazakhstan felt the impact of the Silk Road (Fodde, 2006). According to Baipakov (1991), a leading national archaeologist, it was in the territory of Kazakhstan that the Silk Road started from the border with China. Through cities such as Ispidjab, Sayram, Yassy, Taraz and Otrar, trade caravans moved to Central Asia and then on to Persia, and from Persia to the Caucasus and from there to Europe (Baipakov, 1990). For Kazakhstan, isolated from the main international oceans and seas and located in the middle of the Eurasian continent, experiencing the significant impacts of the Silk Roads was crucial for the Kazakh people, who practised a nomadic lifestyle during the medieval period (Mantayeva *et al.*, 2015; Tiberghien *et al.*, 2018).

Silk Road tours are the most popular form of tourism in Kazakhstan. Central Asian countries and China are actively collaborating in promoting Silk Road tourism for international tourists (Chih-Hung *et al.*, 2013). Tour operators in these countries offer tours that involve visits to multiple countries along the Silk Road. Indeed, itineraries are filled with sights and sites that help participants understand the many cultures along the Silk Road (Werner, 2003). Uzbekistan, with its tourism infrastructure and architectural wonders, has developed itself as the leading tourism destination in Central Asia. Since the Soviet period, the ancient cities of Uzbekistan such as Samarkand, Tashkent, Bukhara and Khiva have all become

famous as Silk Road destinations (Kantarci, 2007). Kyrgyzstan has advanced further than Kazakhstan in the development of Silk Road tourism because of its convenient location between China and Uzbekistan (Kantarci, 2007). However, due to an extremely authoritarian government, which monitors the movements of all foreign travellers, Silk Road tourism has barely developed in Turkmenistan, while such tourism is also weak in Tajikistan due to economic and political instability (Werner, 2003). Evoking the imagery of the ancient Silk Road, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are actively promoting Silk Road tourism to introduce the rich history and culture of Central Asia to an international audience.

According to an interviewee for this research, who holds a high position in the National Association of Domestic Tourism of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n41):

The aim of our Association is to support local tour operators to develop the tourism industry in Kazakhstan. I have also been running a travel agency for more than 12 years and I am familiar with all of the issues related to tourism in Kazakhstan. I can clearly say that ecotourism[7] and Silk Road tourism are our strong suits. Therefore, in our tours we usually mix ecotourism and the Silk Road destinations to increase demand for travel services. The Government of Kazakhstan glorifies nomadism and the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. When we are participating in international tourism exhibitions, it is common to see in our brochures pictures of nomadic families standing or sitting in front of a felt yurt (Figure 55), wearing traditional clothes, eating traditional foods, playing traditional musical instruments, milking horses, making brightly coloured textiles and hunting with golden eagles and dogs (Figure 56). By presenting these kinds of images, the Government of Kazakhstan entices travellers

[7] All nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation and appreciation of nature as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas (UNWTO, 2020).

to experience the lifestyle of nomads. Although there are some families who do still practice the nomadic way of life, the majority of Kazakh people no longer live this way. Thus, this tourism image of Kazakhstan and brochure pictures do not always present the reality accurately. On several occasions, I have proposed to the Government of Kazakhstan to organise ethno-villages where tourists could fully experience the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakh people. Here, tourists would be able to live in yurts, to prepare national foods, to make traditional felt products, to ride horses, to hunt with golden eagles and so on. We have some Kazakh families who migrated back from Mongolia and Uzbekistan and now host international tourists in their yurts. However, we need professionally organised ethno-villages where at least twenty families could live in traditional yurts and experience all of the traditions of the Kazakh people. The Ministry of Culture responded to our proposal regarding the ethno-villages by saying that we already have several ethno-complexes like "Nomad" and "Guns". It should be noted that the ethno-complex Nomad was constructed for the film "Nomad" and has since been used for several other films (Figure 57). It is not a historic site, just a big replica of a historic city constructed together for cinematic effect; it is not the same experience as walking through a historic fortress. And to some extent the ethno-complex "Guns" is also a replica of a village, because the families do not actually live in yurts. The people who work in this complex perform the nomadic way of life only when they have visitors. As the nomadic identity and the pride in being a nomad remains intact as a marker of Kazakh identity, both domestic and international tourists should have an opportunity to stay in yurts with a family of nomadic herders in Kazakhstan. The lack of hotels is a barrier for Kazakhstan in its promotion of cultural tourism along the Silk Road. Most of the Silk Road destinations do not have enough hotels to accommodate a large number of international tourists. Most of the hotels were built in Soviet times and need to be completely reconstructed. International hotel brands in Kazakhstan are limited to

the important business cities. However, the main barrier obstructing the development of Silk Road tourism in Kazakhstan is poor infrastructure. In particular, roads to historical and cultural heritage sites are in bad condition. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Government is the main stakeholder in developing and promoting tourism on the Silk Road. My tour agency often participates in international tourism exhibitions and fairs to promote Kazakhstan's tourism product. The Government helps financially with our travel expenses. Promoting Silk Road tourism is, for me, presenting our intangible cultural heritage. Unlike Uzbekistan, we do not have cultural heritage buildings, because our ancestors were nomads. The nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is mostly associated with intangible heritage. Therefore, currently, the main agenda of the National Association of Domestic Tourism of Kazakhstan is to construct model ethno-villages and propose these to the Government of Kazakhstan. I hope our proposal will be accepted and financially supported by the Government as tourism is a priority area for development in Kazakhstan. Silk Road tourism's diverse offerings ensure that there is significant potential for growth.

Fig. 55 Advertising brochures of Kazakhstan's tourism, 2019



Source: Kazakhstan.travel (2021)

Fig. 56 Advertising brochures of Kazakhstan's tourism, 2019



Source: Kazakhstan.travel (2021)

Fig. 57 Ethno-complex Nomad, Almaty city, 2019



Source: from the interviewee, 2019

Commissioned by the UNWTO Silk Road Programme (2016), TripAdvisor conducted a survey among 18,425 respondents from all over the world in 2015. The results showed that, although people did identify Kazakhstan as being a Silk Road destination (Figure 58), it was not among the top 10 countries associated with the Silk Road that travellers had already visited (Figure 59) or even among the top 10 countries associated with the Silk Road that travellers planned to visit in the next five years (Figure 60) (UNWTO Silk Road Programme, 2016). The respondents emphasized that they were most interested in visiting UNESCO World Heritage Sites on the Silk Road, discovering ancient Silk Road cities, and shopping in local bazaars and markets (UNWTO Silk Road Programme, 2016). In this regard, Kazakhstan has a number of properties on the World Heritage List that are closely linked with the Silk Road, namely the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmet Yasawi one of the destinations for the trade caravans, the "Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly" which date back to the second half of the second millennium BCE to the beginning of the twentieth century, the "Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chan'an-Tianshan Corridor", and the "Saryarka-Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan" (Mantayeva *et al.*, 2015). Moreover, the Government is actively working on getting the Silk Road destinations of Kazakhstan inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage List (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2020, a).

Fig. 58 Top 10 countries that international travellers identify as being Silk Road destinations



Source: UNWTO Silk Road Programme (2016)

Fig. 59 Top 10 countries associated with the Silk Road that travellers have visited



Source: TripAdvisor Travel Trends for the Silk Road (2016)

Fig. 60 Top 10 countries associated with the Silk Road that travellers plan to visit in the next five years

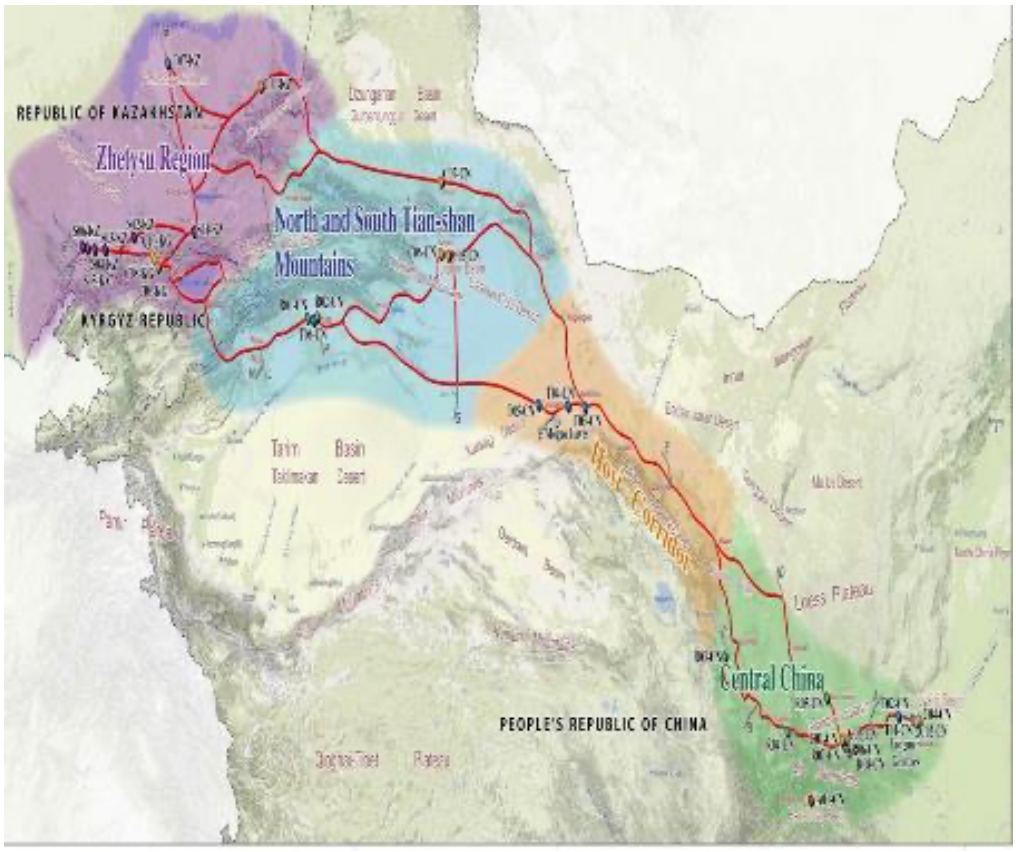


Source: TripAdvisor Travel Trends for the Silk Road (2016)

Among thousands of unique cultural heritage sites on the Silk Road, Kazakhstan proposed several of its most significant ancient and medieval urban centres as part of the Serial Transnational Nomination "Silk Roads" (Figure 61) for the UNESCO World Heritage List (Vileikis *et al.*, 2013). Eight of these sites (Aktobe Stepninskoe, Akyrtas, Karamergen, Kayalyk, Kostobe, Kulan, Ornek and Talgar) were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2014 as part of the Serial Transnational Nomination "Silk Road: the Routes Network of Chang'an-TianShan Corridor" (Figure 62) (Silk Road. Dialogue, Diversity & Development, 2016). This nomination was initiated and financially supported by the People's

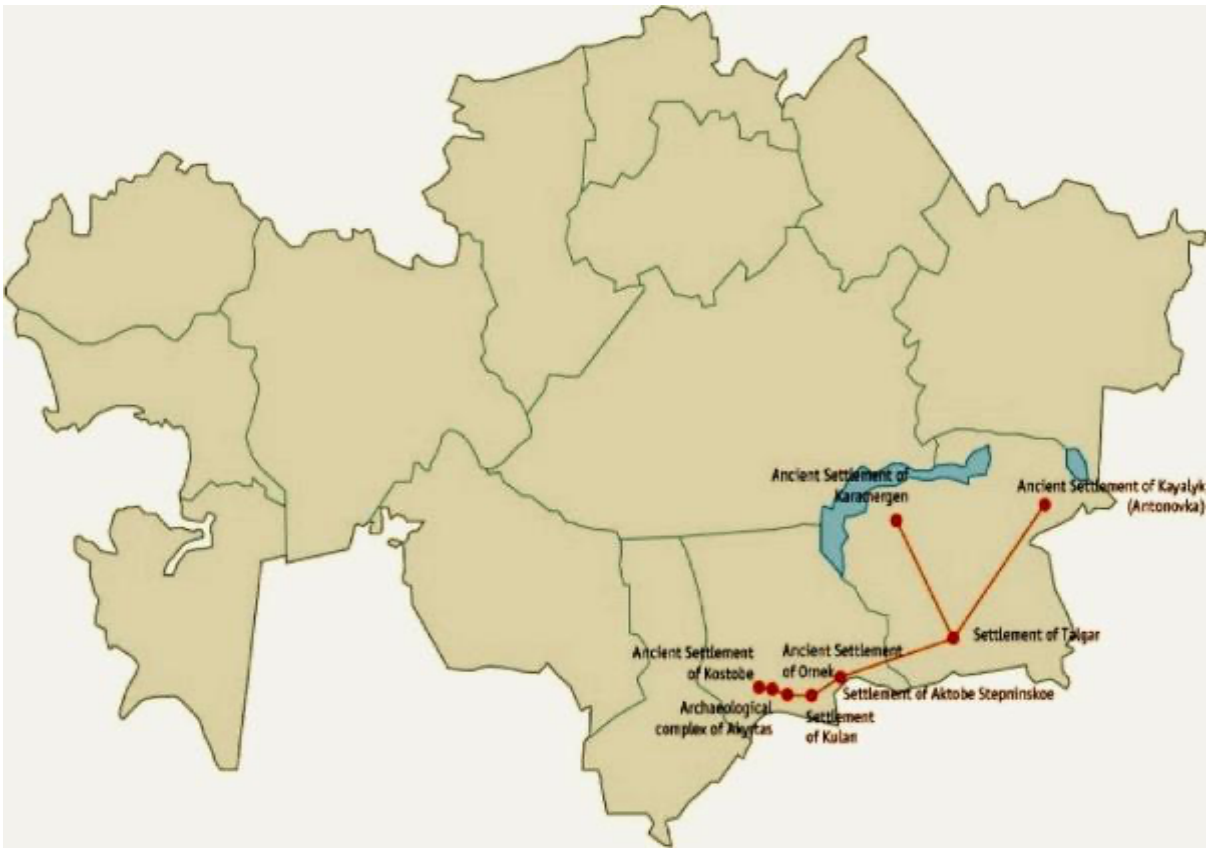
Republic of China and jointly prepared by three countries: the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic (Kazinform, 2016). It was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session in Doha, Qatar in 2014 (Vileikis *et al.*, 2013). Meanwhile, Kazakhstan's other cultural heritage sites on the Silk Road were divided into four categories and included in the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Silk Road. Dialogue, Diversity & Development, 2016). Currently, Kazakhstan is working on preparing other historical and archaeological sites for nominations.

Fig. 61 Silk Roads: The Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor



Source: UNESCO (2018, a)

Fig. 62 Silk Roads: The Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor, Kazakhstan Section



Source: Silk Road. Dialogue, Diversity & Development (2016)

Kazakhstan has been trying to revive and promote the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people so that tourists today can experience what it might have been like to travel along the ancient Silk Road. Indeed, the Silk Road is closely associated with the steppe and nature. The mountains of Kazakhstan are famous for their clean lakes, fresh pine air and unique wildlife, and have always played an important role as signposts for travellers along the Silk Road and as oasses for rest and recuperation (Izenbayeva, 2016). Kazakhstan is rich in terms of the number of its cities lying on the Silk Road, where trade caravans from different countries rested as they were passing through. Mosques, mausoleums, madrasas, libraries, gates and their remains could attract interested travellers with their elaborate designs and colourful tile work (Fodde, 2010). Travellers could also buy locally made handicrafts and other traditional items from the famous bazaars, which

flourished during the times of the ancient Silk Road (Mantayeva *et al.,* 2015). Overall, another significant motivation for the Government of Kazakhstan to revive its traditional nomadic cultural heritage is to build up “romantic views” of the nomadic culture and the Silk Road among tourists, thereby enticing them to visit - boosting the economy as a result.

5.4.3 Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park

The development of tourism could, however, negatively impact on the preservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage in Kazakhstan. The case of Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park can be used by way of illustration. This park is one of the twelve national parks of Kazakhstan, located in the southeast of the country (Figure 63). The park occupies an area of about 200,000 hectares (The Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park, 2018). It conserves unique natural, historical and cultural resources on the northern slopes of the Tien-Shan Mountains. The park is home to unique animals, mammals, and birds that have been inscribed in the Red List of Kazakhstan and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (The Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park, 2018). Therefore, in 2002, Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park was included in the tentative list of sites nominated for the status of UNESCO World Heritage as a natural heritage site (UNESCO, 2018, a). Moreover, the park also has archaeological monuments from different ages. Among them are three sites of petroglyphs, 10 burial mounds of the early Iron Age, four settlements of the early Iron Age and two medieval settlement sites (UNESCO, 2018, a). A distinctive feature of the region is the so-called "imperial" burial mounds of east Scythians – Saki-Tigrahounds – as well as the assortments of medieval cities and settlements which existed along the Silk Road, historically connecting the cultures of East and West (The Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park, 2018). These cultural heritage sites of Kazakhstan were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2014

under the name "Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor".

Despite this, the Government of Kazakhstan allocated around £597 million to construct a world-class mountain-skiing complex "Kok-Zhailau" with all of the necessary infrastructure, hotels, restaurants, entertainment centres and playgrounds planned for the middle of Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park in 2014 (Sakypbek and Aktymbayeva, 2017). Local scholars from different disciplines and NGOs stated that the construction of this complex would negatively impact on the local environment and wildlife of Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park (UNECE, 2018). Moreover, many stated that the construction of this complex contravened national legislation on protected areas, environmental protection, water, forests and land resources, as well as international law, especially the *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Sakypbek and Aktymbayeva, 2017; UNECE, 2018). A civil movement "Protect Kok-Zhailau" was formed in Kazakhstan with the slogan "Preserve Kok-Zhailau for the future generations" (Zhylqybek, 2018). The petition in defence of Kok-Zhailau had over 100,000 signatories (Kozhanova, 2018). Due to active public opposition, the project was removed from the agenda of the Government of Kazakhstan.



Fig. 63 The Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park

Source: The Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park, 2018

However, in October 2018 there was a change of direction as the Government of Kazakhstan decided again to construct the Kok-Zhailau ski resort. Minister of Information and Communications of Kazakhstan, Dauren Abayev, pointed out that the construction of this resort would be important for Kazakhstan to promote its tourism industry (Bnews Kz, 2018). He also mentioned that tourism would bring a large volume of low-skilled jobs. Abayev underlined that neighbouring countries had already taken steps to intensively evolve their winter tourism by enhancing their ski facilities. According to him, Uzbekistan intended to construct a ski resort through an investment of more than £80 million, while Kyrgyzstan had already begun the construction of two ski resorts in the Karakol region (Bnews Kz, 2018). According to Abayev:

In 2014, the first proposed project of a ski resort was way too expensive, and it would have involved serious intervention in the natural landscape. It was presented as a premium resort for rich foreign tourists. But today, the Mayor's Office has revised the construction approach. It is to be a year-round, affordable resort. The planned length of routes is shortened, while the area for buildings and premises has been cut 10 times, if I am not mistaken. All of this seriously reduces the burden on the environment. I would like to note that this new concept completely excludes private and individual cottages being built (Bnews Kz, 2018).

The Kok-Zhailau project is seen by many as highly destructive, so much so that even in a country where openly resisting the Government can be risky, the local population is expressing its dissent freely. According to calculations made by NGO "*Zelenoe spasenie*/Green Salvation", the negative impact of the already constructed road and utilities for the Kok-Zhailau project on the local environment and the habitats of much of the wildlife in Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park would be beyond any financial compensation (UNECE, 2018). The lives of species that are specific to the park such as snow leopards, Himalayan

brown bears, golden eagles, peregrine falcons and others are at risk. The NGO's calculations also show that the construction of this ski resort would lead to the cutting down of over 6000 trees, including *malus sieversii* which are inscribed in the Red List of Kazakhstan (Zhylqybek, 2018). The local population from Almaty region argue that the construction of the ski resort will leave them with no place for leisure and recreation (Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, 2019). Indeed, the Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park is among the few accessible national parks in Kazakhstan, providing Kazakhstani people with opportunities to engage in recreational activities and to educate themselves about nature (UNECE, 2018).

Moreover, local archaeologists have claimed that the construction of the Kok-Zhailau ski resort will lead to the destruction of the archaeological cultural heritage sites located around the national park. The 28th Winter Universiade took place in Almaty city (Kazakhstan) in 2017 for which a road was constructed connecting the Alatau cross-country skiing and biathlon stadium and other sports facilities, and in the process the ancient Talhiz site was damaged (National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO, 2017). This ancient town was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2014, along with 33 other monuments and cultural sites in the territory of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and China ("Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor") (UNESCO, 2019, b). Additional funds from the Almaty regional budget were allocated to repair the damage. The funds were utilised to design and realise the construction of a new bypass road outside the protection zone and to implement additional archaeological research (National Commission of the republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO, 2017). However, local heritage sites in the Almaty region did not receive additional institutional and financial support from the Government (National Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan for UNESCO and ISESCO, 2017). Therefore, local archaeologists claim that during

the construction of the ski resort, other archaeological heritage sites located in the territory of this national park could face similar threats (Azarov, 2018).

5.4.4 Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan

The "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan" project is one of the initiatives of the Government to promote the image of Kazakh culture at an international level. The aim of the project is to create a digital map of the sacred places and monuments of Kazakhstan by 2020 (The Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the United States of America, 2018). Researchers from the project have identified twelve sites in various parts of the country that have sacred significance for different religious groups, including Muslims, Orthodox Christians, and Buddhists (Baitanaev, 2018). According to the head of the Sacred Kazakhstan Research Center, Berik Abdygaliuly, the digital map would give travellers an opportunity not only to learn about the sites and monuments but also to find routes to them. The budget of the project is around £15.1 million during the period 2018-2020. In June 2018, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan announced that the first stage of the “Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan” project had been completed (Egemen Qazaqstan, 2018). As part of the first stage of the project, various documentary films regarding sacred and cultural heritage sites of the Kazakh people were produced. For instance, films entitled “Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan”, “Golden Warrior”, and “Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi” were produced with the participation of BBC World News (BBC News, 2018). All of these films are to be released with subtitles and dubbing provided in the six UN languages and will be broadcasted on various international TV channels by 2022 (Discovery, Viasat History, National Geographic) with an expected combined audience of over 700 million people (Almaty TV, 2018).

According to the Chairman of the Board of National Company “Kazakh Tourism”, Rashid Kuzembayev, the “Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan” project contributes

to the promotion of not only international but also domestic tourism (Egemen Qazaqstan, 2018). To promote domestic tourism, the books "Sacred Objects of Kazakhstan of National Importance", "Regional Sacred Objects of Kazakhstan" and the first volume of the Sacred Kazakhstan encyclopaedia were also published in Kazakh and Russian (Egemen Qazaqstan, 2018). In addition, nearly thierty videos on sacred objects have been developed and broadcast on local TV channels and social media (BBC News, 2018). At the end of each of these videos, an announcement is made calling on each Kazakhstani family to establish their own top-ten historical and cultural places and top-10 natural places in Kazakhstan. According to the Vice Minister of Culture and Sport, Aktoty Raimkulova, the activities of the first stage of the project will contribute to the development of domestic tourism (Egemen Qazaqstan, 2018).

The Government's project "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan" is also helping to revive and preserve the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. To implement the project, researchers and specialists from various disciplines have been involved. They have been conducting expeditionary and archaeological research in different historical and cultural regions of Kazakhstan (Ryabchenko, 2018). The aim of such research is to examine the local relief of both cultural and natural heritage, the arrangement and condition of transport links, and the current state of infrastructure for tourists. Moreover, researchers have also been carrying out ethnographic projects to identify previously-unused written and archival sources associated with cultural and historical sites (Ryabchenko, 2018).

According to one interviewee for this research, who is an archaeologist and Assistant Professor at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Nazarbayev University (see Table 1, n5):

It is a great honour for me to be involved in the Government project "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan". Despite the fact that the project is only at its first

stage, it has already been criticised for mostly focusing on reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. However, I cannot agree with this criticism. For example, I have been involved in the expeditionary works on the ruins of the historic Buddhist monastic fortress of Ablay-kit. This cultural heritage site is located around fourty kilometres to the south of the city of Uskemen. It was built by the Mongol-speaking Oirats in the middle of the seventeenth century. As a result of the expeditionary works, manuscripts in Oirat and Tibetan languages were found by archaeologists in the main temple. Currently, the main purpose of the work is to produce the accurate geographical coordinates of this site. Moreover, I have been involved in the expeditionary works at another Buddhist monument – the ruins of the Qyzyl Kenish modest Buddhist temple complex. The researchers are interested in why this temple was built as it is so far from the major Buddhist centres of eastern Kazakhstan. Furthermore, my colleagues have conducted expeditionary works at the Orthodox shrine of the "Living Source" in Almaty region. They conducted interviews with local people and found some important documents associated with this site. I was also responsible for undertaking research in the library of the wooden Tatar mosque in the Aqkol settlement (Figure 64). We found manuscripts written in Arabic and Tatar languages.

The "Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan" project can be concerned about more than the cultural heritage of Kazakh people. The main aim of the project is to show that Kazakhstan is located on the Silk Road and thus is a country which has sacred significance for different religious groups. So far, the people of Kazakhstan have a very positive attitude toward the whole project (The Institute of Archeology named after Margulan, 2021). However, the Government of Kazakhstan has cut the budget for the project and consequently it can negatively affect the future expeditionary works (Strategy2050, 2021).

Fig. 64 The wooden Tatar Mosque in Aqkol settlement, 1812



Source: from the interviewee, 2019

5.5 Promoting a national brand

5.5.1 EXPO

Another source of motivation for the Government of Kazakhstan to revive and promote the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is so this can be presented to guests when hosting international events. As part of their nation-building process, the Government is working toward the establishment of a positive national brand. In order to achieve this, Kazakhstan has pursued a policy of hosting a number of major international events (Shakirova, 2015). The Government believes that hosting such events leads to economic growth, upgraded infrastructure, and the country asserting itself as the leader in the Central Asian region (Shakirova, 2015). As a result, Kazakhstan has hosted the following major international events: OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) summit (2010), Asian Winter Games (2011), the 28th World Winter Universiade (2017), and the World EXPO-2017. The latter is probably the most significant international event to have been hosted by Kazakhstan.

The World EXPO is a global event held annually in different locations with the purpose of disseminating innovative ideas, supporting progress, educating people and promoting co-operation between nations. The host country is now drawn randomly from a short-list and given the responsibility of organizing the event, which often requires huge capital investment to build suitable facilities (Huang, 2008). The first event of its kind, known as the Great Exhibition, was held in London in 1851 in the purpose-built Crystal Palace (Bureau International des Expositions, 2018). The exhibition underscored the innovation and progress of the Industrial Revolution, and was succeeded by exhibitions in Paris and Australia involving designers, researchers and inventors from all over the world (Xue *et al.*, 2012). In 1928, the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) was founded to manage the annual exhibition (Winter, 2013). Previously known as the "World's Fair" it is now known as the World EXPO, which was held in Shanghai in 2010, Yeosu (South Korea) in 2012, Milan in 2015, and Astana (Kazakhstan) in 2017 (Bureau International des Expositions, 2018). The latter event was the first and so far only World EXPO to be held in Central Asia. The Government allocated around £259 million to organise this major event (Astana Economic Forum, 2014). An additional £1 billion was injected by foreign investors, which is to be paid-back in the long-term (Astana Economic Forum, 2014). Although the event's emphasis was on on-going technological innovation, especially in the energy sector, it also had a positive impact in terms of Kazakhstan's potential to attract tourists, as it attracted over 4 million visitors.

The Government stated that hosting such a major global event was a crucial opportunity for Kazakhstan to present the nomadic culture of the Kazakh people to an international audience and to build its national brand. Aiming to build awareness and draw the interest of tourists, special cultural programmes were designed to nurture the nation's rich cultural heritage and to provide an "authentic" experience. For example, a national cultural complex *Ethnoauyl*

(Ethno-village) was a unique cultural tourism and image project that formed part of EXPO-2017 (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, a). Ethno-village is located in the territory of the *Qazanat* racecourse on an area of 2500 square metres. It is a single ethnic complex consisting of 40 traditional yurts and 12 sectors (Stanton, 2017) (Figure 65). Ethno-village hosted tourists and guests of the event who could experience what life might have been like for an actual nomad. According to Taylor (2001) tourists can achieve an "authentic" experience through genuine interaction or sincere contact with local peoples. McIntosh (2004, p. 9), in her study about tourists' experience of Māori culture in New Zealand, highlights that visitors mostly obtain an authentic experience by being "personally involved in the experience", as well as by experiencing "daily life". Ethno-village present visitors with the history, culture, art and traditions of the Kazakh people and visitors became acquainted with everyday village life. In Ethno-village, every region of Kazakhstan was presented with regard to the traditional nomadic culture of the Kazakh people in the form of master classes in various areas such as: traditional music, dance and musical instruments; handicrafts (wool, leather, wood, weapons); traditional cuisine; and traditional games (Kulsariyeva *et al.*, 2014) (Figures 66 & 67). At *Qazanat* racecourse, traditional Kazakh horse games such as *kokpar, audaryspak, baiga kyzkuu, and tenge alu* were all demonstrated (Figure 68). One of the most popular parts of the cultural programme offered in Ethno-village was traditional hunting with birds of prey and hounds (Kulsariyeva *et al.*, 2014). However, the organisation of this kind of ethno-village and promotion of nomadism as an authentic image of the country in contemporary Kazakhstan is a challenging task. The traditional nomadic culture that was practised before Soviet collectivisation has largely vanished. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan were spontaneously requested by cultural heritage practitioners to leave this

ethno-complex in place so that it could operate after the World EXPO. This petition was approved.

Fig. 65 *Ethnoauyl* (Ethno-village), Astana city, 2017



Source: author's photo

Fig. 66 Performance of Kazakh wedding traditions at the Ethno-village, Astana city



Source: author's photo, 2017

Fig. 67 Master class of a wood artist at the Ethno-village, Astana city



Source: author's photo, 2017

Fig. 68 The traditional Kazakh game *kokpar* at Qazanat racecourse, Astana city



Source: author's photo, 2017

The cultural programme also involved visits to several historical places located along the Silk Road, including such cities as Almaty, Qyzylorda, and Pavlodar. In Almaty, visitors had an opportunity to visit the mountains along the Ile-Alatau mountain range, which lie on one of the Silk Road routes that passed through what is today Kazakhstan's territory (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, b). Those interested in the nomadic way of life had a chance there to live in yurts of nomadic Kazakhs who still move from place to place to find pasture and food. Near Qyzylorda, tourists could visit medieval towns along the Silk Road, such as Zhent, Syganak, Kyryk Rabat, Zhankent and Zhetiasar oasis, and the memorial complex "Korkyt Ata", as well as Baikonur Cosmodrome (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, b). Those in search of natural wonders could trek along the Bayanaul National Park or across the Kyzyltau State Zoological Reserve, or take helicopter rides to State Natural Forest Reserve "Yertis ormany" or join hiking tours through the State Natural Reserve "Irtysh River Floodplain". There is no doubt that EXPO-2017 played a crucial role in promoting the country's rich cultural heritage and in bringing its touristic sites to a more global audience.

However, hosting EXPO-2017 in Kazakhstan has not been viewed positively by much of the local population. The current economic slowdown and currency depreciation (caused by falling oil prices and an unfavourable economic climate in Russia) has restricted the Government's budget, meaning that hosting the event is viewed by some as an unnecessary luxury (Putz, 2017). The corruption that occurred in the preparation of hosting this major global event has increased negative attitudes among the public (Paolo, 2015). Indeed, there have been very few successful examples of the EXPO pavilions being use appropriately since the event, which questions the economic sustainability of the project. After the Seville EXPO'92 (Spain), pavilions were rebranded into technology and science parks, cultural centres and fairgrounds, and office facilities (Carta, 2013). For the event

held in Shanghai (China) in 2010, exhibition pavilions were revamped with the China Fine Arts Palace, Mercedes-Benz Arena, as well as youth education centres and restaurants being built or housed in the process (Carta, 2013). To reduce the state burden and to improve the economic viability of hosting the event, many host cities ran a tight budget and invested only in projects absolutely essential for hosting the event. For Hannover (2000), half of all of the exhibition facilities were left idle after the event was over, while the US government has rejected the chance to host any further EXPOs (Revilla Diez, 2003).

According to the Chairman of the Board of NC "Astana EXPO-2017", Akhmetzhan Yessimov, Kazakhstan would ensure that all exhibition facilities would be fully utilized and that appropriate economic rents would be extracted long after the event (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, c). After the event, some of the exhibition facilities were rebranded as the National Museum and Art Center. In addition, plans are afoot to open an IT university, an international financial centre, an international hub for the development of "green" technologies, scientific laboratories and research institutions at some of the exhibition facilities (Bulambayeva, 2017). Furthermore, temporary hotels that were located in the EXPO village are to be re-opened as apartments to ease the city's housing shortage. As the Chairman of the Board of NC "Astana EXPO-2017" pointed out, after the EXPO, the EXPO village is to become one of the most comfortable high-quality residential areas in the country (The Official Website of EXPO-2017 Astana, 2018, c). In Kazakhstan, these residential apartments are to become the first domestic buildings constructed using green technologies and renewable energy sources. It remains to be seen how the exhibition pavilions will be used in the future. However, this new infrastructure has the potential to improve the country's competitive position in the tourism industry. The Government has asserted that this event was an excellent opportunity to alleviate

a crisis by promoting innovative business models, particularly in the alternative energy sector, and by attracting tourists to Kazakhstan from all over the world.

5.5.2 Nomadism as a national brand

Almost every country in the world is the subject of generalisations and stereotypes. Negative generalisations and stereotypes can create barriers to tourism, investment, commerce and international status. The suffix “stan” in Kazakhstan is not considered helpful for the country’s international image and may create a barrier in the development of its tourism industry (Witte, 2014). This is because foreigners often connect the suffix "stan" with economic and social backwardness associated with other countries that have the same suffix. International tourists relate the suffix "stan" to countries that are dangerous to travel to, like Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Therefore, in 2014, the First President Nazarbayev suggested renaming Kazakhstan as Kazakh Eli (Tadeo, 2014). He stated that Kazakh Eli is the historical name of the country, and that a name change could be considered as a way of reviving the heritage of the Kazakh people. According to the First President: "foreigners take an interest in Mongolia, the population of which makes up only two million, but its name does not end in "stan"" (BBC News, 2014). He pointed out that renaming the country would positively affect its ability to attract international investors and tourists, and would improve the international image of the country. The First President stated that renaming the country would not affect the multicultural policy of Kazakhstan. Although the ethnic Kazakh population of the country supported the First President's proposal, other ethnic populations did not (Diener, 2016). In particular, the Slavic populations of Kazakhstan argued that Kazakh Eli refers to ethnic Kazakh citizens instead of the civic Kazakhstanis. The critics outlined that Kazakh Eli translates from Kazakh as “The State of Kazakhs” (Diener, 2016) However, it should be noted that Kazakhstan’s current name also means “The

State or Land of Kazakhs" in the Persian language. Due to this criticism from some of the population, the First President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev retracted his idea. As an alternative, in order to alleviate the aforementioned negative connotations, the Government has tried to glorify the nomadic heritage of the Kazakh people in its development of the national identity, tourism and image of the country. In other words, nomadism has been established as the national brand of Kazakhstan.

Nation branding entails a broad set of activities undertaken by governments and other stakeholders aimed at marketing and enhancing a country's visibility worldwide. In order to demonstrate that a country is a "reliable partner" it is necessary to make itself known in the international arena (Aronczyk, 2008). For this purpose, nation branding is undertaken. Moreover, nation branding promotes investments and attracts tourists (Avraham, 2018). In most cases, nation branding is utilised to overcome unwanted legacies of the past. According to scholars, most post-Soviet countries have been using nation branding to overcome colonial legacies (Marat, 2009). In other words, many post-Soviet countries have reinvented their national images through the use of nation branding. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, post-Soviet nations experienced significant political, economic and cultural disruption, accompanied by a deeply felt need for national self-redefinition (Marat, 2009). Nation branding programmes were utilised to articulate a new image for external consumption and, at the same time, to revive national pride. Thus, nation branding programmes in post-Soviet countries have greater significance than simply being tools to attract investors and tourists. Nation branding campaigns in these countries are closely linked with national identity (Shakirova, 2015). Therefore, most post-Soviet countries connect heritage and authenticity to their nation branding. From a marketing point of view, heritage is considered as a main organisational tool imparting long-lasting strategic value (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2011). Nomadism has thus been established in the nation branding of post-Soviet Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

5.5.3 Critique of glorifying nomadism

However, Ferret (2016), a French researcher on Central Asia, has criticised the Kazakhstan Government's effort to celebrate nomadism and to determine nomadism as the foundation of the nation's identity and the cornerstone of its nation branding programme. Indeed, many argue that currently the people of Kazakhstan are not nomads (Megan, 2009). Nomadic pastoralism survives today only to a very limited extent. While glorifying the nomadic identity and nomadic cultural heritage, the Government of Kazakhstan and ethnographers have had to rely on the ethnic Kazakhs of Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan or the *Oralmandar*, who migrated back to Kazakhstan during the Government's repatriation policy. Moreover, according to scholars such as Cummings (2009), Ferret (2016), Laruelle (2008) and Norris (2012), there is no point studying Kazakh nomadic cultural heritage in Kazakhstan as it was lost during the Soviet collectivisation and sedentarisation period (Ferret, 2016). Today, the people of Kazakhstan mostly lead a sedentary life and animal husbandry no longer plays a primary role in the economy of the country.

It should also be noted that nomadic pastoralism has been practised only by a small minority of Kazakhs. As can be seen in Figure 69, animal husbandry declined during Soviet collectivisation and sedentarisation period (1930s), after which it recovered somewhat in the 1980s (Ferret, 2018). During the privatisation period (1991), however, the number of livestock reduced rapidly (Ferret, 2018). Cattle were moved from seasonal pastures to other types of pasture in the 1980s. After privatisation, the cattle were watched only by specialised professional herders who moved with them (Benko, 1998). These specialised professional herders were mostly *Oralmandar* who migrated to Kazakhstan under the Government's repatriation policy. From 2000 onwards, the number of livestock has increased (Benko, 1998). Currently, nomadic pastoralism in Kazakhstan has largely been

replaced by sedentary animal farming. The herders' mobility, if they are mobile at all, is mostly limited to seasonal transhumance with villagers migrating with their herds to summer pastures (Hauck *et al.*, 2016). It is usually older family members who move with the livestock, while the younger generation stay to attend school or work in office buildings. If the nomadic Kazakhs before the Russian collectivisation (1930s) migrated four times a year, today livestock holders migrate only for summer and winter pastures and only over short distances (15-30 km) (Robinson *et al.,* 2016). Pastoralism is no longer the main source of income for most households, and cattle are raised primarily for subsistence purposes as a source of non-cash income that supplements monetary income. Therefore, the presentation of nomadism as the national heritage is completely detached from current reality, even though the practice does still survive in certain areas.

Fig. 69 Livestock numbers in the present territory of Kazakhstan (thousands of head)



Source: Ferret (2018, p,6)

5.6 Nationalism

The Government's initiatives and programmes to revive and promote the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people have been criticised for encouraging nationalism by Western scholars such as Cummings (2006), Chinn and Kaiser (1996), Dubuisson (2017) and Sabol (2003). The Government has been criticised for the implementation of "top-down" nationalism since gaining independence (Sharipova *et al.*, 2017). Kazakhstan's nation-building process has been characterised by attempts to reassert the prominence of the ethnic Kazakhs in the political and cultural life of the country. As a result, Kazakhstan has been described as a unitary state, which allows for the self-determination of the ethnic Kazakhs (Edmunds, 1998). Cummings (2006), a professor in the School of International Relations, University of St Andrews, argued that since gaining independence the Government of Kazakhstan has been reviving a Kazakh identity which had been suppressed by many years of Russification during the Soviet period (Cummings, 2006). Yet, Khazanov (1995), the famous Russian scholar on Central Asia, stated that the nation-building framework of Kazakhstan is based on Stalin's approach to building the various Soviet republics. Such claims allege that primodialist ethnicity has been elaborated in the State's efforts to build a Kazakh nation. The Soviet approach of a "big family", where the Russians were the elder brothers, appears to have been retained but with the Russians replaced by the Kazakhs.

Scholars have shown that the *Kazakhization* process has occurred in every governmental programme involved in reviving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (Sorokina and Shklyayeva, 2015). This nationalistic approach has been implemented through reviving and promoting the Kazakh language and shifting the alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin. Kazakh ethnic nationalism has been expanded through the repatriation programme of the Government of Kazakhstan

(Beacháin *et al.*, 2011). In terms of cultural revival, many old Soviet and Russian street names have been replaced with the names of Kazakh national heroes (Ó Beacháin, 2007). Moreover, monuments and statues from the Soviet period have been replaced by those dedicated to national heroes and elements of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Although Kazakhstan is a multicultural country, most of the governmental programmes of Kazakhstan have been dedicated to the reviving and promoting of the cultural heritage of the titular nation (Cummings, 2010). In contrast, proponents of the *Kazakhization* process state that, during the Russian colonisation and the Soviet period, the Kazakh people almost completely lost their traditional cultural heritage. After declaring its independence, an opportunity emerged to revive its traditional cultural heritage in order to pass it on to future generations (Qoigeldiev and Omarbekov, 1993). Moreover, for over 70 years, the Kazakhs were taught a Russian and colonialist variant of history and the majority of Kazakhs, especially the younger generation, were no longer fluent in their mother tongue. The proponents of the *Kazakhization* process also state that if the Kazakh language is not given a chance to develop in Kazakhstan then it will simply die (Mkrtchyan, 2014). In terms of the replacement of street names and monuments, the Government of Kazakhstan and the Kazakh élites have tried to remove old monuments of figures synonymous with the regime that was responsible for widely despised policies such as the collectivisation of the nomads. Every ethnic group in Kazakhstan can preserve and promote its own cultural heritage through the national cultural centres supported by the Government (see Chapter 7).

5.6.1 Kazakhstan's Neo-Eurasianism policy

In order to mitigate the impact of nationalism in Kazakhstan, the First President of Kazakhstan has developed a policy of neo-Eurasianism. The origin of this Eurasianist idea can be traced back to the nineteenth century and is based on the

ideas of British geographer Sir Hartford Mackinder (Shlapentokh, 2007). He claimed that whoever could dominate this huge landmass of Eurasia would control global politics. Eurasianism has been proposed as a social, cultural, economic and political project (Anceschi, 2014). Many countries, such as Russia, Turkey, the nations of the South Caucasus and Kazakhstan, have developed a Eurasianism policy. The First President Nazarbayev proposed his own version of Eurasianism at Moscow State University during an official visit to the Russian Federation (Nazarbayev, 2010). Nazarbayev highlighted that he had been inspired by Lev Gumilev's "Eurasian theory" and that this theory could be considered as the framework for Kazakhstan's Neo-Eurasianism. Gumilev (1912-1992) was a Soviet anthropologist, ethnologist, historian and translator from Persian (Nazarbayev, 2011). Gumilev's "Eurasian theory" was based on his concepts of ethnogenesis (the process of acquiring an ethnicity by a group of people on the basis of common identity) and passionarity (the level of vital energy and power characteristics of any given ethnic group) (Nazarbayev, 2011).

According to Kazakhstan's neo-Eurasianism, Eurasia is a unique region where all ethnic groups have lived peacefully through centuries of mutual trust and understanding. Geographically, Kazakhstan is an Asian country and just 10 percent of its territory is situated in Europe, thus, geo-politically Kazakhstan calls itself a Eurasian country (Sultanov, 2005). In accordance with Kazakhstan's Eurasianism, Kazakhstan is situated in both Asia and Europe and functions as a "bridge between Asia and Europe" (Bulekbaev and Inkarbaev, 2002). The First President pointed out: "*In reality, Kazakhstan, as a Eurasian state that has its own history and its own future, would have a completely different path to travel down the road. Our model for development will not resemble other countries; it will include in itself the achievements from different civilizations*" (Mostafa, 2013, p. 164). The main focus of Kazakhstan's neo-Eurasianism is to build and develop a united Kazakhstani culture on the grounds of multi-ethnicity by establishing

bridges between cultures of different national, ethnic and religious groups (Tashenov, 2000). To some extent, Kazakhstan's neo-Eurasianism can be considered a platform that contributes to preventing ethnic and religious disorder in the country. Neo-Eurasianism does not place any emphasis on culture, religion, or ethnicity. Despite all efforts to demonstrate and confirm that Kazakhstan's Eurasianism policy is an objective, unbiased and affirmative policy that considers the interests of all stakeholders, Schatz (2000, b), an associate professor at the University of Toronto, argued that this policy is simply state-orientated nationalism. For instance, Laruelle (2004), a French expert on Central Asia, stated that Kazakhstan's Eurasianism policy was a hidden form of nationalism, and she presented arguments to this end on language, alphabet reforms and repatriation programmes. According to its critics, however, the Eurasianism policy is not clearly understood by the population at large, and it is argued by some that the Government of Kazakhstan and national élites have promoted the nationalistic idea of a singular cultural identification (Ergaliev and Tikhonova, 1999; Shulembaeva, 2010; Sorokina and Shklyayeva, 2015). By developing a Eurasianism policy, the Government has tried to pretend that there is no emphasis on one particular culture or ethnic group.

5.6.2 Assembly

There is a governmental institution that seeks to preserve social concord and stability by preserving the different languages and cultures of all the peoples of Kazakhstan. In 1995, in order to maintain the inter-ethnic harmony of the State, the First President established the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (Aitymbetov *et al.*, 2015). The Assembly was composed of all the national and cultural centres, and contained representatives of all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan. The Assembly was given the status of a consulting and advisory body that reported to the First President (The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan,

2018). The Assembly is responsible for assisting in the maintenance of inter-ethnic harmony, increasing the efficiency of co-operation between state institutions and civil society in the field of inter-ethnic relations, providing assistance in religious and cultural revival, and addressing diverse national interests in national policy. In order to achieve these objectives, the Assembly achieved constitutional status to elect nine deputies to the Mazhilis (Lower House of Parliament) (Jha, 2003). Elected deputies represent the Assembly's interests as a set of interests covering all ethnic groups of the State. During Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010, the Assembly was described as reflecting a unique Kazakhstani approach to safeguarding inter-ethnic harmony (Mostafa, 2013). Indeed, by establishing this governmental institution, Kazakhstan created all of the necessary conditions for the development of the culture, language and traditions of all ethnic groups in the country.

The Assembly has enhanced the development of the culture, language and traditions of all ethnic groups through promoting national-cultural centres. Currently, there are 1,338 registered national-cultural centres in Kazakhstan (Alexandrov, 2018). According to the First President these ethno-cultural centres: *"…constitute the hearts of preserving national self-consciousness, the organisational mechanism for supporting and developing national traditions, cultures and original spirituality of the nations and national groups. These national-cultural centres must take initiative in achieving harmony among people not only of different nationalities but also religious confessions*" (Jha, 2003, p.54). Through their folkloric, cultural and educational activities, national-cultural centres are able to consolidate their minority communities around certain issues such as culture, citizenship, and self-awareness as ethnic groups with their own history. Indeed, the teaching of languages is one of the chief tasks for national-cultural centres. There are 108 schools in the country where the languages of 22

ethnic groups are taught as different subjects (Sinnott, 2003). Due to the Government's trilingual policy, which is focused on promoting Kazakh, Russian and English languages, there is almost no chance to learn the languages of ethnic minorities in public schools. In this regard, the national-cultural centres fill a gap (Alexandrov, 2018). Thus, all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan have some opportunity to preserve and promote their cultural heritage in Kazakhstan.

Conclusion

This chapter has critically examined the role and activities of the Government of Kazakhstan in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The main task of the chapter has been to identify why and how traditional Kazakh cultural heritage has been revived and preserved. The research findings demonstrate that Kazakh cultural heritage has been revived and promoted to satisfy the following aims: to determine and strengthen national identity; to enhance the tourism industry; to improve and promote the State's image in the international arena; and to present its traditional cultural heritage when hosting major international events. However, the main motivation for the Government of Kazakhstan to revive and preserve its traditional cultural heritage is to build a national identity. Cultural heritage is viewed by the Government as a way of consolidating the status of a newly independent country, thereby creating a sense of identity and strengthening its national value.

CHAPTER 6: THE ROLE OF UNESCO IN PROTECTING AND PROMOTING KAZAKH CULTURAL HERITAGE

The aim of this chapter to analyse the role and activities of UNESCO in the protection and promotion of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. More specifically, this chapter is intended:

- to review criticisms regarding UNESCO and its *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*;

- to analyse, from an historical perspective, Kazakhstan's engagement with UNESCO on cultural heritage;

- to investigate under which circumstances and to what extent UNESCO contributes to the protection of the tangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan;

- and to examine UNESCO's role and activities in safeguarding and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, with a particular emphasis on the challenges in having Kazakhstani elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity;

- to examine "heritage wars" that occur over the ownership of heritage in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (CH) Convention.

6.1 UNESCO and its Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

As part of the United Nations institutional family, UNESCO is an intergovernmental agency with 195 Member States and ten Associate Members (Barrin, 2009). It is the most important body in the world with regard to the protection of cultural heritage. Established in 1945, at the end of the Second World War, the main aim of UNESCO was initially to maintain peace and security

(Laves and Thomson, 1957). This was highlighted in Article I of its Constitution, which stated UNESCO's aim was: "*to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms*" (UNESCO, 2016). Since then, UNESCO's goals have expanded. UNESCO today encourages intercultural dialogue, sets international standards, controls progress and ensures quality support and guidance for its members in the following five programme sectors: (i) education; (ii) social and human sciences; (iii) culture; (iv) natural sciences; and (v) communication and information (Barrin, 2009). UNESCO aims to do this through international programmes.

Since the 1970s, increasing attention has been paid by UNESCO to heritage preservation. The *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* was adopted at the seventeenth session of UNESCO in 1972 (Rodwell, 2012). The requirement for such a step arose from the ongoing destruction of cultural and natural heritage across the world at an unprecedented rate for various reasons, ranging from wars to natural disasters (Labadi, 2013). The official intention of the document was to identify, protect and preserve global cultural monuments and landscapes deemed to be of outstanding value (Willems, 2014). The most significant result of the Convention was arguably the World Heritage List, which has been described as "*the most effective international legal instrument for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage*" (Strasser, 2002, p. 215).

By signing the Convention, each State Party guarantees not only to protect World Heritage Sites located on its territory but also to safeguard its national heritage. According to UNESCO, ratification benefits countries in several ways. UNESCO provides a platform for negotiation and activity among its member states

(Rodwell, 2012). The organisation also runs activities and arranges general and individual services for all of its member states. UNESCO's members can benefit from gaining international recognition for their achievements and they also have the opportunity to foster broad international cooperation in UNESCO's core areas (Singh, 2010). The collaboration of members within UNESCO involves governmental, non-governmental organisations, researchers, and large or multi-national corporations. UNESCO's designated sites and organisations can also benefit in economic terms by being associated with UNESCO, such as by attracting additional funding, boosting tourism, growing their profile and strengthening their brand value (Arizpe, 2015). It was, therefore, important for Kazakhstan become a member of UNESCO.

Nevertheless, UNESCO and its Convention have been the subject of strong criticism from academics and non-Western countries, who believe that the selection criteria of sites for the World Heritage List are not objective (De Cesari, 2010; Meskell, 2002; Labadi, 2013). This criticism stems from the fact that, in order to be nominated, every heritage site should meet the requirements of three governing bodies. These are: the state party - or parties - proposing the site; two advisory boards that conduct research and make nominations for selection; and finally the World Heritage Committee that officially makes the final decision on inclusion in the list (Willems, 2014). The World Heritage Committee consists of 21 elected member states, all of whom are believed to pursue their own national interests (Meskell, 2013). According to Steiner (2011), these member states nominated more than 30 percent of the listed heritage sites between 1978 and 2004. For instance, 47 sites and monuments inscribed on the World Heritage List today are located in Italy. When addressing Committee members during a meeting in 1997 in Naples, Welter Veltroni, the then Italian Minister of Culture, said that, "*as you all know, 65 percent of the world's cultural heritage is located in Italy*" (Cleere, 2011, p. 177). Overall, 50 percent of World Heritage sites are located in

Europe and North America, in contrast to only 18 percent in Arab countries (Meskell, 2013). Indeed, 27 member states to the Convention have no sites in the Heritage List at all, despite the fact that some of these countries signed the document several decades ago, including Monaco (since 1976), Guyana (since 1977), and Brunei (2011) (Terrill, 2014). Therefore, it is understandable that the selection process into the World Heritage List involving Committee members has received growing levels of scrutiny on ethical grounds.

An unequal distribution of cultural and natural sites worldwide is further evidence of the presence of a selection bias on ethical grounds. In fact, 77 percent of nominated sites are classified as cultural and only 20 percent as natural (Meskell, 2013). This reflects the fact that European countries have more cultural sites compared to natural ones (Cleere, 2011). Attempting to justify the choice of sites included in the Heritage List, Martina Nibbeling-Wriessnig, the German ambassador to UNESCO, claimed that throughout the past hundreds of years European countries were more prone to protect their cultural heritage sites as opposed to countries in other parts of the world (Meskell, 2013). In particular, she points out that European cultural heritage sites were largely built of stone and, therefore, easier to satisfy the World Heritage List nomination criteria. It should be noted that the geographical allocation of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List is also predisposed to Europe. Labadi (2005), for instance, emphasizes that, as of 2002, Europe was dominant in the percentage share (65 percent) of cultural landscapes on the List. It seems that the allocation of natural heritage on the World Heritage List follows a similar pattern as the cultural one.

Considering the strong political and economic dominance of developed countries, their influence over the inscription in the World Heritage List has been growing, which has raised the issue of political bias throughout the selection procedures (Battini, 2011). The Director of the World Heritage Centre, Francesco Bandarin,

highlighted that: *"…inscription has become a political issue. It is about prestige, publicity, and economic development…"*, and suggested that actions must be put in place to resolve the matter (Strasser, 2002, p.255). Although the World Heritage Convention affirms that decisions have to be made in compliance with ethical norms, it has been argued that politically and economically strong countries are able to put enough political pressure to inscribe their sites on the World Heritage List (Keough, 2011; Lixinski, 2012; Olmland, 1997; Rao, 2010). Bertacchini *et al.* (2015) has examined the decision-making process at the World Heritage Committee, and evaluated the contest between blocs and the function of leading countries, with specific reference to the US. The ministership of four out of five BRICS countries, which includes Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, on the Committee has created a resilient political-economic coalition (Bertacchini *et al.,* 2015). Their influence is largely documented during voting processes, when each member of this coalition attempts to support each other. For example, in 2003, South Africa proposed its Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape for nomination; however, ICOMOS and IUCN rejected their application since the buffer zone would have had a destructive influence on a mine located nearby (Meskell, 2011). Following this decision, India and Russia attacked the Advisory Bodies for displaying a lack of understanding, thus supporting the initiative of South Africa (Frey and Steiner, 2011). UNESCO found itself in a deadlock as they could not accuse BRICS countries of dishonesty since they were involved in a peacekeeping process with the UN. In a similar politicized context, the purposes of World Heritage have been hindered by the particular interests of individual nations. Therefore, it is important to analyse the circumstances under which UNESCO operates and to what extent it contributes to, or undermines, the protection of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

6.2 UNESCO's contribution to the protection of the tangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the newly independent Central Asian countries began to integrate into the international arena. Kazakhstan became a member of UNESCO on 22 May 1992, the first of the five post-Soviet Central Asian countries to do so (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a). The interaction with UNESCO is based on the 1995 memorandum of cooperation between Kazakhstan and UNESCO and the agreement on opening a UNESCO Bureau in Almaty that same year (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a). The Bureau was given the status of regional representative on issues of communication in Central Asia, the Caucasus, Iran and Mongolia (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, b). The Bureau was also given the regional status of education lead in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. More importantly, in 2001, the Bureau was reorganised as the cluster office of UNESCO for countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, b). Since then, Kazakhstan has pursued a dynamic policy of strengthening its cooperation with UNESCO and intensifying its collaboration within its framework with other countries. Currently, the Republic of Kazakhstan has signed up to sixteen UNESCO conventions, including the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*, the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, and the *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property* (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a).

As a result of ongoing cooperation with the UNESCO Cluster Office in Almaty, projects regarding the preservation and promotion of the cultural and natural heritage of Kazakhstan have been realised (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, c). Having properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List is a

top priority for Kazakhstan, and significant work has been done in this area in collaboration with UNESCO. As a result, the following have been included in the World Heritage List in recent years: The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi (2003); Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly (2004); Korgalzhyn and Nauryzum national parks within the category of Sary-Arka — Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan (2008); Silk Road: the initial section and the route network of the Tien Shan corridor (2014); and the Western Tien-Shan (UNESCO, 2018, b) (Figure 70).

The Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly weres the first rock art site in Central Asia to be inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List, following the decision of the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee (Clottes, 2011) (Figure 71). Tamgaly is a large petroglyph located on the northern edge of the Anrakhai Mountains, about 170-180 km north-west of Almaty (Maryashev and Goryachev, 2002). Over 5000 petroglyphs have been carved into the exposed sandstone bedrock and on the surface along hills, valleys, summits and slopes. The majority of the petroglyphs date back to the Bronze Age (1400-1000 BC) (Maryashev and Goryachev, 2002). There are also petroglyphs belonging to the Sak Scythian period (500 BCE) and the Early Turkic period (CE 500) as well as images from more recent times.[8] Tamgaly has a special meaning for the people of Kazakhstan. Those who still believe in Tengrinism consider this place sacred. From 1998, under the supervision of the Institute for the Study and Management of Archaeological Sites Republic of Kazakhstan, a group of archaeologists, geologists, architects, and restorers worked devotedly to earn the UNESCO inscription. They documented the over 5000 rock carvings dating from

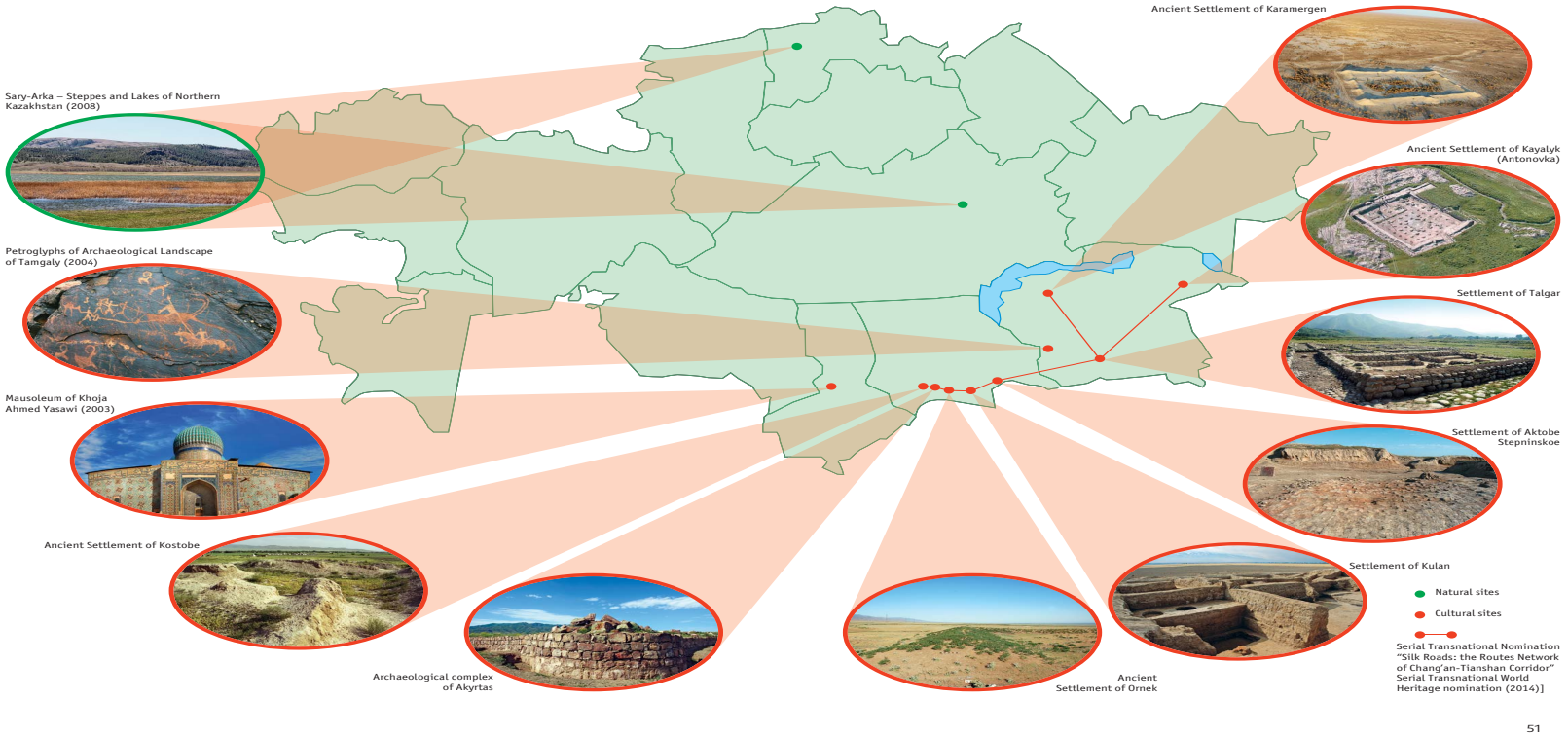
[8] Tamgaly was first discovered in 1957 and it is considered as being of global value because it is an archaeological landscape with petroglyphs serving as a unique record of a moribund cultural tradition (The World Heritage Convention. Article 1; Operational Guidelines, sect.II A, 45, 47; sect.II D, 77, criterion III)

the Bronze Age through the Medieval period to contemporary sites, and placed an area of about 900 hectares under the 1992 Law on the Protection and Use of Historical and Cultural Heritage (Chang, 2019). According to one participant in this research who worked as a restorer (see Table 1, n15):

The inscription of the Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly is very important for the Republic of Kazakhstan. This is because the condition of the site before the inscription was considered critical. Firstly, the site had been damaged during construction works. Secondly, it was impossible to manage tourist groups because there was no visitor centre. Thirdly, due to a lack of staff inside the site, lots of petroglyphs were damaged by tourist groups. During the nomination of the site for inscription (2001-2003) all of these problems were solved. With the financial support of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Tamgaly Museum Reserve was created. A visitor centre was organised to manage tourist groups. With the financial support of UNESCO, the collective Norwegian[9] -Kazakhstan project for management, conservation and preservation of Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly was undertaken. As a result, a large number of studies and preservation activities were completed. It should be noted that without this project it would have been impossible to complete documents for the nomination including the management plan and the justification of the global importance of the site. Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly is closely linked with shamanic healing practices. Before the inclusion of the site into the World Heritage List, modern shamanic healers used this place for their shamanic healing practices. Mass use of the site for shamanic purposes also led to the damaging of the petroglyphs. After the inscription, all measures have been taken to stop such damage.

[9] Implemented between 2012 and 2016, this project has aimed at enhancing protecting cultural heritage of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Fig. 70 UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Kazakhstan



Source: from the interviewee, 2019

Although the Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly are not inscribed as a religious or sacred cultural heritage site on the World Heritage List, it is still considered as a sacred place in Kazakhstan. The people of Kazakhstan, especially those who still believe and practice Tengrism, consider this place to be sacred (Baipakov and Mariyashev, 2008). Moreover, modern shamanic healers used this place for their shamanic healing practices. After the inscription of the site into the World Heritage List, any such shamanic healing practices became illegal. According to one interviewee, a modern shamanic healer and at the same time the head of a national NGO (see Table 1, n40), there have been several cases of shamanic healers being arrested for performing shamanic healing practices at the site. He himself has been stopped by security personnel and removed from the site by police several times. Such treatment has drawn a backlash from modern shamanic healers.

Fig. 71 Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly



Source: from the interviewee, 2019

When a sacred site becomes a World Heritage Site, the management of the site needs to be able to balance the beliefs of the people who hold the site as sacred but still make the site accessible to everyone (Serageldin *et al.,* 2001). It should be noted that the Petroglyphs within the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly are considered as a sacred place only for those who still believe and practice Tengrism (Baipakov and Mariyashev, 2008). The majority of Kazakh people consider the site as an archaeological landscape with petroglyphs serving as a unique record of an extinct cultural tradition of ancestors of Kazakh people. The use of the site for shamanic purposes had led to the damaging of the petroglyphs (Baipakov and Taimaganbetov, 2006). Mostly, this is because shamanic healers used fire during their rituals. Taking into account such damage, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan decided to prevent such damage by stopping shamanic healing practices at this cultural heritage site. According to heritage conservators and scholars, this has been an effective conservation decision (Baipakov and Taimaganbetov, 2006). Meanwhile, it has been outlined by heritage conservators as a fair decision as the majority of Kazakh people do not practice shamanism at all today. As the heritage conservators pointed out, there are various places in Kazakhstan where healers can practice their shamanic rituals (Baipakov and Taimaganbetov, 2006). This means that shamanic practices across the country have not been stopped in the wake of the World Heritage inscription of the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly.

The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was included in the World Heritage list as an architectural monument in 2003 (UNESCO, 2021, a) (Figure 72). It was built in Turkestan city by order of Timur (also known as Tamerlan), ruler of the Timurid Empire. The construction of the Mausoleum originally started in 1389 but was left unfinished following the death of Timur in 1405 (Argynbayev and Nurmukhammedov, 1988). It replaced a smaller twelfth century Mausoleum for Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, the Turkic poet and Sufi mystic, head of Sufism in Central

Asia. Khoja Ahmed Yasawi (1103-1166) is widely respected for promoting Sufism throughout the Turkic-speaking world and establishing a theological school that turned Turkestan city into a medieval centre of education (Argynbayev and Nurmukhammedov, 1988). His tomb is considered an important pilgrimage site for Sufis. Sufis believe that the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi is "the Second Mecca of the East" and that undertaking a pilgrimage there is equal to the Hajj to Mecca. The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi can be considered as the beginning of the Timurid architecture style, as its innovative design of vaults, domes and glazed tiles made it the prototype for all Timurid buildings to follow, particularly in Samarkand, the capital of the Timurid Empire (Nurmuhammedov, 1988). The fact that the entrance and some parts of the interior of the Mausoleum are unfinished does not decrease its uniqueness and value. The main conic-spherical dome of the Mausoleum is the largest dome not only in Kazakhstan, but in Central Asia as a whole. The thirty-five-roomed building constructed from fired brick is one of the most important Islamic mausoleums (Nurmuhammedov, 1988).

Fig. 72 The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi



Source: author's photo, 2017

During the Soviet period, the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was considered an historic building and a museum. After Kazakhstan gained its independence in 1991, its spiritual function was revived and it became an important part of the national identity of the Kazakh people. The Mausoleum is included on the List of National Properties of Kazakhstan and preserved by the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Stubbs and Thomson, 2017). It is included in the World Heritage List because it is one of the largest and best-preserved constructions of the Timurid period (Stubbs and Thomson, 2017). According to UNESCO, the Mausoleum is "*a characteristic example of Timurid style, and a most impressive testimony of the architectural attainment of Timur's empire in the late fourteenth century. The Mausoleum provides important advances in building technology, displaying an unsurpassed record of all kinds of Central Asian vaulted constructions and showing some innovations*" (UNESCO, 2021, a). The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi is also inscribed as a site of outstanding universal value because it was one of the supreme architectural achievements of its time, and a remarkable building in the history of Central Asian architecture (UNESCO, 2021, a).

According to one participant in this research, who worked on this site as a restorer (see Table 1, n15):

As I was born in Turkestan city and lived there for a long time, the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi has a special role in my life. My house is located near the Mausoleum. I have seen how the reconstruction works were carried out during the Soviet period. In the nineteenth century, the city of Turkestan changed into a military depot, and a defence wall was constructed around it. As the Mausoleum remained in a poor condition, the Soviet authorities decided to demolish it. My grandfather was among those who went against the Russians to safeguard the Mausoleum. This probably affected my decision to become a restorer. I am proud

that restoration works have been done under my supervision since the independence of Kazakhstan. Although the Mausoleum has been inscribed in the World Heritage List, all restoration works have been done with the financial support of the Republic of Kazakhstan. There are a number of factors that negatively impact on the condition of the Mausoleum. Because of a high-water table there are problems of rising damp and salts. There is a need to reduce water levels in the area of the site. Secondly, Turkestan suffers from earthquakes. However, the main damage has come from pilgrims. It is believed by the Kazakhs that if people take brick fragments from the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi and keep them at home, then they will be happy and healthy. Therefore, most of the fired bricks of the Mausoleum are damaged. It is very problematic for us to create the same fired bricks because the sand of the region has changed over the centuries. The Mausoleum is located in the area of the former citadel, in the north-eastern part of the ancient town of Yassi, now an open archaeological site. The surrounding area (buffer zone) of this cultural heritage site embraces the whole archaeological area of the ancient town. So, in order to do any archaeological research in this area, there is a need to gain permission from UNESCO. In addition, the local people of Turkestan city proposed planting flowers in front of the Mausoleum. Currently, we are waiting for the permission of UNESCO to plant these flowers. These can be considered as the negative aspects of being included in the World Heritage List. In my personal point of view, the whole city of Turkestan should be inscribed on the World Heritage List.

UNESCO's recognition of the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi might turn out to be a significant step in the course of the preservation and promotion of this site at the international level. However, it may also have some unwanted side-effects, such as loss of control from the Government of Kazakhstan. Dieter (2010) criticised UNESCO's World Heritage programme for the fact that, after their inscription, cultural heritage sites are subject to strict rules that can restrict

developments. Before the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi was inscribed as a World Heritage site, it was common for roses to be planted in front of the Mausoleum. After the inscription, the local people of Turkestan city proposed planting flowers in front of the Mausoleum again. However, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan needed permission from UNESCO to do so. When the author of this research asked for the negative side of having World Heritage status, several interviewees mentioned the rose-planting issue. As the Head of the Cultural Heritage Department at the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan outlined, Kazakhstan had lost some control over an element of its cultural heritage.

6.3 The role and activities of UNESCO in safeguarding and promoting the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan

Extensive work has been undertaken to preserve the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people after Kazakhstan ratified the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2011 (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, a). The National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, founded in 2012 under the National Committee of Kazakhstan, is responsible for the promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (Chukayeva *et al.*, 2014). In order to protect and promote this intangible cultural heritage, the Concept on the Safeguarding and Development of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Republic of Kazakhstan was also enforced in 2013. The aim of the Concept is to build suitable conditions for the protection, preservation and promotion of the intangible cultural heritage of the people of Kazakhstan. The National Committee of Kazakhstan created a National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Kazakhstan including 45 elements (Table 10).

Tab. 10 National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Kazakhstan

N	Element Name	Element Category of Intangible Cultural Heritage
1	*Nauryz*	Practices, rituals and celebrations
2	*Qusbegilik* – falconry	Knowledge and rituals related to nature
3	*Aitys* – song and poetic competition of *aqyns*	Oral traditions and forms of expression including langauge as transmitter of intangible heritage
4	*Kiiz yi* – yurt, Kazakh original transportable dwelling. Tradition of production and its interior decoration	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
5	Kazakh traditional dombyra *kyi*	Performing art
6	*Qobyz* – stringed musical instrument and art of playing	Performing art
7	Kazakh traditional song art	Performing art
8	*Batyrlar zhyry* – Cycle of 50 Kazakh heroic epics	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
9	*Qyz-Zhibek* – Kazakh lyric-poetic drama	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
10	*Qorqyt Ata kitaby* – Kazakh epic poem	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage

11	Kazakh jeweller's art	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
12	*Kokpa*r – Kazakh national equestrian game	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
13	*Kazakh kuresi* – Kazakh national wrestling	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
14	*Kiiz basu* – tradition of felt making	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
15	*Besik* – tradition of production and usage of Kazakh cradle	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
16	*Qymyz* – Kazakh fermental milk product made of horse milk and production techniques	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
17	*Qozy Korpesh-Bayan su*lu – Kazakh lyric epic poem	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
18	*Zhetigen* – many-stringed plucked musical instrument and art of playing	Performing art
19	*Sybyzgy* – wind musical instrument and art of playing	Performing art
20	*Shanqobyz* – reed musical instrument and art of playing	Performing art
21	*Orteke* – Kazakh traditional puppet musical art	Performing art
22	*Qara Zhorga* – Kazakh folk dance	Performing art
23	*Terme* – song and recitative style of Kazakh folk art	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
24	*Kemey* – Kazakh traditional song and recitative throat singing	Performing art

25	*Togyzqumalaq* – Kazakh traditional tabletop game	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
26	Kazakh traditional carpet weaving	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
27	*Shubat* – Kazakh fermented milk product made of camel milk and production techniques	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
28	*Qara olen* – Kazakh traditional poesy	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
29	*Baqsy saryny* – ritual ceremonial song of Kazakh shamans followed by dances	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
30	*Keste* – Kazakh fancywork on different materials	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
31	*Tekemet* – tradition of felt carpet production	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
32	*Teri ondeu* – traditional leather product making	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
33	*Er-turman* – production of horse hamessing	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
34	*Assyk* – traditional game	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
35	Kazakh ethnic cuisine	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
36	*Shildehana* – Kazakh rituals related to birth-giving	Practices, rituals and celebrations
37	*Betashar* – Kazakh wedding rituals	Practices, rituals and celebrations

38	*Zhoqtau* – commemoration rituals	Practices, rituals and celebrations
39	*Saiys* – equestrian games	Knowledge and ritals related to nature
40	*Sheshendik sozder* – oratory skill	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
41	Kazakh traditional clothes	Knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts
42	*Qazaqtyn shygarmasy* – calendar of 12-years zoologic cycle	Knowledge and ritals related to nature and univers
43	Stories of Khodzha Nasreddin	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
44	*Korugly*	Oral traditions and forms of expression including language as transmitter of intangible heritage
45	Traditional children and adolescent games	Practices, rituals and celebrations

Source: UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office (2020, b)

UNESCO's Almaty Office has conducted a number of activities safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. A project called "Strengthening capacities for effective safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in Central Asia (2012-1016)" was implemented with the financial support of Norway. The total budget of this programme was £346,231 (of which 10 per cent represented programme support costs) (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2020, c)). As part of this project, UNESCO's Almaty Office held several tailor-made workshops and field activities for intangible cultural heritage managers and civil society

representatives. The workshops included the following fundamental themes: implementation of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* at the national level, community-based inventorying, and understanding the processes of preparing nomination documents to the Urgent Safeguarding List and Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. All of these workshops and field activities were held with the participation of representatives from other Central Asian countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to increase sub-regional collaboration and to discuss prospects for joint nominations to the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, b). As a result, several multinational nomination documents were proposed and submitted to UNESCO. Training workshops were also conducted by UNESCO-trained experts from different countries such as Ukraine, the Netherlands and Bulgaria (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, b).

According to one participant in this research who works at the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n1):

I attended all of the training workshops organised by UNESCO's Almaty Office on safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Besides our Ministry, representatives from the Ministry of Information, the Agency for Tourism and Sport of Kazakhstan, members of the National Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Kazakhstan, experts from the UNESCO Observation on Central Asia, as well as folk artists, musicians, and traditional craft makers attended these training workshops. I can definitely say that without these training workshops it would have been impossible to include elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This is because in Kazakhstan there are no specialist institutions and experts in intangible cultural

heritage. Although Kazakhstan has been working under the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage from 2011, this issue still has not been solved. There were numerous debates during the workshops. The most ardent debates were concentrated on the collaboration between ministries, governmental agencies and practitioners/bearers of intangible cultural heritage on the implementation of this Convention. I remember throughout the workshops it was unclear for everybody if it was appropriate to count professional performers (who graduated from the Conservatory) of traditional music and dance as bearers of the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. A big debate also revolved around the administration of intellectual property rights regarding traditional knowledge and cultural expressions.

As a result of these training workshops and fruitful collaboration with UNESCO, eight elements of the intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan have been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. In 2012, the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan and of the Kyrgyz Republic signed a memorandum of collaboration in the sphere of safeguarding and promoting common intangible nomadic cultural heritage (The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). The main articles of this memorandum centred on proposing joint nomination documents for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. As a result, in 2014, the joint nomination of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, entitled "Traditional knowledge and skills in making Kyrgyz and Kazakh yurts (Turkic nomadic dwelling)", was included in the Representative List (Figure 73). The inscription of knowledge and skills in the production of yurts is crucial for both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as the yurt has become a symbol of the national identities of both nations. For both, the yurt is a symbol of statehood, family, and traditional hospitality.

Fig.73 The Kazakh yurt, Almaty



Source: author's photo, 2017

According to an interviewee for this research who is a famous yurt maker (see Table 1, n36) in Kazakhstan:

I am proud to have been involved in the project of getting "Traditional knowledge and skills in making Kyrgyz and Kazakh yurts" inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This inscription is crucial not only to Kazakh and Kyrgyz people, but also for all Turkic nomadic people. The inscription of this element reflects the rich experience of nomadic civilization. There is no doubt that UNESCO can be considered as the main platform and forum for international diplomacy on the issue of cultural heritage. We can see how most of the Central Asian countries are working closely to increase the number of inscriptions of common nomadic cultural heritage on the World Heritage List. Compared with the last 10-15 years, people have become much more concerned about the safeguarding of yurts in Kazakhstan. Twenty years ago,

I had a high position in one of the leading banks in Kazakhstan. When my mother passed away, we wanted to construct a yurt in front of our house, because we did not have enough space for guests. Even in a city as big as Almaty, I found only one yurt maker. I was so involved in constructing that yurt that afterwards I decided to work in this field. Now, my whole family and all of my relatives are involved in this field and we are producing yurts and their interior decorations. Although the price of our service is quite expensive, most Kazakh people are keen on having a yurt for special occasions in their lives. Today it is quite common to see yurts during holidays, weddings, birthday parties and family gatherings. There is no doubt that the inclusion of yurts into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has raised awareness about their importance.

Although the yurt is determined as a significant part of the Kazakh nomadic traditional cultural heritage, currently its use is only folkloristic. Yurts are only assembled during special occasions once per year and have lost their relevance as the main home of the Kazakhs.

The traditional Kazakh art-form of the *Dombyra Kuy* is also inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its inscription was confirmed at the 9th meeting of the UNESCO Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris in 2004. The *Dombyra Kuy* is an instrumental piece of music played on a traditional Kazakh pear-shaped, two-stringed, plucked and long-necked musical instrument called a *dombyra* (see Chapter 4). According to UNESCO, this artform "*plays an important role in strengthening social cohesion among Kazakh people while providing them with a sense of identity and belonging*" (UNESCO, 2021, b).

The other symbol of Kazakh culture added to the List was the "*Aitysh/Aitys*, art of improvisation", inscribed in Paris in 2004 (Figure 74). This was a joint nomination by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. *Aitys* (for Kazakhs) or *Aitysh* (for

Kyrgyz) is an improvised competition between two *akyns*, a form of oral poetry executed in the manner of singing with the accompaniment of traditional musical instruments (see Chapter 4), the Kazakh *dombyra* or the Kyrgyz *komuz* (UNESCO, 2021, c).

An *Aitysker*/performer of the art of improvisation (see Table 1, n19), highlighted that, after the inclusion of *Aitys* into the Representation List, the number of young performers of Aitys in his school has considerably increased. It might be because he performed *Aitys* in a recording project run by UNESCO's Almaty Office. This recording performance has been broadcast on most of the national channels. According to one interviewee for this research who is a famous *aitysker* (performer of *aitys*) (see Table 1, n21):

The inclusion of Aitys into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity attracted attention and support from the population. The number of young performers of Aitys has considerably increased. Today all regions of Kazakhstan have schools where famous akyns-aityskers transfer their knowledge and skills to young generations using traditional methods. I also established the school of akyns-aityskers in the city of Qyzylorda. This city can be considered as the home of this art. The most important thing for me, when teaching young generations, is to reflect on current problems and realities in Kazakhstan through poetic improvisations. The youngest pupil in my school is a four-year-old girl. She can perform more than fifty famous Aitys from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the first stage, our students have to learn the best ancient pieces of Aitys and perform these to a public audience. Every year, the Ministry of Culture organises the Republic competition where young akyns-aityskers demonstrate their art. During this competition, we can see a variety of styles of Aitys being performed that are transmitted from generation to generation. Since the inclusion of Aitys into the Representative List of the

Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan together with UNESCO's Almaty Office are recording Aitys performances for future generations. The famous Kazakh Aityskers perform the old Aitys in diverse manners. I was involved in this project, performing it in the traditional style of my region.

Fig. 74 Preforming *Aitys*/art of improvisation



Source: from the interviewee, 2020

Falconry has been practiced for thousands of years in more than 60 countries (Figure 75). However, due to many factorsincluding rapid urbanisation, falconry has gradually become a minority practice. In 2016, "Falconry, a living human heritage" was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Arab Emirates, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain and the Syrian Arab Republic (UNESCO, 2021, d). The inscription document outlined:

"*Falconry expresses itself in multiple cultural domains, in particular social practices, rituals and festive events, as well as knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe. These include traditional skills, traditional knowledge, about the biology and behaviour of birds and the environment, the making of traditional falconry equipment, as well as linguistic and artistic expressions found in idioms, painting, sculpture, poetry, rituals and music*" (UNESCO, 2021, d). The inscription of falconry on the Representative List has contributed to the safeguarding and promoting of this living heritage in Kazakhstan. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, jointly with UNESCO's Almaty Office, have organised meetings, forums, seminars and festivals to promote the significance of falconry. Every year a national championship takes place in Kazakhstan to identify the best falconers. The winners of this championship usually have an opportunity to become involved in international falconry festivals and competitions. For example, Kazakhstan's falconers attended the 4th International Festival of Falconry held in the United Arab Emirates in 2017 (The Official Website of the 4th International Festival of Falconry, 2021).

Fig. 75 Hunting with birds of prey



Source: The Horse Sport Federation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020

According to the Head of the Traditional Kazakh Sports Department at the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n2):

The development of falconry as a traditional Kazakh sport is one of the main focuses of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan. As you know, falconry was an essential part of the life of nomadic Kazakhs. Under the Soviet Union, falconry was regarded as belonging to the Kazakh élites so all falcons were confiscated. As a result, the number of falconers in Kazakhstan decreased to less than ten. The Kazakh government was concerned about this tradition disappearing. I want to outline the role of UNESCO in the protection of hunting with birds of prey. The inscription of falconry as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity has encouraged all state parties in Kazakhstan to develop this form of art. With the tremendous support of UNESCO and the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan, nowadays the number of falconers has increased from ten to one hundred. It should be noted that the development of Kazakh national sports is not an easy task. This is because most Kazakh traditional sports require the participation of animals. The development of falconry in Kazakhstan is one of the hardest tasks for our department. Today, the Kazakh tradition of hunting with birds of prey is used to attract tourists from all over the world. For example, every summer Kazakhstan hosts professional falconers from the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. In 2016, a big delegation of these falconers hosted Kazakhstan for three months. We can see that every international tourist is happy to take a photo with Kazakh golden eagle and falconers.

International *Nowruz Day* (22 March) is celebrated by more than 300 million people all around the world, a tradition that dates back thousands of years. *Nowruz* symbolises the first day of spring and the renewal of nature. In 2009, *Nowruz* was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity under the initiative of several countries which share this holiday

(Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan) (UNESCO, 2021, e). *Nowruz* (*Nauryz* in the Kazakh language, and hereafter referred thus) has long played a special role for the nomadic Kazakhs. Today, *Nauryz* is celebrated throughout Kazakhstan and any other place where Kazakh communities live. This inscription covers a number of ceremonies, rituals and cultural events occurring within most families and communities. This festival includes traditional games, traditional dishes, performing traditional songs and dances, traditional storytelling and other oral traditions and various types of handicrafts. A traditional dish called *Nauryz kozhe* is prepared exclusively for the celebration of this festival. This festival starts by visiting elderly relatives and neighbours. Nomadic Kazakhs celebrated this festival over several days. Today *Nauryz* is a public holiday and Kazakhstanis are given a four-day bank holiday to celebrate it.

One of the traditional games played during all Kazakh festivals, including *Nauryz*, is *Kazakh kuresi* or Kazakh wrestling (Figure 76). In 2016, *Kazakh kuresi* was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. *Kazakh kuresi* was inscribed under the category of Traditional Sports and Games (UNESCO, 2021, f). Safeguarding and promoting indigenous and traditional forms of sports and games which derive from the roots of many different communities is one of the focuses of UNESCO. *Kazakh kuresi* reflects an ancient form and style of Kazakh traditional wrestling for men. Wrestlers known as *baluan* are matched depending on their weight category. There are various types of *Kazakh kuresi* including wrestling barefoot and wrestling in boots with long tops. All wrestling techniques involve contact above the waist. In order to win a contest, a wrestler must lay the opponent on his shoulders (UNESCO, 2021, f). According to the Head of the Traditional Kazakh Sports Department at the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n2):

Kazakh kuresi is one of the best preserved and most widely practiced traditional sports in Kazakhstan. Our department jointly with National Kazakh Kuresi Federation are actively involved in the inscription of Kazakh kuresi on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. There is no doubt that this inscription raised the status and public recognition of the sport not only in Kazakhstan, but also in the international arena. Today, all regions of Kazakhstan have schools where Kazakh kuresi is practiced by men and women at a professional level. This traditional sport is included in the curricula of school as an optional course. This course can contribute not only to the promotion of knowledge of traditional culture but also to the healthy lifestyles of the young generations. The "Kazakhstan Barysy" Fund was established in 2010. The main purpose of this fund is to support Kazakh Baluans (wrestlers) and the promotion of this traditional sport in Kazakhstan not only among Kazakhs, but also among all nationalities living in Kazakhstan. This Fund every year organises tournaments in Kazakhstan to identify the best Baluans (wrestlers). All stakeholders such as the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan international organisations like UNESCO, non-governmental organisations, and even local people are involved in organising these tournaments. The broadcasting of these tours on national and international TV channels also contributes to the promotion and safeguarding of this traditional sport, especially among young generations.



Fig. 76 Kazakh *kuresi*/Kazakh wrestling

Source: author's photo, 2017

One of the folk games of the nomadic Kazakhs known as *Assyk atu* was also inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2017 (Figure 77). This game is popular among Kazakh children, both girls and boys (mainly boys aged 4 to 18 years) (Sabyrzhanov *et al.*, 2011). *Assyk atu* was traditionally played, not only during festivals and holidays, but also in daily life as a means of developing intellectual and physical abilities. *Assyk* is a bone from a sheep or ram's knee-joint which, as a rule, are differently coloured (Sabyrzhanov *et al.*, 2011). Besides Kazakhstan, this game is widely played across the nations of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Eurasia. Some nations use the talus of sheep and cattle to play the game. According to the rules of the game, every *Assyk atu* player has his/her own small sack of *Assyk* (Totenai, 2008). The aim of the game is to use one *Assyk* to knock out as many other *Assyks* as possible from the playing field. This traditional nomadic Kazakh game was almost lost during the Soviet period. During collectivisation, nomadic Kazakhs lost almost all of their sheep and cattle and it was almost impossible to make *Assyk* (Sabyrzhanov *et al.*, 2011). In urban areas, the game was seldom played. After gaining independence, the Government of Kazakhstan encouraged younger generations to practice traditional games. In order to promote *Assyk atu*, the National Federation of *Assyk* Games was established as a branch of the National Federation of Traditional Sports of Kazakhstan in 2013 (The National Federation of Traditional Sports of Kazakhstan, 2018). The National Federation of *Assyk* Games with the wide support of the Kazakh government, international organisations like UNESCO, non-governmental organisations, and local people, organised regular tournaments at regional, national and international levels. In 2013, Kazakh children took part in the Annual International Festival of Traditional Games arranged by the Turkish government (The National Federation of Traditional Sports of Kazakhstan, 2018). The aim of this festival was to promote traditional folk games by bringing children together from different countries and sharing knowledge and experience

of traditional folk games like *Assyk atu*. The inscription of *Assyk atu* on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity increased public interest in this traditional game and this traditional folk game was added to the school curriculum as an optional subject (The National Federation of Traditional Sports of Kazakhstan, 2018).

Fig. 77 The Kazakh traditional game *Assyk atu*



Source: Kokshetau Asia (2021)

Certain types of food, and the preparation thereof, can express deeply held cultural practices and values, thus constituting a type of intangible cultural heritage. UNESCO has recognised food as an integral part of intangible cultural heritage, listing a range of diverse diets in its list of intangible cultural heritage (Santilli, 2015). During the 11th session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in Addis Ababa from 28 November to 2 December 2016, a multinational nomination "Flatbread making and sharing culture: *Lavash, Katyrma, Jupka, Yufka*" was inscribed onto the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2018, g) (Figure

78). However, this nomination involved some international conflicts which are discussed below. The culture of flatbread and sharing, presented in this inscription under different names (*Lavash, Katyrma, Jupka, and Yufka*), is a complex of traditional knowledge, views, skills and rituals referring to preparing, baking, keeping, and using traditional thin bread that represents certain cultural and social functions within certain communities in Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey and is transferred from generation to generation. Flatbread plays a crucial role in the lives of Kazakhs. According to UNESCO's inscription: "*At funerals in Kazakhstan it is believed the bread should be prepared to protect the deceased while a decision is made from God and in Kyrgyzstan sharing the bread provides a better afterlife for the deceased*" (UNESCO, 2018, g). The Kazakhs make flatbread on Thursdays and Fridays to remember dead relatives. The Kazakh people believe that if they share seven flatbreads with their neighbours, all of their problems will be solved. The Kazakhs prepare flatbread for funerals, family gatherings, wedding parties and various holidays.

Fig. 78 Making *Katyrma*/ Flatbread



Source: UNESCO (2021, g)

The national cuisine is an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and their nomadic traditions and history. Traditionally Kazakh people believed food was provided by the grace of God (Kalybekova, 2006). Therefore, it was prohibited to throw food away, to step on food, to step over food or to leave food uncovered overnight. A guest entering somebody's home is obliged to taste offered food, even if the guest is short on time (Kalybekova, 2006). Due to the shortage of meat and dairy products as a result of the Russian *korenisaciya*[10]policy, the Kazakhs began to eat what were traditionally seen as Russian dishes (Qatranulya, 2001). In urban areas particularly, Kazakh families prepared traditional Russian food every day. However, Kazakh cuisine was not lost altogether. It remainsed an integral part of the cultural heritage and sense of identity of the Kazakh people (Tilemisov, 1995). Many Kazakh dishes survived and are still prepared frequently. Particularly in rural areas, old recipes have been passed from generation to generation to preserve these historic Kazakh dishes (Segizbaiuly, 2011). As Bannerman (2006) pointed out, postcolonial countries, by safeguarding and reviving food-related stories, cooking recipes and traditional ingredients, build their collective memories. Post-Soviet Kazakhstan also utilises traditional cuisine in maintaining collective memory. Thus, the Kazakh ethnic cuisine is included in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Table 10).

Food is closely related to tourism, as part of attempts to boost economic development and employment. Although images are created to promote traditional food in tourist destinations, for many tourists food is not a main motivation for travel (Hall and Gössling, 2016). Yet, consuming traditional

[10] The Soviet policy of *korenisaciya* (nativisation) supported and promoted native cadres, cultures, and languages to incorporate the multi-ethnic peoples into nations that merge into the federal structure of the Soviet Union.

cousine and participating in food-related cultural events is a significant part of cultural tourism experience (Dallen and Amos, 2013). Moreover, food has long been one of the crucial markers of ethnic identity, along with language, religion, literature, and other distinctive elements of culture. Cookbooks with traditional recipes, food fairs and festivals, and restaurants serving traditional cuisine are integral part of the process of national identity and nation building (Lin *et al.*, 2011). As a marker of national identity, however, food can provoke conflicts among States Parties over its ownership.

6.4 The challenges in having Kazakhstani elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

6.4.1 UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage and "heritage wars"

UNESCO's inscription of intangible cultural heritage on the Representative List has created so-called "heritage wars" between nations (Aykan, 2016). These conflicts occur between nations over the ownership of heritage in the ICH Convention. Mostly, such conflicts have taken place when State Parties claim ownership over shared cultural traditions and prevent other countries from "taking over" them (Ranta, 2015). Once a cultural element is inscribed, it is stated and recognised as the national property of the listing country. The inscription of *lavash,* a type of baked flatbread popular throughout the Caucasus and Central Asia, is an illustrative case here. In 2013, Armenia proposed *lavash* for nomination as an integral part of Armenian cultural heritage (Aykan, 2016). When Armenia's Deputy Culture Minister Arev Samuelian announced that the proposal had been submitted, all of its neighbouring countries (Azerbaijan, Iran, Georgia and Turkey) argued that *lavash* also belonged to them (Asbarez, 2013). In 2014, at the 9th session of the Intergovernmental Committee Meeting, UNESCO accepted the nomination of *lavash* as the "preparation, meaning and appearance of traditional

Armenian bread as an expression of culture" (Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2014). The nomination document defined *lavash* entirely as "traditional Armenian bread," outlining it as a "component of the Armenian identity that promotes consciousness of national cultural originality" (Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2014). The nomination document also included the Armenian traditions and rituals that were linked to the baking of *lavash* and how they reinforced social and community bonds in Armenia. The nomination document also emphasised that *lavash's* culture-bearers constitute "the entire population of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the world-wide Armenian diaspora communities" (Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2014).

This Armenian nomination aroused fierce opposition and significant national press coverage in many countries. Iran's state authorities, heritage curators, and scholars all argued against UNESCO's decision regarding this nomination and claimed that *lavash* is part of Iran's traditional heritage, originating in the Arsacid era (Iran Daily, 2014). Indeed, Iran's Culture Ministry appealed to UNESCO to reconsider the Armenian *lavash* application and prepared an Iranian *lavash* nomination for inscription on the Representative List as well (Iran Daily, 2014). At the same time, many Turkish people were also angry about Armenia's nomination and Turkish mass media published articles with headlines such as "*Lavash* Became the Cultural Heritage of Armenia," "We Lost *Lavash* to Armenia," "They Appropriated Our National Bread," and "UNESCO's *Lavash* Shock to Turkey" (Aykan, 2016). Azerbaijan, Iran and Georgia all supported these Turkish reactions. In this regard, Aykan (2016, p. 799) pointed out:

While the Convention (Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage) strongly influences the current processes of heritagization of

food in Western Asia, these processes do not primarily serve the Convention's purposes of safeguarding intangible heritage and ensuring mutual appreciation of it. The Convention rather functions as a source of nationalism in the region to identify and legitimate transnational food traditions as national heritage and to prevent other countries from laying claims over them.

In response to the protests against the nomination, the Intergovernmental Committee decided to change the wording of the document to "*lavash*, the preparation, meaning and appearance of traditional bread as an expression of culture in Armenia," clarifying that *lavash* does not only belong to Armenia but also to other countries (UNESCO, 2021, h). UNESCO reflected upon this disagreement by stating the following:

The Committee …takes note that lavash is shared by communities in the region and beyond, recalls that inscription on the Representative List does not imply exclusivity and encourages the submitting State when implementing safeguarding measures to remain conscious of the element's larger cultural context in the region, the Committee recalls the importance of using vocabulary appropriate to the spirit of the Convention and avoiding expressions such as "unique" and "original".

However, this decision of the Intergovernmental Committee to revise the definition of *lavash* in transnational terms did not end this dispute regarding to whom *lavash* actually belonged. Armenian state authorities arranged a press conference in Yerevan to report on *lavash's* nomination. The Secretary General of the Armenian National Commission for UNESCO, Vahram Kazhoyan, stated in the press conference that Turkey and Azerbaijan had failed to prevent *lavash* from being inscribed as part of Armenian heritage (ArmInfo, 2014). Kazhoyan outlined that there had been no further modifications to the nomination, which still defined *lavash* as part of Armenia's national heritage (ArmInfo, 2014). Moreover, the

Armenian ethnographer and historian Suren Hobosyan stated that Armenians are the true owners of *lavash* and "*perhaps it is Armenians who settled down in Georgia, Turkey, and Iran that brought this element into those countries' cultures with them*" (Aykan, 2016, p. 806). He also advised Armenians to be ready for an "organised and fierce fight" from Azerbaijan on this particular dispute (Aykan, 2016, p.806).

Although UNESCO had tried to appease some of its enraged Member States, the intensity of the fallout did not dissipate. Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, and Iran all claimed that UNESCO's granting of status to Armenia was necessarily exclusionary. They argued that identifying this type of bread as Armenian would imply a dilution of its importance in Azerbaijani, Turkish, Georgian, and Iranian cuisine, and thereby reduce its value within each nation's cultural narrative (Levin, 2017). Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan both supported Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia in this "heritage war" (Daily Sabah, 2016). Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan also claimed that *lavash* is a crucial part of their own cultural heritages and signed a petition against Armenia. As a result of this "heritage war," Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture decided to prepare a separate nomination to register *lavash* as part of its common heritage. Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan submitted a joint nomination for *lavash* as part of their common intangible cultural heritage. In 2016, at the 11th session of the Intergovernmental Committee Meeting, UNESCO accepted the nomination of *lavash* under the title "flatbread making and sharing culture: *Lavash, Katryma, Jupka, Yufka*" (UNESCO, 2021, g). In this way, UNESCO and its inscription of cultural heritage became the subject of cultural debate and created a "heritage war" between neighbouring countries. This case demonstrates the complexity of cultural globalisation, where universalisation processes do not homogenise culture but rather reinterpret it in ways that often serve to strengthen national, not cosmopolitan, identities.

UNESCO and its Conventions have many times been criticised for their approach to national heritage. The case of *lavash* is a useful example of such approaches. As Ichijo and Ranta (2015, p. 157-158) pointed out:

The international organisations that are meant to limit the scope of nationalism… end up enhancing the nationalist case. In effect, UNESCO's focus on protecting the local in the global context results in strengthening the national…UNESCO, an intergovernmental organisation, functions as the source of authority for the nation-state and other groups in pursuing their version of nation-rebuilding/maintenance that is primarily targeted at the domestic audience.

It should be noted that UNESCO and its Conventions are not providing "patents" for cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. However, it is common when State Parties employ its lists to demand national ownership over shared cultural heritage. When State Parties promote cultural elements to the UNESCO lists, they mostly presume that they have in some way to obtain their "patent" or to have them registered officially as their own traditions (Gürçayır, 2011, p.11). Moreover, when a cultural element is inscribed on behalf of a country, it is declared as national heritage by the global news media (Park, 2010).

After Thailand criticised UNESCO's 1972 Convention for creating violence between states, Director-General Irina Bokova stated that World Heritage needs to be an "*important and indispensable tool to develop and encourage international cooperation and dialogue*" and that "*heritage should serve not for conflict but as a tool for dialogue and reconstruction*" (UNESCO, 2021, i). The 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* seeks to ensure international cooperation and dialogue in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Yet, contradicting these aims, it sometimes fosters nationalist approaches to intangible heritage and stirs debates between state parties over the ownership of particular things or traditions (Ranta, 2015). In the case of *lavash*,

the Convention fostered nationalism by codifying transnational food tradition as national property and by preventing other countries from laying claim to such tradition. By allowing the Convention to be used to claim national ownership over shared intangible cultural heritage elements, UNESCO's reputation as a neutral and impartial actor in cultural heritage protection was damaged.

6.4.2 “Heritage wars” between Central Asian countries

"Heritage wars" also affect the neighbouring peoples of Central Asia in terms of the identification of core values and historical standards. One use of heritage is as a marker distinguishing a nation from other nations. The inscription of cultural heritage on the Representative List has prompted ownership claims to shared heritage, which has become a source of conflict among countries which "seek to monopolise control and ownership of what they perceive to be their national heritage and identity" (Frost and Hall, 2009, p.64). As previously nomadic nations, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan share much common cultural heritage. In order to distinguish themselves from "Cossack" people of Slavic descent who lived on Russia's southern boundaries from about the fifteenth century, the Russian Empire referred to the Kazakh people as "Kyrgyz" (Aldazhumanov *et al.*, 2010). This was because Kyrgyz and Kazakh people spoke almost the same language and shared a common nomadic cultural heritage. Therefore, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan successfully proposed shared nominations for both tangible and intangible elements on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Meanwhile, the cultural heritage of the three other Central Asian countries - Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan - are inextricably linked to each other (Bacon, 1966). Thus, these countries prepared joint nominations for the UNESCO World Heritage List. Yet, effective collaboration between neighbouring states on joint nominations can prove difficult as each country tries to grant a quasi-national right to ownership over a piece of the cultural narrative.

An example of this process is provided by Uzbekistan, who proposed that Hodja Nasreddin Efendi's adventures be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as its national treasure. Hodja Nasreddin was a thirteenth century Seljuq philosopher who figures prominently in the oral and written traditions of many countries, including Uzbekistan. A story told by Nasreddin usually has a subtle humour and a pedagogic nature (Bynum, 1989). Hodja Nasreddin is considered as an integral part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Uzbek people. They affirm that Bukhara (Uzbekistan) is the actual birthplace of Hodja Nasreddin (Sergeyeva, 2020). In 1943, the Soviet film *Nasreddin in Bukhara* was directed by Yakov Protazanov based on Solovyov's book (1940), followed in 1947 by a film called *The Adventure of Nasreddin*, directed by Nabi Ganiyev and also set in the Uzbek SSR (Meletinskii, 1998). The Government of Uzbekistan erected a monument in Bukhara in his honour in 1979 (Meletinskii, 1998). This monument has become an important tourist spot in Uzbekistan, indicating that Hodja Nasreddin belongs to the Uzbek people. It is an interesting example of films and monuments making intangible heritage tangible. It should be noted that intangible types of cultural heritage are more prone to disputes regarding ownership between nations. Unlike material types of cultural heritage, like buildings, monuments and historic sites that are fixed in a certain place, intangible cultural heritage is not permanently attached to a territory (Logan, 2007). As Logan (2007) pointed out, intangible cultural heritage is embodied in people rather than in inanimate objects and places. Thus, all other Central Asian countries argued that Hodja Nasreddin also has a tremendous role in their oral and written traditions. In this way, Hodja Nasreddin became the subject of a "heritage war" between all Central Asian countries. In addition, claims about his origin are made by many peoples including the Turkish, Uighur, Kazan, Chuvash, Crimean, Persian, Greek, Albanian, Azerbaijani, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbian, and Kurdish peoples (Bynum, 1989). Intangible cultural heritage tends

to spread as people move and communicate with each other; people migrate and transfer their traditions with them, not only to neighbouring countries but also to geographically distant ones (Logan, 2007). Indeed, even if they do not move, cultural traditions can be distributed to and adopted by people elsewhere. In the case of Hodja Nasreddin, the Silk Road served as the main way of spreading this traditional heritage among the Turkic, Persian, Arabian, African, Indian and European worlds (Meletinskii, 1998). 1996-1997 was declared International Nasreddin Year by UNESCO which outlined the significance of Nasreddin's stories with regard to the traditions of European and Asian folklore (Abazov, 2009).

With this recognition, UNESCO seemed to try to encourage state parties to prepare joint multinational nominations. The 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* outlines how shared intangible heritage is effectively safeguarded in its totality (Ubertazzi, 2015). UNESCO promotes transnational safeguarding efforts as a tool to reinforce cultural dialogue and cooperation among countries with shared intangible cultural heritage. In order to avoid inscription of the same or similar elements on behalf of several countries, the Convention's Operational Directive 1.5 requires countries with shared cultural heritage to jointly prepare multinational nominations (Aykan, 2015). Although many types of intangible cultural heritage are shared among countries, joint multinational nominations are rarely inscribed on the Representative List (Ubertazzi, 2015). Nationalist approaches to intangible heritage are the main reason behind this low rate of inscription. Most countries tend to submit their own nominations in order to promote their own national heritage and identity.

The inscription of *Epos Manas* on the Representative List created a "heritage war" between the neighbouring countries of Central Asia. *Manas* is the name of a

legendary Kyrgyz hero who represented a cornerstone for the Kyrgyz people, when they were scattered across Central Asia, helping them to find their identity and win their independence; it is also the name of a heroic epic poem that tells the nomadic history of the Kyrgyz people (Reichl, 1989). *Epos Manas* describes Turkic history, concentrating on the Kyrgyz and the important events that had been passed on in part even before the tenth century. It came to take a unified oral form among the Kyrgyz people in the second half of the tenth century (Isaeva, no date). *Manas* is performed very emotionally without accompaniment; it has a poetic form from beginning to end. *Epos Manas* is considered as an iconic figure, upon which Kyrgyz national identity is based and the *epos* itself has been identified as the encyclopaedia of the Kyrgyz people (Isaeva, no date). *Epos Manas* is also found among ethnic Kyrgyz living in Xinjiang (China), and a version of the epic has been published with Chinese translation (Jumaturdu, 2016). There are more than 65 written versions of the epic (Jumaturdu, 2016). In 2009, UNESCO inscribed the *Epos Manas* in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on behalf of the People's Republic of China (UNESCO, 2021, j). The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage defined *Manas* as "*a major epic representative of the traditions and historic richness of the Kyrgyz community of China, which recognize and transmit it as a key symbol of their cultural identity*" (UNESCO, 2021, j).

However, the inscription on China's behalf provoked protest in Kyrgyzstan, where the Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism of the Kyrgyz Republic petitioned UNESCO to reconsider the inscription (Levin, 2017). The Kyrgyz people saw this action by China as an effort to take ownership over their nation's cultural icon. The Kyrgyz mass media started to publish articles claiming that the Chinese government aimed to deprive Kyrgyzstan of one of its main symbols of national identity (Jacquesson, 2020). This Chinese inscription increased

awareness of intangible cultural heritage in Kyrgyzstan, pushing the Government of Kyrgyzstan to adopt a law for the safeguarding of its heritage. The Ministry of Culture, Information and Tourism of the Kyrgyz Republic aimed to prove that the *Epos Manas* belonged to Kyrgyzstan. As a result, in 2011 Kyrgyzstan adopted the law "on *Epos Manas,*" establishing governmental responsibilities to safeguard, conserve, and promote the *Epos Manas* (CIS-Legislation, 2011).

Following Kyrgyzstan's actions to take ownership of the *Epos Manas*, Kazakhstan's scholars and heritage conservators claimed that this *epos* belongs not only to the Kyrgyz people, but also to all Central Asian peoples. For instance, the famous Kazakh writer Muhtar Auezov stated that *Epos Manas* as an epic belongs to all Turkic peoples regardless of their socio-economic, political or geographical attachments (Thompson *et al.*, 2006). The *Epos Manas* describes Turkic history, including the history of the Kazakh people. Moreover, Auezov indicated that the *Epos Manas* was first discovered by the Kazakh ethnographer, historian and scholar Chokan Valihanov in 1856, during his expedition to Lake Issyk Kul (Kyrgyzstan) (Thompson *et al.*, 2006). Valihanov recorded one of the main episodes of *Manas*, *Reminiscences of Kokete,* as well as rendering a historical, ethnographic and philological assessment of the *Essays of Jungaria* (Isaeva, no date). Even the inscription document for the *Epos Manas* outlined the importance of the *Epos Manas* to the Kazakh people as follows:

"*The Kyrgyz in China and the neighbouring Central Asian countries of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan regard the Manas as a key symbol of their cultural identity and the most important element of cultural identity and the most important cultural form for public entertainment, the preservation of history, the transmission of knowledge to the young and the summoning of good fortune*" (UNESCO, 2021, j).

However, the Government of Kyrgyzstan rejected all such statements and continued to claim that *Epos Manas* only belonged to the Kyrgyz. The Government of Kyrgyzstan established a national programme for the period 2012-2017, which aimed to safeguard, research and promote the *Epos Manas* (UNESCO, 2021, k). Approximately 20 million som (Kyrgyzstan currency; 21,870 GBP) was allocated for the development of this national programme (UNESCO, 2021, k). *Manaschi* schools were established for the performers of the *Epos Manas* and the best performers were presented with the Presidential Award of Storytellers. Folk events were organised and festivals were dedicated to the *Epos Manas* at national and international levels. "*Manas* studies" were established as a core subject in schools and universities (UNESCO, 2021, k). In 2013, after two years of preparation, the Government of Kyrgyzstan proposed their own nomination of *Epos Manas*. The Kyrgyz epic trilogy of *Manas, Semetey and Seytek* was inscribed on the Representative List (UNESCO, 2021, l). This trilogy describes how heroes named *Manas, Semetey and Seytek* battle against their *Khitan* and *Oirat* enemies, struggling to unite the disparate tribes of Kyrgyz people into a single nation and reclaim their ancestral lands (UNESCO (2021, l). Speaking at the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev stated: "*We are very happy about the decision to include the Epic of Manas on the UNESCO list. More resources and more support will be put towards further research, study and dissemination of the epic. In the future, the world will know about the Epic of Manas*" (Giles, 2013).

Competition between the Central Asian states is rooted in the Soviet period. Competition was utilised by the Soviet administration to fulfil national economic plans, to enhance the highest results in the production of material and cultural wealth, and to achieve the highest possible labour productivity in the Soviet Union (Anic, 2017). "Five-Year Plans" were a tool of this competition which were state-

crafted development programmes orientated toward extra modernisation in the Soviet Union (Chapman & Strier, 1998). For instance, the programmes aimed to construct railroads, steel factories and coal power plants, to build dams, canals and river diversions. After the announcements of "Five-Year Plans", there were informal competitions among the Soviet Republics to achieve the plans earlier (Anic, 2017). The Soviet administration used propaganda posters to promote industrial productivity, and to engender optimism for the new "Five-Year Plan" (Figure 79) (Bonnell, 1999). The Soviet Central Asian republics competed between themselves to achieve rapid industrial and agricultural developments. For example, throughout the Soviet period, interest in cotton remained high; during all the "Five-Year Plans" Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan competed in cotton production (Shtaltovna & Hornidge, 2021). Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan competed in the production of valuable mineral deposits (Peyrouse, 2012). Even after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there is informal competition among the Central Asian states in economic, social and cultural developments (Peyrouse, 2012). By creating "heritage wars" among the Central Asian states, UNESCO contradicts its founding aims as an organisation, devoted to peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding.

Fig. 79

Soviet Propaganda Posters

1. Comrades lumberjacks! Give over the plan! Keep the word given to Comrade Stalin! Giving beyond expected! 1948

2. Doing better than planned! What about you?, 1966

1. 2.



Source: Starove, 2021

6.4.3 "Heritage war" inside Kazakshtan

UNESCO's inscription of cultural heritage can also create a "heritage war" inside a country. The case of Kazakhstan illustrates this point. One of the goals of Kazakhstan is to inscribe more cultural heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List in order to promote the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan at the international level to boost national pride and tourism (Chukayeva *et al.*, 2014). In order to achieve this goal, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan actively collaborates with UNESCO's Almaty Office. In turn, UNESCO's Almaty Office regularly conducts trainings and

seminars with a focus on how to enhance the nominations (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, 2017, c). In one such training or seminar, UNESCO's Almaty Office curators suggested that every region of Kazakhstan should prepare its own nominations for inscriptions. Kazakhstan is divided into 17 regions or provinces (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). They are headed by a regional governor (*akim*) appointed by the President but have a regional council elected by universal suffrage (*maslihat*) (Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). Every region of Kazakhstan has a cultural department which is responsible for cultural development, preservation and promotion cultural heritage of the region. There is unofficial competition between the regions of Kazakhstan to get the most inscriptions on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The author was invited to interview the head of the cultural department in one of the regions of Kazakhstan who reported that they were looking for somebody who could manage all the selection and nomination processes regarding the inscription of elements of heritage from that region. They suggested that the author would be a good candidate for such a position. This head of the cultural department outlined many times that this region needed more inscriptions on the UNESCO World Heritage List compared to other regions of Kazakhstan. The author was told that the regional governors (*akim)* of each region of Kazakhstan were involved in this "heritage competition" for UNESCO inscriptions.

Although the World Heritage Commission provides practically no financial support in the safeguarding and preservation process, inclusion on the World Heritage List tends to encourage foreign countries, NGOs, or different sponsoring organisations to provide investment or funding (Leask and Fyall, 2006). For some regions of Kazakhstan, where there is no production of oil and gas, such financial support for the protection of cultural heritage is vital. A significant portion of the economy of Kazakhstan is based on oil and gas

production (Akiner, 1991). Thus, the financial status of each of the regions of Kazakhstan relies on the quantity of oil and gas in each region. Moreover, the World Heritage List is widely used as a tool for creating marketing campaigns to attract more tourists to the destination (Leask and Fyall, 2006). The Government of Kazakhstan pays great attention to the development of the tourism industry. Tourism is considered one of the priority sectors of the economy along with fuel and energy (see Chapter 5) (Abubakirova *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, by having World Heritage List sites, the regional authorities of Kazakhstan aim to generate tourism. There is no doubt that the development of the tourism industry in a region can enhance its economic development. In addition, having UNESCO World Heritage sites can enhance the national significance of regions, as happened with the city of Turkestan.

The First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev renamed the South Kazakhstan region "Turkestan" on 19th June 2018. The city of Turkestan became the administrative centre of the region (Official Source of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). The President stated that Turkestan was perfectly equipped to perform administrative functions, as the city "*was the heart of political and spiritual life of the Kazakh Khanate and the whole Turkic world for centuries*" (Bnews Kz, 2018). Turkestan is home to many historic and sacred sites that draw a significant number of visitors from neighbouring countries and beyond. The UNESCO World Heritage site, the Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, is located in this city and is its most famous tourist destination. In order to boost Turkestan's tourism potential, the Government of Kazakhstan decided to change its political status (Satubaldina, 2018, b). The President of Kazakhstan pointed out that Turkestan would become a new centre for attracting investment, technology and intellectual resources not only of Kazakhstan but the entire Central Asian region (Satubaldina, 2018, b). According to Nazarbayev, this move would give impetus to the balanced socioeconomic development of the city and

the consistent improvement of the quality of life of the people of the whole region (Kazinform, 2018).

Despite much criticism regarding the "heritage wars" that UNESCO has apparently created between and within nations, UNESCO's conventions concerning the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage can be considered as highly encouraging opportunities for Kazakhstan to revive its nomadic cultural heritage. Following the inscriptions of intangible heritage of the Kazakh people on the Representative List, efforts have been made to revive the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Conclusion

Inclusion of various elements of Kazakh culture on several of UNESCO's lists and registers enables the promotion of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan at the international level and the extension of systematic measures for its preservation domestically. Participants in this research working in UNESCO's Almaty Office and those who are actively engaged in the nomination of cultural heritage sites and elements on the UNESCO World Heritage List claim the Government of Kazakhstan is actively contributing, through UNESCO, to the protection and safeguarding of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

The most significant drawback of being a member of UNESCO for Kazakhstan is that UNESCO and its inscriptions of cultural heritage have become subjects of cultural debate and have created "heritage wars" between neighbouring countries and even within a country. However, many of these issues are being resolved by UNESCO by inscribing joint nominations. The preparation of joint nominations has become popular among countries with shared cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible). Indeed, it is likely that the controversy surrounding the

nomination of Nassredin Hodja will be resolved through joint multinational nomination. Therefore, the research findings indicate that UNESCO and its Convention should take into account modifications in the listing procedures and inscription criteria. In order to avoid "heritage wars" between countries, the state parties should be encouraged to prepare multinational registrations.

The Government of Kazakhstan invests heavily in the protection and inscription of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List. UNESCO serves as an effective channel promoting Kazakhstan's cultural values and achievements and the creativity, thereby ensuring international recognition of the contribution to world culture made by representatives of Kazakhstan. UNESCO has an excellent reputation in the Central Asian region, especially regarding recognition and protection of cultural heritage. According to results of research undertaken by Dawkes and Jorayev (2015), archeologists at the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), the contracting division of University College London (UCL), UNESCO is recognised as a significant organisation for Kazakhstan in terms of heritage management and the international recognition of its heritage. In terms of heritage, UNESCO maintains a wide range of heritage initiatives and efforts, ranging from research into the protection and management of archaeological sites, to intangible heritage and cultural tourism. There has been crucial cooperation in the recognition and protection of cultural heritage between Central Asian countries and UNESCO, demonstrated by various national and transnational projects. In addition, UNESCO is viewed by Central Asian countries as one of the most successful bodies of the UN in terms of bringing the countries together harmoniously (Dawkes and Jorayev, 2015).

While the Government of Kazakhstan invests heavily in the protection and inscription of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Kazakhstan as a member of UNESCO could further benefit from applying to

the World Heritage Fund for monetary assistance. For instance, Kazakhstan benefited from the budget that was allocated by Norway as an earmarked contribution to the UNESCO Fund. Moreover, with the financial support of the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in Trust, Central Asian countriesincluding Kazakhstan, organised training workshops for the documentation of cultural heritage, in an effort to ensure the sustainable management of the Silk Road corridors.

Kazakhstan, by being a member of UNESCO, can also benefit in economic terms by attracting additional funding from NGOs and foreign countries. As an illustration, based on the "Silk Road Economic Belt" project, China has committed to allocate a significant amount to restore Kazakhstan's cultural heritage sites located on the Silk Road. Eight of Kazakhstan's most significant ancient and medieval urban centres were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2014 as part of the Serial Transnational Nomination "Silk Road: the Routes Network of Chang'an-TianShan Corridor". Currently, Kazakhstan is working on preparing new historical and archeological sites on the ancient Silk Road for nominations as part of the same Serial Transnational Nomination.

One of the most significant aspects of being a member of UNESCO is that this international organisation encourages the bearers of the intangible cultural heritage of the Kazakh people in the safeguarding of its cultural heritage. According to the participants in this research, during the inscription processes, the tradition-bearers played a significant role in sharing their knowledge that has been transmitted from generation to generation. Moreover, inscriptions on the Representative List have been strengthening the bearers and increasing the number of practitioners, bringing wider attention to the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

Participants in this research who are actively engaged in the nomination of cultural heritage sites and elements on the UNESCO World Heritage List consider

UNESCO as an effective organisation in the protection of traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. They perceive UNESCO's role as helping Kazakhstani people preserve their ancestors' cultural heritage in order to spread knowledge of their cultures and respect for their values among other peoples of the world.

CHAPTER 7. THE ROLES AND ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN REVIVING AND PROMOTING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN KAZAKHSTAN

As non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are one of the main stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation, the aim of this chapter is to analyse the roles and activities of NGOs in reviving and safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. This will be achieved by:

1. Analysing the engagement of NGOs in the development of Kazakhstan, with a particular emphasis on their role in cultural heritage conservation;
2. Examining the activities and effectiveness of local NGOs (NGOs that were created in, and are operating in Kazakhstan) in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people;
3. Investigating the debates around understanding and defining how NGOs develop the cultural heritage of the Kazakhs;
4. Analysing the ethnic discontent around the operation of local NGOs;
5. Identifying the strengths of and challenges faced by local NGOs in implementing their programmes.

In addition to personal interviews, the data used in this chapter was taken from the official website of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). The data from the Ministry website was statistically analysed and is presented in the form of graphs and charts.

7.1 NGOs as Stakeholders in Global Cultural Heritage Conservation

Globally, a lot of NGOs and non-profit organisations (NPOs), also called amenity societies, volunteer societies, and social enterprises, are deeply engaged in heritage conservation and promotion. These non-governmental and non-profit

organisations can be divided into two groups: large, well-funded organisations with a global reach, and small, local volunteer advocacy groups concerned with conservation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Pike, 1999). Large, well-funded NGOs operate programmes and mobilize considerable funding for worthy projects in the conservation of cultural heritage at the international level (Kalman, 2014). These include, for example, the Getty Conservation Institute, the Aga Khan Development Network, the World Monuments Fund and others. Small non-profit organisations also can be divided into national, state, provincial, and local non-profit organisations (Mendelson and Glenn, 2002). Non-profit organisations at the state and national level are mostly well-funded and well-staffed. In contrast, non-profit organisations at the provincial and local level have small budgets and are mostly or entirely voluntary. According to Kalman (2014, p.31), the main roles and activities of NPOs in the heritage sector are:

- Heritage advocacy: enabling government, businesses, and the local community to adopt policies and take actions for the conservation of cultural heritage;

- Public awareness and education: increasing the level of awareness of the values and methods of heritage conservation among the local people;

- Ownership, development and management of historic properties: functioning as a "national trust", receiving donations of cultural sites and usually making them available for public visitation.

-Funding support: ensuring funding support for projects.

However, NGOs can also have a negative impact on the protection of cultural heritage. NGOs can create significant barriers to restitution of wrongfully removed art objects. The friction regarding the sculpture Venus of Cyrene is a telling example. Italians invaded Libya and occupied it as a colonial power between 1911 and 1943. A headless marble sculpture, known as the Venus of

Cyrene, was removed from Libya in 1915 by Italian soldiers and was placed on display in the Museo Nazionale delle Terme of Rome (Chechi, 2015). In 1998, the Italian and Libyan Governments agreed on the return of this statue to Libya following lengthy negotiations and two court decisions (Wilkie, 2010). Despite the agreement, a non-governmental organisation Italia Nostra brought an action against the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage aspiring to avert the restitution. Italia Nostra argued that this headless marble statue was an integral part of Italian cultural heritage as it had been found in territory subject to Italian sovereignty (Chechi, 2012). Moreover, Italia Nostra claimed that this case could lead to further requests for restitution and the consequent pauperization of the Italian cultural heritage. Nevertheless, Italia Nostra's request was dismissed and the statue was returned to Libya in 2008 (Chechi, 2012). This example demonstrates a legal attempt of an NGO to priorities the State's statutory mandate. The mandate is aimed at preserving the integrity of the national cultural heritage over their ethical commitment to return wrongfully removed art objects.

7.2 The operation of NGOs in Kazakhstan

The growth of the NGO sector has been a global phenomenon since 1945, and this is particularly relevant for developing and transitional countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Asian countries have hosted various international NGOs from the United States, Britain, Germany, and from other European countries (Mendelson and Glenn, 2002). These NGOs operate in different fields of institutional development, such as supporting the creation of competitive political parties, independent media, and civic advocacy groups, as well as trying to improve environmental conditions and alleviate ethnic conflicts. According to the United Nations an NGO is any non-profit, citizen's group which is organised on a local, national or international level, is task-orientated and driven by people with a common interest (United Nations, 2021). There is no formal

definition of an NGO in Kazakhstani law. National legislation uses the term "non-commercial organisation" to comprise organisations with diverse legal forms, such as institutions, public associations, joint stock companies, consumers' cooperatives, foundations, religious associations, associations of legal entities in the form of an association or union (The Law on Non-Commercial Organisations, 2001).

7.2.1 International NGOs in Kazakhstan

UNESCO encourages its State Parties to involve non-governmental organisations in preserving and safeguarding cultural heritage, especially intangible cultural heritage. The General Assembly has accredited more than 150 NGOs at international level (UNESCO, 2021, m). The Intergovernmental Committee involves these organisations in offering advisory services. There are no Kazakhstan-based UNESCO-accredited NGOs. Nevertheless, there is a Kyrgyzstan-based NGO involved in the safeguarding and promotion of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage, the publicly funded Aigine Cultural Research Centre founded in 2004 (The Aigine Cultural Research Center, 2020). This international NGO set itself the goal of protecting the cultural and natural heritage and diversity of Kyrgyzstan but also is involved in preserving aspects of Kazakhstan's heritage. The majority of the Centre's projects are aimed at the protection of biocultural heritage, with a particular focus on three domains: the natural, spiritual and social aspects and dimensions of sacred sites; the heroic epic *Manas Semetey Seytek*; and small Kyrgyz epics and folk music (The Aigine Cultural Research Center, 2020). Due to the fact that most of the cultural heritage of the Kyrgyz people is closely connected with the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, the Aigine Cultural Research Centre contributes to the safeguarding and promotion of the common cultural heritage of both countries. This NGO is especially actively involved in the inclusion of the common

intangible cultural heritage of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan in UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

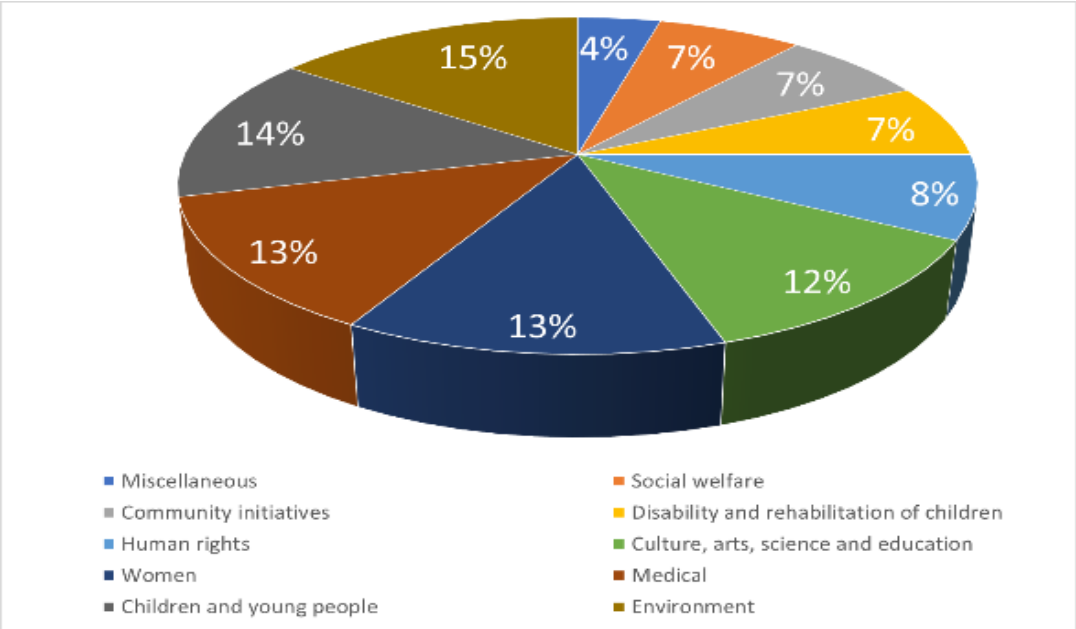
7.2.2 Local NGOs in Kazakhstan

Non-governmental and non-profit local organisations in Kazakhstan began to function and develop during the Soviet period. These officially sanctioned public organisations were partly financially supported by the state budget and partly by membership fees (Popova, 2013). Membership fees in organisations were required as a form of "volunteerism". Large ideological bureaucratic organisations formed alongside small non-governmental organisations, which connected people with similar interests. However, the activities of these organisations were limited to youth, sports, culture and scientific research and mostly controlled by the government (Dyachenko, 2007). By the 1960s, as a result of social movements, new non-governmental organisations started to operate, demanding economic and political changes (Kabdiyeva, 2014). For example, Kazakh students studying in Moscow organised the NGO *Zhas Tulpar* (Young Horse) that focused on reviving the national identity and culture of the Kazakh people (Kudaibergenova, 2017). Gorbachev's policies of the mid-to late-1980s provided the impetus for the non-profit sector to appear and develop (Kabdiyeva, 2013). As a result, eighteen independent public associations and informal groups combined together in 1990 in the capital city of Kazakhstan. The most powerful non-governmental organisations at the national level were *Azat* (Independent) and *Adilet* (Fair), which were actively critical of the totalitarian system of government and demanded the democratization of society (Farmer and Farmer, 2001). In addition, the famous Kazakh writer Olzhas Suleimenov established the NGO *Nevada-Semey* that aimed to improve environmental conditions in Kazakhstan. As a result of the active work of this organisation, the nuclear test site at Semey in north-east Kazakhstan was closed in 1991 (Weinthal and Luong, 2002).

According to scholars Adamson (2002), Brudney and Nezhina (2005) and Weinthal and Luong (2002), the emergence of the non-profit sector in Kazakhstan came to life after the collapse of the Soviet Union. International NGOs guided and trained local NGOs, thus NGOs at the national and local level in Kazakhstan operated within the ideological and institutional structure of the "Western model" (Weinthal and Luong, 2002). Currently, the number of organisations within the non-profit sector is rising. This trend has developed mostly since the Government of Kazakhstan started to support the local NGOs in their activities. In 2003, a State Programme of Government Support of NGOs was adopted, which approved specific government branches, building conditions for the sustainable development of local NGOs, and enhancing their role in working out significant problems through collaboration with, and support from, the Government (Knox and Yessimova, 2015). The Government of Kazakhstan not only reduced the registration fee for NGOs significantly, but also created a fund for NGOs' activities in 2004. The functional activities of local NGOs focused on environmental issues (15%), children and young people (14%) and cultural, arts, science and educational issues (12%) (Figure 80) (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). The First President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, stated that Kazakhstan hosts more non-governmental organisations than any other Central Asia country Personal webpage of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). In 2018, the Ministry of Justice estimated that there are 22,398 officially registered NGOs in the country (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). However, the majority of registered NGOs are inactive or not operating, making 14,349 active NGOs in Kazakhstan (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). Kazakh legislation allows for NGOs which are created specifically to implement state social contracts, and non-commercial organizations which include non-profits such as religious groups

and labour unions. Government officials use these terms interchangeably and which creates difficulties in researching the NGO sector.

Fig. 80 Non-profit Classifications in Kazakhstan (n=18,000)



Source: The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020

7.3 Debates about the operation of local NGOs in Kazakhstan

After declaring its independence, one of the main aims of the Government of Kazakhstan was to build a sense of national identity. In this regard, Kazakh activists engaged in reviving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people which had been disrupted during the Russian colonisation. Heritage activism appeared either in the form of individual activists or in the form of NGOs through which activists' networks organised their activities and pursued their interests (Nazarbayev, 2003). Mostly these local NGOs were concerned with reviving the Kazakh language, oral literature, costumes, traditions, traditional music, sport games and handicrafts. Usually, the leaders of these NGOs were very patriotic and practitioners of the activities they supported. Central to the activities of heritage NGOs are varied and different understandings of the concept of heritage. Interviews with the leaders of heritage NGOs revealed that there is no common

definition of heritage among them. In response to the question of "What exactly is the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people?", the leaders of heritage NGOs answered according to their type of activities. For example, the leaders of NGOs that focused on reviving the Kazakh language defined language and literature as the main component of the Kazakh traditional cultural heritage. Leaders of craft NGOs (see Table 1, n42) defined the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people as "*the unique methods of our ancestors to produce felt, leather, wool and metal products which were significant for the nomadic Kazakhs to survive at Great Steppe in harmony with nature*". All of them referred to the nomadic past of the Kazakh people. Furthermore, some of the heritage NGOs perceive the nomadic heritage of the Kazakh people as the main component of the national identity of contemporary Kazakhstan.

In terms of defining the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, another vital debate among local NGOs is whether to refer to Islamic or Tengrianist identities. As historically the Kazakh people practised both Tengrism and Islam, there has been much discussion and debate among the local NGOs about reviving and restoring Tengrism or Islam to a central place in Kazakh culture and national life (Nurtazina, 2003). Since the Government of Kazakhstan established the nomadic heritage of the Kazakh people as the core element of national identity, many local Kazakh NGO leaders claim that Tengrism represents the traditional religion of the Kazakh nomads, and thus that it should be adopted as the official religion of Kazakhstan. Currently, Islam is the official religion practiced in Kazakhstan, and ethnic Kazakhs are predominantly Sunni Muslims of the Hanafi school. During the Soviet period, the famous Kazakh writer Olzhas Suleimenov, in his book *Az i Ya* (1975), described Tengrism (*Tengriyanstvo*) as the most ancient religion in the world, elaborated as a philosophical teaching four thousand years ago (Suleimenov, 1975). Suleimenov also discussed the possible Turkic origin of the Russian chronicle *The Tale of Igor's Champaign (1185-87)*. The Russian literary

élite therefore criticised Suleimenov's *Az i Ya* for glorifying feudal nomadic culture and for chauvinistic approaches. After declaring independence, a number of Kazakh élites, including Suleimenov, promoted the idea and the heritage of Tengrism as a core element of national identity (Bulutay, 2000). Moreover, one of the followers of this idea, the famous Kazakh writer Murat Auezov, established an NGO called *Rukh-Miras,* with the explicit aim of promoting Tengrism. They created the journal, also called *Rukh-Miras,* which proposed a cultural approach for learning the history of Kazakhstan. According to Auezov, the world is separated into cultures and civilisations and the unique originality of the Kazakh civilisation derives from the Tengrian conception of the world (Bulutay, 2000).

The Tengrist idea of national identity started to take on a political character from 2015. This political character comes from the neighbouring country of Kyrgyzstan. The Kyrgyz local NGO, Tengir-Ordo Association for the Preservation of the National Heritage, aimed to establish Tengrism as a form of national identity (Sarigulov, 2002). The founder of the NGO is Dastan Sarygulov, a Member of Parliament and businessman, one of the richest persons in Kyrgyzstan. Due to Sarygulov's reputation, this NGO was popular not only within the country but also among all Central Asian states (Sarigulov, 2002). The NGO requested the Government of Kyrgyzstan to consider a visit to the Yenisei and the runic steles as a pilgrimage to a holy place for the Kyrgyz people, equivalent to a pilgrimage to Mecca (Laruelle, 2012). Moreover, in order to promote Tengrism not only among the Central Asian states but also among other countries, they organised an international symposium. Inspired by their idea, the Kazakh local NGO Rukh-Miras, which consists mainly of Kazakh writers and poets, demanded that the Government of Kazakhstan revive and restore Tengrism to a central place in Kazakh cultural and national life (Abdakimuhli, 2008). During an interview, a director of one of the local NGOs and a passionate campaigner for the Tengrian revival, stated (see Table 1, n40):

There is no doubt that the Kazakh people should revive and promote Tengrism as it is the belief of our ancestors. Tengrism is a belief without borders and barriers: without a holy text, without a prophet, without canon and prohibitions, without rituals and prayers. Tengrism is a faith of equality, because it does not contain any social and financial exploitation. Nomadism is all about love of nature. Therefore, Tengrism is better suited for the nomadic Kazakhs. One of the focuses of our NGO is to restore the ancient runic script. Orkhonic Turkic is the language of Tengrism, the old language of our ancestors. By reviving and restoring runic script we will be able to restore our ancestor's language. Nowadays, the Government of Kazakhstan aims to shift from Cyrillic alphabet in favour of Latin. We believe that instead of Latin, the Government of Kazakhstan should adopt runic script. This is because all alphabets like Cyrillic, Arabic and Latin are tightly bound with foreign imperialist powers and their cultures. We need to stay away from foreign cultural influence, whether from Russia, the Islamic States, China or the United States of America. These countries are trying to prevent the cultural revival of the Kazakh people. Tengrism has impacted many countries. As Murad Adzhi (the Kazakh and Tatar famous writer) stated, Russia was impacted by Turkic Tengrism before Byzantine Christianity came to their territory. Tengrism has also impacted on Buddhism as well as some Orthodox old believes that have been practiced by Cossacks. Tengrism was begotten in the Altai and the Deshti-i-Kipchak which is the contemporary territory of Kazakhstan, therefore our NGO tries to revive the cultural heritage of our ancestors.

However, all attempts of local NGOs to revive Tengrism as a state religion have been criticised for their nationalistic approaches by the people of Kazakhstan (Laruelle, 2007).

According to another interviewee, who is a state appointment in one of the regions in Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n14):

There are some local NGOs and élites that are aiming to build our national identity through the way of the mentality which occurred in the period when worship of Tengrism was practised. It is very easy to explain the reasons for that. The proponents of this idea are atheists from the Soviet period. Some of their dogmas are similar to the Soviet atheism claim where Islam and Christianity were considered as the tool for creation wars between nations and exploitation of economically disadvantaged people. It is clear that for some of the post-Soviet national élites it is much convenient to follow and promote pseudo religion/faith which does not contain any restrictions and not require any regular rituals and prayers. The whole point of Tengrism is to praise the earthmother (Umai Ana). Therefore, these national élites claim to dismiss all of our traditions and customs which came from the Islamic religion. Moreover, these national élites created local NGOs that aim to revive the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Here, they contradict to themselves by trying to revive the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people which are only related to Tengrism. From my personal point of view, it is impossible to revive the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people by denying most of their past. We know that Islam came to our territory in the eighth century and was officially accepted as the state language in the eleventh century. So, from these periods our ancestors practised Islam and most of cultural traditions and customs refer to this religion. Moreover, it should be noted that although Islam remains dominant over Tengrism, most of the religious traditions of Tengrism remain interrelated and mixed with Islamic traditions. In other words, our ancestors created "Kazakh Islam" by mixing some features of Tengrism to Islamic religious traditions. As an illustration, one of the cultural traditions of the Kazakh people that still exist – Otqa mai quyu (putting oil into the flame). When the mother of the groom welcomes her new daughter-in-low by pouring a scoop of oil into the flame and heating her hands over the fire and stroking the face of bride. This tradition of the Kazakhs came from Tengrism religious traditions. So, again it is

impossible for the local NGOs to revive the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people by denying those that related to Islam or Tengrism, because they are interrelated and mixed.

Members of the population of Kazakhstan claimed on social media that the Government of Kazakhstan should stop the revival of Tengrism in 1995. Advocates of Tengrism had demanded the expulsion of Russians and all ethnic Slavs from Kazakhstan (Sarigulov, 2002). It was also claimed on social media that proponents of Tengrism try to promote their faith by rejecting Islam and Christianity (Abdakimuhli, 2008). Moreover, some local NGOs and national élites have attempted to put Tengrism on the same level as World religions like Islam and Christianity. The revival of Tengrism as a state religion contradicts the multicultural policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as Islam and Christianity are the main religions of ethnic groups living in the country (Abdakimuhli, 2008). In addition, the concept of reviving Tengrism contradicts the multicultural policy of the Government of Kazakhstan. This is because advocates of Tengrism claim to distance the country from foreign influences, especially from Western and Islamic countries. Overall, the attempts of local NGOs to revive Tengrism as a state religion and national ideology could not succeed as it is the concern of only certain nationalist intellectual élites.

7.4 The activities of local NGOs in reviving and safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people

Nevertheless, there are a number of local NGOs which contribute to reviving and safeguarding the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. These local NGOs have a generally "good" reputation among the local population. The oldest among these NGOs is the Kazakh Society of Safeguarding of the Historical Monuments and Cultural Sites, formed during the Soviet period (Esim, 1996). It was established to protect historical monuments and manage the implementation

of legislation which referred to cultural heritage. In 2007 these obligations were shifted to governmental agencies. The Kazakh Society of Safeguarding of the Historical Monuments and Cultural Sites focused on advertising and promoting the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan and distributing information on historical monuments, historical and natural sites, and national symbols.

However, the most famous and well-managed local NGO focused on reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is the Craftsmanship Union of Kazakhstan. This newly organised NGO is aimed at supporting craftsmen and managing training programmes and exhibitions (OpenAlmaty, 2019). This Union has offices in seven regions of Kazakhstan and is nowadays the main NGO for the revival, preservation, support and promotion of traditional crafts in Kazakhstan. This national NGO closely collaborates with the UNESCO Kazakhstan Office to inscribe elements of the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) of Kazakhstan on UNESCO's ICH list. Apart from safeguarding and promoting intangible aspects of the cultural heritage of Kazakh people, this NGO aims to improve the status and standards of living of craftsmen, to develop craft businesses, and to increase the quality and range of craft products (OpenAlmaty, 2019). The Craftsmanship Union of Kazakhstan is responsible for the training and co-ordinating of craftsmen as well as for the organisation of exhibitions, fairs and craft festivals. One of the main achievements of the Union was the establishment of the traditional crafts centre Qazaq-Oner (Kazakh Art) (Figure 81) in 2017 in the city of Almaty (Visit Almaty, 2019). The Centre takes up 800-square meters and features a shopping gallery, workshops, a multimedia centre of traditional music and a restaurant of national cuisine (Visit Almaty, 2019). It brings together artisans from Almaty and those who are committed to preserving traditional crafts. According to the Head of this NGO and Centre (see Table 1, n42):

The establishment of this Centre was my dream for more than ten years. These kinds of Centres exist in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan which contribute to the reviving of the nomadic traditional cultural heritage. According to the CACSA (Central Asia Crafts Support Association), in 2005 Kazakhstan took the last place in the development and preservation of traditional folk crafts in Central Asia. In this regard, the following should be noted. Until the middle of the twentieth century, the majority of the population of the countryside in Kazakhstan practiced traditional needlework, such as felting, carpet weaving, and today the custodians of this heritage can be counted on a few fingers. The number of followers of traditional needlework has significantly decreased due to the intensive process of urbanization, the mass outflow of youth to the cities, the decline in demand for handicrafts for various reasons. The demand for handicraft products arises, in most cases, from foreign guests. So, at the end of the last century, unique Kazakh carpets were bought up by foreigners, and then exported outside the country. If earlier such carpets could be seen in the decoration of almost every house, today they can be found, mainly, only in museums. And the age of women engaged in traditional weaving of carpets, which has been preserved, mainly in the southern regions of Kazakhstan, exceeds 60 to 70 years. In this regard, the role and activities of the Centre Qazaq-Oner is crucial. This is because, as well as seeing all the beautiful finished products, visitors can actually watch the artists at work … and even take part in master classes (Figure 82), including one on how to make a traditional yurt. Currently, approximately twenty different types of Kazakh traditional crafts are represented. In the future we are going to expand the Centre by involving other practitioners of Kazakh traditional craft. Our Centre Qazaq-Oner was opened with the financial support of the Government in order to develop the national tourism.

Fig. 81 Traditional craft centre – *Qazaq-Oner*



Source: from the interviewee

Fig. 82 Master class at the traditional craft centre – *Qazaq-Oner,* 2017



Source: from the interviewer

Another well-known and active NGO at the national level is The Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation which was established in 2011. The aim of this NGO is to support and implement the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in reviving and safeguarding the traditional nomadic culture of the Kazakh people (The Facebook page of the NGO Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation, 2019). According to the Head of "The Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation" (see Table1, n40):

Nowadays, our NGO has become the bridge between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in preserving and reviving the shared nomadic cultural heritage. "The Heritage of Nomadic Civilization" International Public Fund became the official partner of the World Nomad Games. The World Nomad Games are an international sport competition dedicated to traditional sports that were practiced by the Central Asian nomads. Nomadic sports, intelligence games, displays of strength and pure showmanship are all showcased in a festival that has been dubbed the "Olympics for nomads". In 2014 the first World Nomad Games was held in Cholpon Ata on the shores of Issyk Kul, the second largest saline lake in the world. In 2014, the second the World Nomad Games was organised again in Cholpon Ata, attracting 1200 competitors from over 62 countries. Kazakhstan was took part in both games and was among leading countries (Figure 83). Our NGO promoted these games in Kazakhstan and promoted Kazakhstan traditional cultural heritage in Kyrgyzstan during the games. There is no doubt that the World Nomad Games are the most progressive and exciting destination in Central Asia. We are proud that we were the initiators of the establishment of the "Kazakh traditional clothes day" in 2015. Unfortunately, as a result of Russian colonisation and modernisation, Kazakh traditional clothes are only worn by Kazakhs once per year, during the celebration of Nauryz festival. In order to popularise Kazakh traditional costumes all citizens of Kazakhstan who consider themselves patriots wear Kazakh traditional costumes at least one day of the year and go to work, school and universities, and other public places like this less than a month after the action

was held. According to its results, it was clear that a new holiday of clothes is needed by the people, although it was supported in different regions in different ways. Unfortunately, relatively few participants of the action were in the north of the country - in Petropavlovsk, Pavlodar and Kostanay, in the east - in Ustkamenogorsk, and, strangely enough, in the south - in Shymkent and Taraz. There is still work to be done in these regions. Perhaps the problem is that there was too little time for mass notification of the people. But at the same time, the western cities - Aktau, Atyrau and Uralsk gathered the holiday of Kazakh costume with great enthusiasm: people dressed in Kazakh clothes alone, with families and friends, and whole groups. As a result, 24th of April is established as the "Kazakh traditional clothes day" (*Figure 84*).

Fig. 83 The Kazakh delegation at The World Nomad Games, 2014, Kyrgyzstan



Source: from the interviewee

However, after observing the official Facebook page of this NGO "The Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation", it seems as if their main aim is to commercialise the

nomadic heritage (Facebook page of the NGO Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation, 2019). This NGO promotes offers in organisation of the nomadic games and festivals in various private events. The Kazakh traditional horse games like *Zhamby Atu, Kokpar, Qyz quu, and Tenge Ilu* have become popular attractions in Kazakh events. During the winter period, hunting with birds of prey and dogs became a popular offer by this NGO. Therefore, it is not clear what their main priority is: either safeguard the Kazakh traditional nomadic heritage or to promote their business.

Fig. 84 Celebration of "Kazakh traditional clothes day" in 2016, Almaty



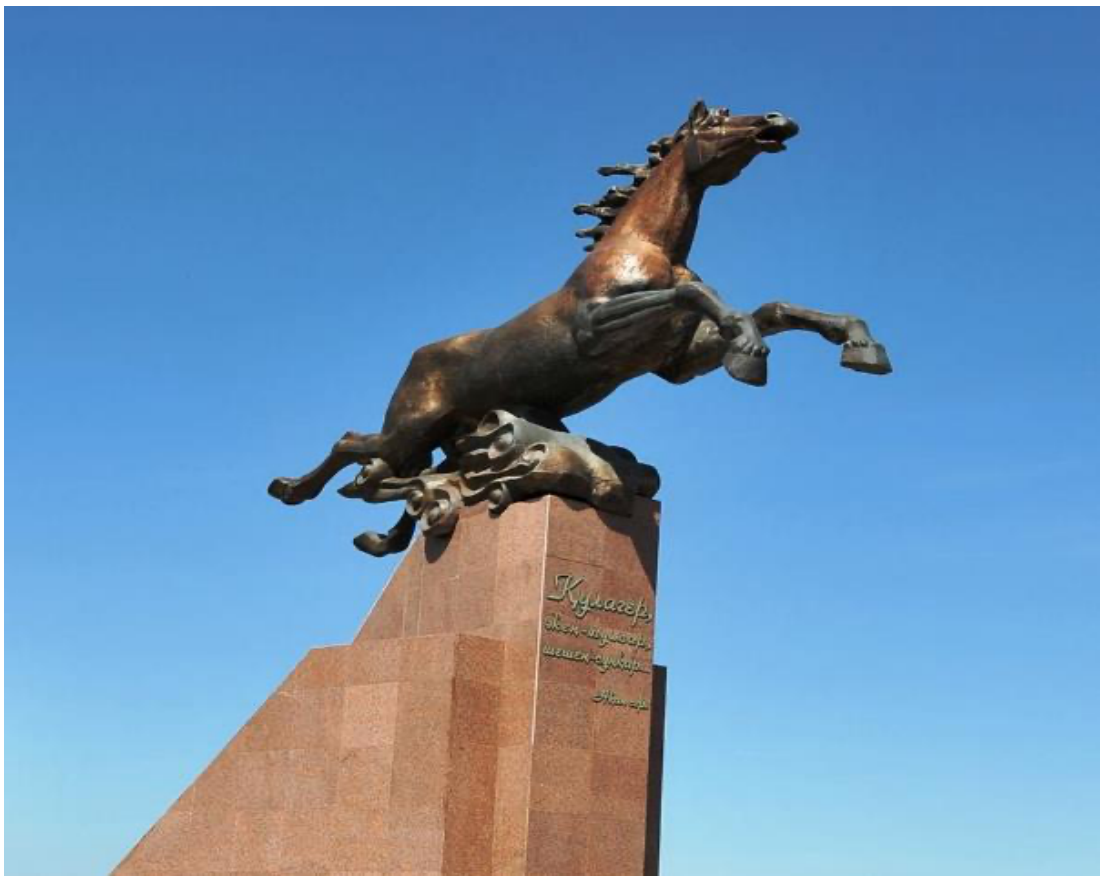
Source: from the interviewee

The local NGO, the Federation of Equestrian Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan, aims to revive and preserve traditional horse games which are now perceived as equestrian sports. In order to achieve this, the Federation is focused on bringing together all the athletes, professionals, and fans of horse-riding sports and to achieve the highest sporting results (The Federation of Equestrian Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). This NGO has been supported and recognised by the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Committee on Sports and Physical Education of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of Kazakhstan (The Federation of Equestrian Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). The Federation encourages the younger generation to be involved in horse-riding sports. It also organises workshops and training to improve the skills of judges and stewards with the aid of local and foreign experts, and to assign sporting ranks (see Table1, n38).

Undoubtedly, in the matter of preserving the national identity of any people, national sports play an important role. After gaining independence, they began to gradually revive in Kazakhstan. Today, national sport competitions are held annually in the country, some of them have already acquired the status of international sports. Most of these national sports are based on horse riding. The horse played a significant role for the nomadic Kazakhs. It served as a loyal friend and a means of transportation. Without horses it was impossible to protect our land from invasions, to guard a herd of cattle, to woo brides and participate in national games. At the same time, horses saved nomadic Kazakhs from hunger and thirst. However, it should be noted that we eat horse meat specially bred for this purpose. Thoroughbred horses like kazanate (horses of heroes) were always cherished by Kazakhs for the horse riding, competitions and national games. Today the development of national sports is at the initial stage. State support for the development of national sports is still insufficient. The state structures do not allocate funds for these purposes. Activities are mainly carried out at the expense

of sponsors. As an illustration, one of the achievements of our NGO is the establishment of a monument to well-known Kazakh steppe horse "Qulager" on the Astana-Kokshetau autobahn (Figure 85). Qulager who had no equal in races once belonged to the famous eighteenth-century poet Aqan-Sery. The horse became the pride of the whole Kazakh people. The construction of the monument was financially supported by the local people who are indifferent to the culture of its own culture. Although the plan for the monument was approved by the Government of Kazakhstan, it was not financially supported by the government. Construction of the "Qulager" monument right here has clear advantages as the tourist routes begin from the Burabai resort zone. On the way back, the monument will greet and welcome visitors to the new capital of Kazakhstan. Also, the vast area around the monument allows organising various horse-racing events such as racing, qyz-quu, alaman-baige and etc.

Fig. 85 The mounument of *Qulager,* Nur-Sultan, 2017



Source: from the interviewee

7.5 Ethnic Discontent around the Operation of Local NGOs

The cultural revival in Kazakhstan after the declaration of independence has led to the emergence of many local NGOs whose official purpose is the revival of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. While the promotion of Kazakh heritage has been used to assert the titular nation's legitimacy and hegemony over the territory of Kazakhstan, other ethnic groups have also tried to create NGOs to develop their own culture and traditions. Yet, the creation of local NGOs with the aim of reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has provoked some discontent from other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan (Moldabekov, 2003). This is because, during the first years following independence, the Government of Kazakhstan rejected the registrations of some NGOs which were focused on the promotion of the culture of ethnic minority groups in Kazakhstan (Ivanova, 2014). This mostly applied to Russian and Cossack-based NGOs that aimed to promote the continuation of Russian and Soviet Union style politics. As an illustration, one of the most famous NGOs from the Soviet period, The Communist Party, was refused the right to re-register in 1992 due to its open hostility to Kazakh independence (Ivanova, 2014). In the same year, the NGO named *Edinstvo* (Unity), which was established to advance Russian culture, also had its registration rejected. This NGO was against the establishment of Kazakh as the state language and claimed the supremacy of the Russian culture and language over others (Zardykhan, 2004). Consequently, *Edinstvo* was denied for its chauvinistic and Russian nationalistic approaches. In 1990, a group of activists in Pavlodar established an NGO, *Slaviya*, with the aim of promoting Slavic cultural heritage (Zardykhan, 2004). After the declaration of Kazakh independence, this NGO moved their focus to politics. A monument of Ermak, the Cossack conqueror of northern Kazakhstan, was demolished by the Government of Kazakhstan in 1992 (Yerokhin, 2013) (Figure 86). The NGO *Slaviya* called on the Government of Kazakhstan to explain the reasons for

demolishing this sculpture and other monuments and sculptures from the Soviet period. Moreover, this NGO organised a petition with sixteen thousand signatures requiring the recognition of Russian as the state language (Derluguian and Cipko, 1997). Consequently, the Ministry of Justice refused to register this non-governmental organisation.

Fig. 86 A monument of Ermak



Source: Vesti.kz (2021)

As a result of the refusal to register NGOs that focused on promoting Slavic cultural heritage, the leaders of these NGOs decided to create a Republican orgaisation. They created a new NGO named Lad-ROSD (*Respublikanskoe obshestvennoe slavyanskoe dvizhenie* (The Slavic Republican non-governmental organisation) in 1992 (Laruelle, 2018, a). Its aims are: to safeguard the ethnically distinct culture and language of Slavs; advance and reinforce democracy; and defend the political, social, and cultural interests of the Slavic population in Kazakhstan. Lad-ROSD believed that by being involved in various political parties, they would be able to achieve their main goals (Laruelle, 2018, a). Accordingly, it was involved in the activities of several democratic opposition parties such as the Republican People's Party of A. Kazhegeldin (*Respublicanskaya narodnaya partiya Kazakhstana*), Citizen (Azamat), the Communist Party (*Kommunisticheskaya partiya Kazakshatana*), and the

Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (*Demokraticheskii vybor Kazakhstana*) (Ziegler, 2010). Although the Ministry of Justice officially refused to register Lad-ROSD, it started to develop throughout the whole country in 1992. As a main Slavic non-governmental organisation in Kazakhstan, Lad-ROSD had 12 branches, 400 activists and nearly 20, 000 members (Peyrouse, 2007). However, it was not centralised, and each branch had its own goals and objectives. Moreover, regional Lad-ROSD branches were prosecuted for the possession of weapons and drug trafficking, as well as for fiscal matters (Peyrouse, 2007). Due to these accusations, as well as for the promotion of Slavic culture and traditions against the declarations of Kazakh cultural survival and sovereignty, four main leaders of this non-governmental organisation were arrested in 1993 (Zardykhan, 2004). In this way, the oppositional attitudes of Lad-ROSD have been extinguished by the Government of Kazakhstan. It was the only way to stop violence and fights against territorial integrity, sovereignty and independendence of Kazakhstan.

Nevertheless, the Cossacks were the most problematic ethnic group for the Government of Kazakhstan as they were outspoken opponents of Kazakh independence. The Cossacks attempted a "rebirth" of the past by advocating the revival of Russian supremacy. In 1991, in order to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of the unification of Ural Cossacks and the Russian state, a massive demonstration occurred in Kazakhstan where Russian flags were openly waved (Derluguian and Cipko, 1997). The purpose of the demonstration was to establish a Cossack Autonomous Republic within the territory of Kazakhstan. As a result, some Cossack NGOs were denied registration by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Only in 1994 did the Ministry register three Cossack NGOs (Derluguian and Cipko, 1997). The Ministry clarified that these NGOs were not allowed to constitute a military grouping and were only to preserve and promote their cultural heritage (Alexandrov, 1999). However, some

Cossack NGOs took part in many separatist movements. In 1994, one of the registered Cossack NGOs of Eastern Kazakhstan (*Soyuz Kazakov Vostochnogo Kazakhstana*) led by Ataman Cherepanov demanded that a referendum to join Russia be organised because autonomy was denied to them (Yerokhin, 2013). After this statement, the Government of Kazakhstan took action to prevent this movement, and the Ataman fled to Russia to avoid imprisonment. Another scandal involving a separatist movement occurred in 1999 (Yerokhin, 2013). A Cossack NGO, based in East Kazakhstan, led by the Russian citizen Victor Kazimirchuk, also known as Pugachev, tried to seize power in Eastern Kazakhstan in order to establish the republic of "Russian Altay" by armed means (Commercio, 2004). This NGO had been linked with the Cossack NGOs in Russian Siberia and demonstrated a strong separatist tendency. Although they had financial support from Moscow, their movement failed. All leaders of the movement, including Pugachev, were sentenced to prison (Commercio, 2004). The Cossack NGOs had, then, the potential to expand into a serious political force. The Government of Kazakhstan consequently treated these NGOs as "fifth columns" whose devotion was not towards Kazakhstan but towards Russia.

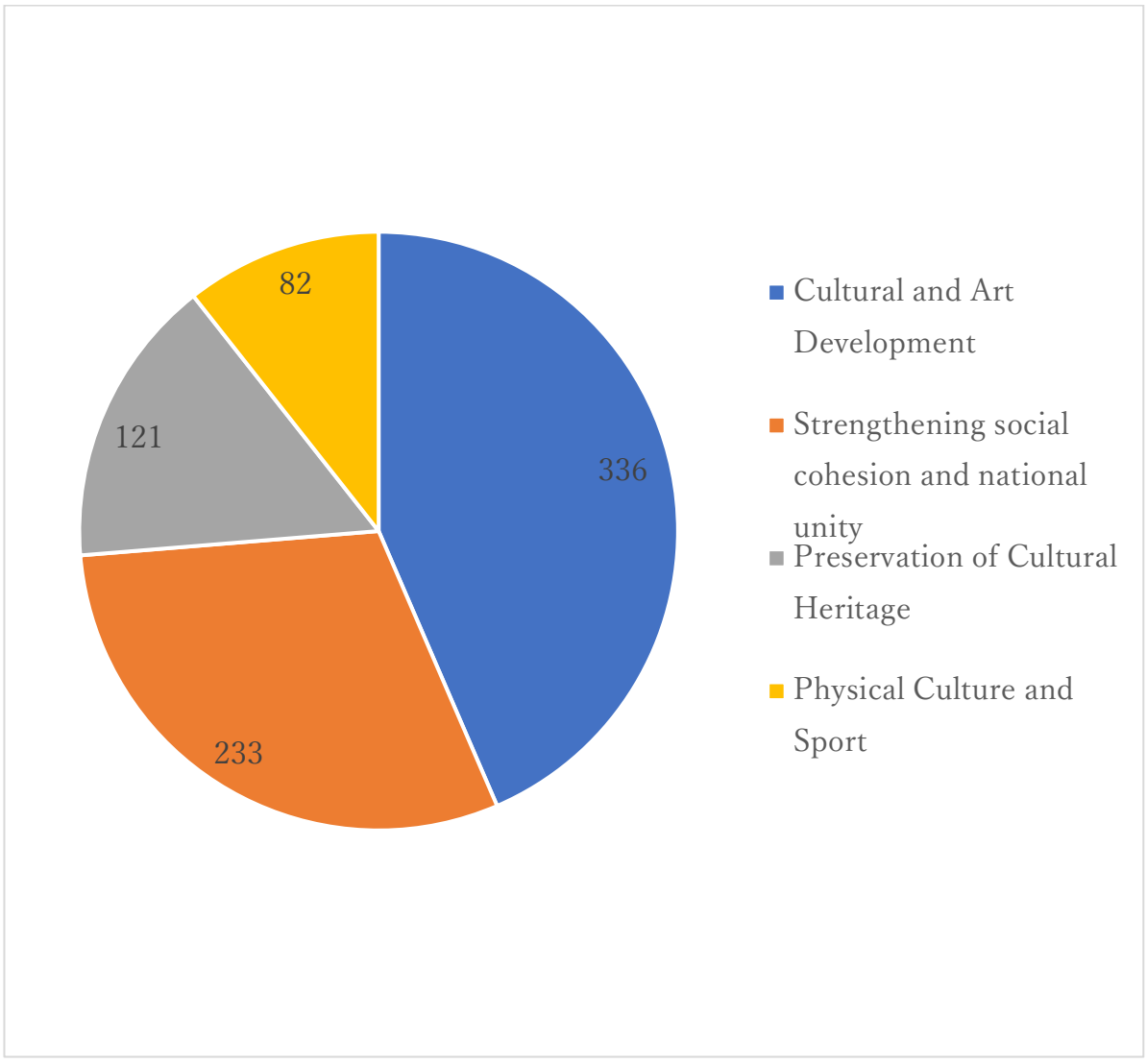
It should be noted here that the Government of Kazakhstan denies official registration to any NGO that promotes or practices racial, ethnic, social or religious intolerance, makes public appeals for the violent overthrow of the constitutional regime, or challenges the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan. This law also applies to Kazakh-based NGOs. For instance, one of the popular local NGOs in the 1990s, *Alash*, was closed by the Government of Kazakhstan for propagating a type of Islamic fundamentalism and demanding the expulsion of all Russians from Kazakhstan (Dyachenko, 2007). Another Kazakh NGO, *Zheltoqsan,* also had its registration rejected due to its nationalistic approach (Dyachenko, 2007). In particular the leaders of this NGO proposed to deport all Russians and Cossacks from the country. Most NGOs of minor ethnic groups

which have been banned by the Government of Kazakhstan have challenged the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan.

The number of NGOs that are focused on the preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Slavic population is growing in Kazakhstan. According to official statistics from the Ministry of Justice, there are 127 NGOs that focus on safeguarding and promoting Slavic cultural heritage (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). Overall, there are 772 registered local NGOs that aim to preserve cultural heritage (Figure 87), 313 of which are concerned with reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). As can be seen from the graph (Figure 88), in comparison with other ethnic groups, the NGOs focused on protecting and promoting the cultural heritage of the Slavic populations are among the highest in number. Even in the 1990s, during the creation of a political policy towards NGOs, several Slavic NGOs were officially registered (Melvin, 1993). The Russian Community (*Russkaya obshina*) is the most popular and powerful NGO that promotes the cultural heritage of the Slavic populations. This NGO became a member of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan through being state employees working on the country's nationality policies, supervising different cultural activities without political claims (Zardykhan, 2004). The reasons why leaders of ethnic organisations join the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan are not limited to their willingness to avoid conflict; there are political and economic incentives for them to maintain the status quo. By supporting the current regime and contributing to its efforts to advertise apparent ethnic representation at home and abroad, minority élites are permitted limited but defined access to power and economic resources. The Association of Russian, Slavic and Cossack Organisations of Kazakhstan (*Associatsiya Russkih, Slavyanskih I Kazachih Organizacii Kazakhstana*) is also one of the NGOs that closely collaborates with the Government of Kazakhstan in

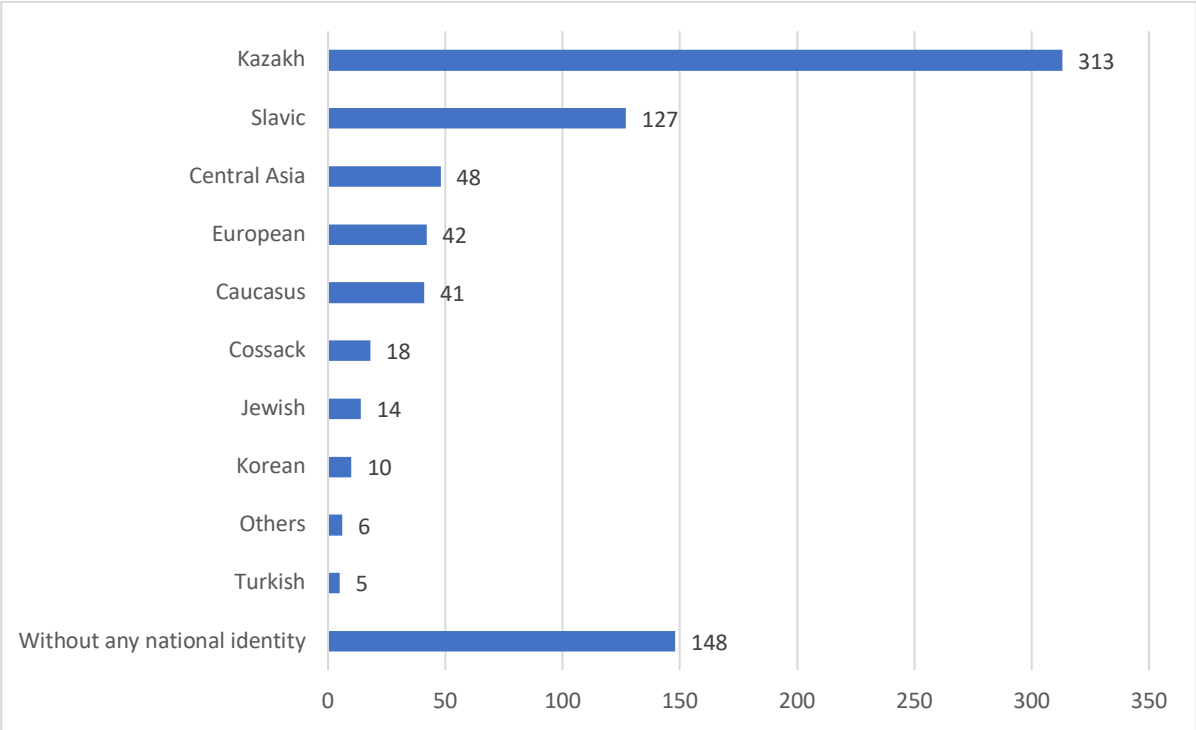
strengthening the cultural development of Slavic populations living within the country (Peyrouse, 2008). Another popular Russian NGO called Orthodox Citizens of Kazakhstan was created by Archi-Episcope Alesandr (Podoprigora, 2003). This NGO mostly works on promoting Church views, encouraging Russians to be involved in religious services and arranging charitable activities. Therefore, it can be claimed that there is no discrimination in the establishment and development of Slavic NGOs in Kazakhstan.

Fig. 87 Types of activities of local NGOs that aim to preserve the cultural heritage (overall number - 772)



Source: The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020

Fig. 88 Local NGOs that aim to preserve the cultural heritage according to nationality and ethnicity



Source: The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020

The Government of Kazakhstan welcomes applications from all ethnic groups to create and develop their NGOs. The main requirement for them is not to publicly appeal for the violent overthrow of the constitutional regime or challenge the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan. As can be seen from the graph (Figure 88), there are Korean, Jewish, Caucasian, Turkish, European and Central Asian-based NGOs that are focused on safeguarding and advancing the cultural heritage of their ethnic groups (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). Most of these NGOs contribute to the revival and promotion of their cultural heritage in Kazakhstan. As the figures show, there are 10 local NGOs that operate in order to develop and safeguard the cultural heritage of Korean people living in Kazakhstan (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). The Republican association of Korean Cultural Centres of Kazakhstan established the NGO Association of Koreans of Kazakhstan (*Associaciya Koreicev Kazakhstana*) in 1995 (Natsuko, 2001). It aims to encourage local Koreans to learn their native

language, as most Koreans in Kazakhstan have little knowledge of the Korean language. According to official statistics, the Koreans' proficiency in their native language constituted 25.8% in 1999 (Oka, 2002). This NGO also conducts various cultural and educational activities that impact on safeguarding Korean cultural traditions. The Association of Koreans of Kazakhstan collaborates with the Government and is actively involved in the activities of the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan (Natsuko, 2001). The creation and development of local NGOs concerned with safeguarding and advancing the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups is not only encouraged by the Government of Kazakhstan but also sometimes financially supported by the Government in the form of various grants. This creates a certain dependency on the Government.

7.6 NGOs and Representation of the Country as a Multiethnic Country

Western scholars have, however, criticised the emergence of the NGOs of minor ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan as no more than a tool for the popular representation of the country as a multiethnic country (Davenel, 2009; Diener, 2004; Eitzen, 1999). According to the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the country defined itself as a multiethnic state, and created inter-ethnic and inter-confessional tolerance as an important part of the image it presents to the international community (The Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020 b). Therefore, the appearance of local NGOs concerned with the development of the cultural heritage of minor ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan is crucial for the Government of Kazakhstan. Furthermore, these NGOs are especially important for the government of Kazakhstan during the celebration republican festivals such as Independence Day, *Nauryz,* Victory Day and the Unity of People of Kazakhstan Day. All of these festivals promote interethnic diversity and praise President Nazarbayev for his unique inter-ethnic

policy. In order to demonstrate this to the people of Kazakhstan and the international community, all of these NGOs have to be involved in the celebration of republican festivals (Eitzen, 1999). For example, all of these NGOs participate through performing their traditional dance songs and serving dishes in national costume. Usually, the Kazakh performers demonstrate their traditional dances and songs first, followed by Russian and other minor ethnic groups. The order of performances follows the demographic weight of each ethnic group in Kazakhstan's society (Eitzen, 1999). These performances by local NGOs of minor ethnic groups are strictly controlled by cultural Departments. Moreover, the establishment and actions of these NGOs are closely watched by local authorities. All these NGOs not only have to register with the Ministry of Justice but also are regularly checked by the Committee for National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Davenel, 2012). In addition, most of these NGOs work closely with the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan and support the Presidential policies on national issues.

Therefore, since their activities are highly controlled by the Government local NGOs of minor ethnic groups in Kazakhstan are not non-governmental at all. Moreover, the functions of these NGOs can be linked with "folklorisation of the national culture" (Davenel, 2012). Thus, the development of local NGOs of minor ethnic groups is important for the Government of Kazakhstan to demonstrate its brand image as a multinational country.

7.7 Local NGOs and Inter-Ethnic Conflicts

Another issue related to the activities of NGOs that focus on reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is that sometimes they create inter-ethnic conflicts in Kazakhstan. These inter-ethnic conflicts mostly relate to the activities of NGOs working on reviving and advancing the cultural heritage of minor ethnic groups. Although there are no political movements among NGOs of

Kazakhs and minor ethnic groups, there has been much conflict and debate in social media (Moldabekov, 2003). Most of these conflicts and debates relate to the Cossack NGOs that operate in the country. According to the Ministry of Justice, there are 41 NGOs that actively work on reviving and safeguarding the cultural heritage of the Cossacks (The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). The relationship between the Kazakh and Cossack ethnic groups in Kazakhstan is very complicated. For Central Asian peoples, including Kazakhs, Cossacks symbolise the Russian colonial past. In 1861, Cossack settlers were moved to the northern Kazakh steppe and served as frontiersmen to the Tsarist army (Sapunov, 2001). When the borders were secured, the Cossacks were combined with Russia's regular military service (Sapargaliyev, 1966). As they were faithful to the tsar, they served as special shock forces to suppress the military activities of the Kazakh people. Therefore, Cossack performances with military symbols have often evoked negative feelings among the Kazakhs.

The leader of one famous NGO who has been interviewed in this research stated that the establishment and development of the Cossack NGOs is very dangerous for Kazakhstan. He points out (see Table 1, n40):

The contemporary Cossack revival since 1990s has been one of the most complicated and controversial socio-political phenomena in Kazakhstan. After the declaration of independence, Cossacks living in Kazakhstan claimed to re-establishment of the Russian power over the country. The Cossacks revival movement came from the strengths of Cossack descendants interested in exploring more about Cossack history, culture and traditions. So, Cossacks started to meet in so called "military-historical clubs" to learn more about their history and culture. Afterwards, the leaders of these clubs created NGOs in Kazakhstan to reinforce and shape their identity through reviving historical materials and reviving their traditional social and cultural way of life. Everybody knows that the

main aim of these NGOs is the rehabilitation of Cossacks in military, social and cultural terms. I have heard several times from the Cossack NGOs leaders that they are proud of their ancestors who were colonisers. They are proud of Ermak and the epic achievements of the Cossacks in conquering this territory. There have been several scandals and debate between Kazakhs NGOs and Cossacks in media platform. The most recent scandal occurred in 2015 in Eastern Kazakhstan when the Cossacks reintroduced their custom of wearing the traditional military dress of the pre-revolutionary Cossack voiska (military) from which their ancestors descended (Figure 89 and 90). Their military uniform scared local people as full uniform also contained a traditional Cossack sabre, or shashka and the short Cossack whip, or nagaika. According to the legislation of Kazakhstan and in general, in any self-respecting country, wearing a military uniform that does not conform to the model of the military uniform of this country is prohibited. Despite this fact, the Cossacks who settled in Eastern Kazakhstan calmly walked in their military dress, and even with sabres in their belts. Due to this scandal, the Ministry of Justice organised the meeting with the Kazakhs and Cossacks NGOs. Although after that meeting, the wearing of military dress was prohibited by the Government of Kazakhstan, it is still common to see the Cossacks wearing their military dress. From my personal point of view, the establishment and activities of Cossacks NGOs should be banned by the Government of Kazakhstan.

Fig. 89 Cossacks wearing the traditional military dress of the pre-revolutionary Cossack *voiska* (military)



Source: from the interviewee

Fig. 90 Cossack boy wearing the traditional military dress of the pre-revolutionary Cossack *voiska* (military)

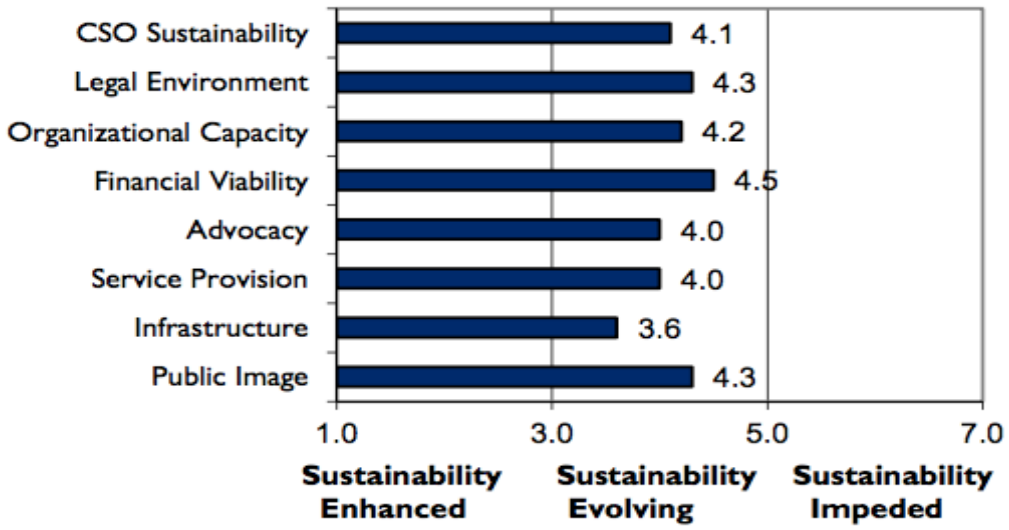


Source: from the interviewee

7.8 Challenges to the Operation of Local NGOs in Kazakhstan

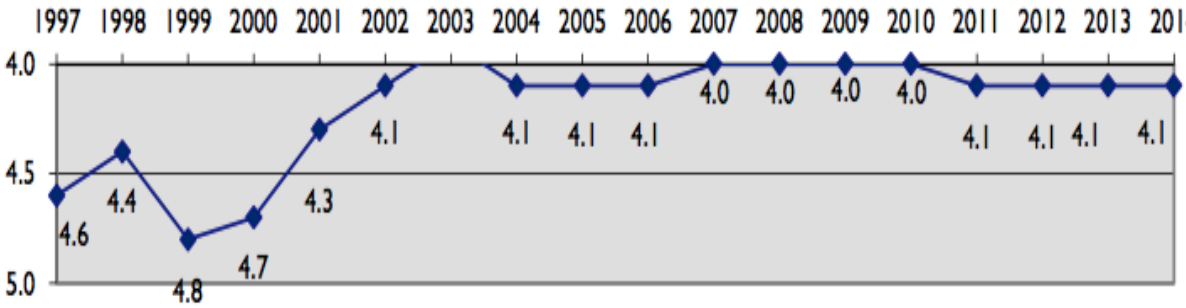
There are many challenges that local NGOs face in operating and implementing their programmes in Kazakhstan. The rest of the registered local NGOs cannot achieve sustainable development. NGO sustainability refers to the capacity of the NGO sector to effectively function and be viable in the long-term. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) created the NGO Sustainability Index to assess the level of a country's NGO development and sustainability. The index employs a 7-point scale (ranging from 1.0 to 7.0); with 7.0 indicating a poor level of development, and 1.0 indicating a very advanced NGO sector (USAID, 2020 a). This index analyses and assesses scores according to seven interrelated dimensions: legal environment, organisational capacity, financial viability, advocacy, service provision, infrastructure, and public image. The composite NGO sustainability index for Kazakhstan in 2014 (the latest one) was 4.1, indicating a medium level of development (Figure 91 and 92) (USAID, 2020 b). According to the report, there is little chance for NGO inputs into the policy-making process at a governmental level, as demonstrated by NGOs' limited success with engagement on specific issues (USAID, 2020 b).

Fig. 91 2014 Scores for Kazakhstan for NGO viability



Source: USAID, 2020, a

Fig. 92 Kazakhstan's NGO Sustainability Index (1997-2014)



Source: USAID, 2020, b

7.8.1 Financing

The most significant challenge facing NGOs in Kazakhstan is funding and financial viability. The Government of Kazakhstan, through various grants, provides financial support for the activities of certain local NGOs. These social grants are the main source of funding for NGOs (Kabdiyeva, 2013). However, only a limited number of local NGOs receive these social grants. In addition, social grants tend to be short-term and cannot support NGOs in the implementation of long-term programmes. International organisations also financially support Kazakh NGOs through social grants (Kabdiyeva, 2013). Still, these social grants are also only for short-term projects. Consequently, in order to achieve long-term viability and financial sustainability, the country's NGOs have to provide private services. As an illustration, one local NGO that has been involved in this research, "The Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation", provides private services for the organisation of private events (Facebook page of the NGO Heritage of Nomadic Civilisation, 2019). It offers to organise various performances such as music, dance, traditional games, horse games and racing, and hunting with birds of prey. It should be noted that the prices are quite inexpensive. The leaders/directors of heritage NGOs promote not only the roles and activities of their NGOs but also

their private services via social media. Thus, it is hard to identify whether they offer private services to implement the social programmes or vice versa. It can be clearly stated, however, that there is a tendency here towards the commercialisation of cultural heritage in Kazakhstan.

7.8.2 Management

Another major challenge for the development of local NGOs in Kazakhstan is the lack of professional and skilled managers as well as qualified staff and volunteers. According to an Asian Development Bank report, only 31% of local NGOs in Kazakhstan have boards of directors, and those that do mostly established them to meet the requirements of international funding agencies (The Asian Development Bank, 2020). Local NGOs fail to understand the importance of having boards of directors and how this impacts the achievement of development goals. As Peterson (2010) states, a board of directors makes up the policymaking body of any organisation and contributes to developing a coherent and long-term strategy. Therefore, an effective board directs and influences organisational performance. The Asian Development Bank reports that, although some well-educated and experienced staff can be found in local NGOs, most of local NGOs in Kazakhstan suffer from a lack of professional and qualified staff (The Asian Development Bank, 2020). The report indicates that the main reason for this is lack of funding. Due to the economic instability of Kazakhstan, professional and skilled staff have to leave their jobs in favour of better paid sectors. In addition, several surveys conducted by the Kazakhstan Centre of Public Development Accord, the United Nations Development Programme office in Kazakhstan, and the United Nations Volunteer programme have outlined the lack of volunteers as one of the main barriers to the development of local NGOs in Kazakhstan. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the population of Kazakhstan is notwell informed about the activities of NGOs and does not fully understand why society

needs them (Weinthal and Luong, 2002). In the eyes of the majority of the population of Kazakhstan, NGOs are “money-takers” or “spiders of Western countries” (Aleksandrov, *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, the Government of Kazakhstan does not consider volunteer activity as a strong, skilled resource that is crucial for solving social problems and for getting people involved in civil society (Brudney and Nezhina, 2005). Thus, the status of volunteers is not defined or legalised in Kazakhstan. Consequently, volunteering consists of students looking to gain work experience and improve their CVs (Brudney and Nezhina, 2005).

The research findings of the United Nations Development Programme office in Kazakhstan and the Asian Development Bank indicated that Kazakhstani people tend not to understand clearly the "non-profit" concept as it is understood in the Western countries. There is no trust in the activities of non-governmental and non-profit organisations, as the most of them are financially supported by Western countries. Especially during the period of 1993-2000, a significant amount of money was disbursed by Western countries to the organisation of NGOs in Kazakhstan (Mendelson and Glenn, 2002). As an illustration, the local NGO Our Heritage Foundation started its operation in 2001. It was founded by craftsmen to institutionalise the achievements of the Craftsmanship Development Programme started by the Government (OpenAlmaty, 2019). It was financially supported by the Foundation Eurasia of Central Asia and the American multinational energy corporation Chevron. Although Our Heritage Foundation facilitated the formation of the Union of Craftsman in Kazakhstan in 2012 and contributed to the annual training and national competitive exhibition *Sheber* (Craftsmanship), local people were sceptical about the operation of this organisation (OpenAlmaty, 2019). The people of Kazakhstan do not deeply understand the motivations of both international and local non-governmental organisations. The same question was asked for all the respondents whilst conducting interviews: “Does Kazakhstan need the support and operations of

NGOs at national and international levels to revive and safeguard the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people". The majority of respondents answered "No" because they believe that Western-based NGOs promote their own identities and cultural ideas at the expense of Kazakhstan. Moreover, the majority of local people who are practicing and promoting the cultural heritage of Kazakh people do not know or understand what the non-governmental and non-profit organisations are.

As the Head of "Traditional Sports of the Kazakh People" of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan pointed out (see Table 1, n2):

The cultural heritage and identity of the Kazakh people was shaped and damaged during the Russian colonisation and the Soviet period. Only after gaining of independence, the Government of Kazakhstan with tremendous support from local people tried to revive and promote the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. There is no doubt that we need to revive our cultural heritage in order to build our national identity and pass it to the next generation. From my personal point of view, the Republic of Kazakhstan does not need the activities and operations of international NGOs because they are not aiming to revive and preserve the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Maybe we need their operations in other spheres like politics, economics or human rights, but definitely not in cultural heritage sphere. The Ministry of Culture and Sport encourages the local NGOs to be involved in reviving the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan by granting them. However, as the results show, local NGOs produce limited success. There are number of reasons for that. The local NGOs do not have professional workers who are ready to work for the limited amount of grants. In most of the cases the local NGOs show lack of initiative and motivation, as a consequence, receive little interest or understanding from people of Kazakhstan.

It seems as if the role and activities of local NGOs in reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people are not deeply understood by

the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan either. According to the Head of the Department “Cultural heritage" of the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan (see Table 1, n1):

The effectiveness of NGOs in reviving and safeguarding the cultural heritage of Kazakh people is not so significant. There are number of reasons for that. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan usually proposes the grants for the NGOs to revive and protect cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. In order to win this grant NGOs have to provide full package of documents. In most cases this package of documents is considered as a huge problem for most of the NGOs. To some extent I can understand this problem. On the other hand, our practical experiences show that these documents and competitions are essential to select reliable NGOs. Currently, our department is dealing with a problem with a local NGO. This NGO won the grant to reconstruct a cultural heritage site in Kazakhstan. As a result, experts of the Ministry of Culture were shocked to see their reconstruction. They used only modern materials for reconstructions, so the cultural heritage site totally lost its authenticity. National and local NGOs suffer from the lack of professional employees and volunteers. Due to a lack of funding, professional employees and volunteers have neither the desire and time nor finance to contribute to the protection of cultural heritage. Professional employees and volunteers prefer to work for Western funded international non-profits in Kazakhstan. Unfortunately, these Western funded international non-profits do not refer to the protection of cultural heritage. Western funded international non-profits are focused on political, economic and ecological issues.

7.9 Conclusion

NGOs play a significant role in safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, globally. UNESCO encourages international NGOs to work at the local level with very specific projects, being often the main actors

engaged in the fund-raising, promotion, empowerment and capacity-building process to enable participation of the local communities in the management of their cultural and natural heritage. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, international NGOs have invested in the development of Kazakhstan. Most of these international NGOs focused on improving environmental and economic conditions, building civic society, and alleviating ethnic conflicts. The Government of Kazakhstan published the list of international NGOs that operate in the country. However, there are no international NGOs that are concretely concerned with safeguarding and promoting the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. This can be explained by the research results conducted by the Kazakhstan Centre of Public Development Accord, the United Nations Development Programme office in Kazakhstan, and the United Nations Volunteer programme. The reports state that, although Kazakhstan is rich in natural resources, possessing substantial coal, oil, and gas deposits, about one in six people live below the national poverty line (OECD, 2015). There are many people in rural areas who do not have access to clean water and electricity. Moreover, Kazakhstan suffered from environmental damage caused by nuclear weapons testing, unnatural shrinkage of the Aral Seas, and rapid exploration of natural resources. Therefore, the international NGOs are mostly concerned with improving environmental and economic conditions in Kazakhstan.

Since Kazakhstan's declaration of independence, the non-profit sector in Kazakhstan has developed considerably. The Government of Kazakhstan creates conditions for sustainable development of local NGOs by reducing tax rates and financially supporting them in the form of social grants. Cultural revival in Kazakhstan after the declaration of independence has led to the emergence of many local NGOs, whose official purpose is the revival of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Mostly these local NGOs are concerned with reviving the Kazakh language, oral literature, costumes, traditions, traditional

music, sport games and handicrafts. However, there has been considerable debate among local NGOs regarding reviving and restoring Tengrism or Islam to a central place in Kazakh culture and national life. All of the attempts of local NGOs to revive Tengrism as a state religion and national ideology have not been successful because the attempted revival concerns only certain nationalist intellectual élites. Moreover, the Government of Kazakhstan does not support the Tengristic movement as it contradicts the multiethnic policy of the country. In addition, the development of local NGOs aiming to revive and promote the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people have created some ethnic discontent. During the first years of independence, the Ministry of Justice rejected the registration of the Russian and Cossack-based NGOs that aimed to promote Russian and Soviet Union politics. These local NGOs blamed the Government for applying nationalistic approaches. Besides, Western scholars have criticised the emergence of the NGOs of minor ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan as no more than propaganda tools for the image of Kazakhstan as a multiethnic country. However, it should be noted that the Government supports all ethnic groups to create and develop their NGOs and denies official registration of any NGO that promotes or practices racial, ethnic, social or religious intolerance, makes public appeals for the violent overthrow of the constitutional regime, or challenges the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan.

Although local NGOs contribute to the revival and promotion of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, there are some criticisms regarding their activities. As the operation of NGOs is a relatively new phenomenon in Kazakhstan, the majority of the local population does not deeply understand or trust their activities. In addition, there are many challenges that local NGOs face in operating and implementing their programmes in the country. The issues of funding and financial viability and lack of professional and skilled managers and qualified staff and volunteers: all these challenges create barriers to the

development of the non-profit sector in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan states in their reports that the role and activities of local NGOs in reviving and conserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is not so significant. However, interviews with leaders and directors of local NGOs indicate that their activities and programmes in reviving the cultural heritage are vital for the Kazakh people. There are 313 active local NGOs operating in order to contribute to the revival and advancement of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The research findings indicate that the operations of these local NGOs increase public awareness of the protection of cultural heritage. In the case of Kazakhstan, local NGOs consequently do have an important and viable role to play in acting as a bridge between the Government and the general public in reviving and preserving cultural heritage.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

Two aims have directed this research: to assess the impact of the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, and to analyse the roles and activities of identified stakeholders in reviving, preserving and promoting this heritage.

The study provides a comprehensive review of postcolonial heritage and national identity in the context of cultural heritage studies. As the postcolonial studies are used "to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day" (Ohadike, 2000, pp.3-4), this research examines not only cultural effects of the Russian colonisation but also analyses how the disrupted heritage has been reviving and promoting after regaining the independence. Thus, current research deals with the past and its relationship with the present, foregrounding the links between cultural heritage and national identity. The present research applies several conceptual frameworks including Said's "Orientalism" (1978), collective memory, and Nora's (1989) concept of "sites of memory". The creation of a new national identity that unites people is impossible without recourse to some collective memory and myth-making. Collective memory arouses an awareness of the nation's common fate by "stressing individual solidarity against an alien force, that is, by enhancing the salience of boundary perceptions" (Armstrong, 1994, p.145). As Smith (1999) pointed out, communities look to the past to create the new "imagined community". When building collective memory, communities rely on various sources of materials that contain remembered experiences. This research shows that since regaining its independence Kazakhstan emphasised its nomadic cultural heritage as the basis of collective memory.

This conclusion starts by providing a summary of the research's contributions to scholarship, set in the context of cultural heritage preservation in postcolonial

countries. It follows this by presenting answers to the research questions that have directed this study. The chapter then draws conclusions from the analysis of the activities of the identified stakeholders. It ends with section which considers the limitations of the current research and links it together to make recommendations.

8.1 Contributions to knowledge

Compared to other global regions, the history and heritage of the post-Soviet Central Asia region as a whole rarely comes under the microscope in international academic study. Since Kazakhstan was for so long absorbed within the larger and well-established categories of "Russian" and "Soviet" influence, Western scholars have only recently considered Kazakhstan as an area of study (Akiner, 1995; Fierman, 1991; Myer, 2002; Olcott, 1995). Therefore, by drawing researchers' attention to this understudied country, this doctoral research can be claimed to be a pioneering study.

The notable methodological contribution of this research was that it benefitted from being conducted in three languages: Kazakh, Russian, and English. Researching multilingually contributed to understanding and contrasting the different perceptions and perspectives held by Kazakh-, Russian and English-speaking scholars on the impact of the Russian colonisation of Kazakhstan and on the role and activities of stakeholders in reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakhs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in both the Kazakh and Russian languages with participants in this research. This made it convenient for them to express their thoughts in their own languages, and allowed their voices to be brought fully into the research.

This research examined the influence of Russian colonisation on Kazakh culture and contributes to research and current debates. As mentioned in the literature review (Chapter 2), there are many versions of Kazakhstan's colonial history. In

constructing the collective memory of the Kazakh people, Russian and Kazakh-speaking historians have different points of view. There is even an ongoing debate among Kazakh and Russian- speaking scholars as to whether the Russian expansion into the Kazakh steppe was a voluntary unification or a disrupted conquest (Appolova, 1948; Asfendiyarov, 1998; Moiseev, 1991; Qozybayev, 1991; Shoinbayev, 1982). After independence, myth making has blossomed in Kazakhstani scholarship; some history textbooks have even taken on a mythologized narrative (see Chapter 2). The First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev encouraged historians to examine the historical process in the context of the development of national spirit and national ideas. The President explained that if "rethinking history" meets the demands of the present ideology, it is not important whether it is based on historical evidence. As the President stated, in many cases, the invention of history is even necessary: "For our national consciousness, the mythologizing of the past comprises a foundation stone in the state ideology" (George, 2001, p.2). This Kazakhstani myth making historiography fits closely with what Anthony Smith (1995, p.63) defines as "ethnic myth-history" – "an amalgam of selective historical truth and idealization, with varying degrees of documented fact and political myth". This research contributes to delineating and deconstructing that process.

As outlined in Chapter 2, traditional Kazakh-speaking scholars (e.g. Baibatsha, 2003; Daniyarov, 1998; Qarzhaubay, 2001) have been creating myths, stimulating group narcissism, and inspiring a certain degree of ethnic arrogance and conceit. On the other hand, Russian-speaking scholars claim that the Russian administration fought against illiteracy, "backward" rural cultures, traditions and social structures (e.g. Appolova, 1948; Moiseev, 1991; Shoinbayev, 1982; Tolybekov, 1976). These scholars illustrate "unification" as a large-scale modernisation process which brought European ideas and cultures to the Kazakh steppe. This doctoral research presents a more balanced perspective by using the

works of both Kazakh- and Russian-speaking historians as well as Western scholars in analysing the influence of the Russian/Soviet colonisation on Kazakhstan's cultural heritage. Chapter 4 shows that the Russian expansion into the Kazakh steppe was a disruptive conquest which disrupted not only the Kazakh nomadic lifestyle but also the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people.

This is the first research to provide a comprehensive analysis of the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving, promoting and protecting cultural heritage and national identity, not only in Kazakhstan, but also in Central Asian countries. In particular, the role and activities of the Government of Kazakhstan, UNESCO, local and international NGOs in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakhs is examined. Also, to the best of the author's knowledge, this research is the first to explore the "heritage wars" within a country surrounding UNESCO's inscriptions of cultural heritage. The case of Kazakhstan, which is analysed in Chapter 6, offers an advance in knowledge in this regard.

This research also contributes to the academic literature associated with the future work and policies of international organisations, NGOs and government authorities in developing mechanisms and frameworks to support the revival and development of identities and cultural heritage in Kazakhstan. For instance, the research highlights that the development of policies and programmes which focus only on the promotion of Kazakh cultural heritage is in contradiction to the existing multinational and multicultural policy of the Government. Thus, the findings from this study have the potential to help policy makers reflect and foresee possible challenges associated with reviving and promoting the Kazakh traditional cultural heritage.

8.2 Research summary

8.2.1 An assessment of the impacts of the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe on traditional Kazakh nomadic cultural heritage

Nomadism was once the foremost social and economic form of life on the Kazakh steppe. Kazakh national identity and cultural heritage were consequently tightly bound to pastoral nomadism. The effects of the Russian occupation (1731-1991) and the related colonial policy were far-reaching and dramatic changes took place in all aspects of Kazakh nomadic culture. The Soviet Union sought to establish an undivided cohesive identity which was complicated by the existing social, ethnic and cultural differences of the Russian colonised countries (Olcott, 1995). Conquering these involved efforts to assimilate the Soviet peoples into a common culture. In particular, the Soviet administration implemented a process of "Russification" whereby Russian language, culture and ideals were imposed on non-Russian institutions and communities throughout the republics (Hofmeister, 2016). The Soviets tried to convince the nomadic Kazakhs this Russification policy was spreading a form of "Western civilisation", "progress" and "enlightenment" into a barbaric and backward region (Sabol, 2012). As a result, instead of being linked to aspects of nomadism, the history of Kazakhstan is mostly connected with notions such as "indigenization" and "Russification", "collectivization" and "privatization". There is little doubt that this period made the survival of Kazakhs and their cultural heritage extremely challenging.

Chapter 4 shows that the colonisers failed to acknowledge that the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people was tightly bound with pastoral nomadism. This cultural heritage was a way of life with spiritual meaning for the Kazakhs. One of the greatest inventions of the nomads – the yurt – can be easily assembled and dismantled within a short period of time. It is not just a house for the nomadic Kazakhs, but is rather considered the place to eventually start a family and protect

it against enemies, or in which to host guests. The main idea of the yurt was to keep the whole family together, thus the whole family takes part in its installation (Nazarbekuly, 2005). Installing a yurt helps to build a better relationship between family members and make them more united. There are many traditions and behavioural norms related to the yurt, for instance, how to sit in it (Margulan, 1964). There is little doubt that when the nomadic Kazakhs were forcibly settled down, not only did they lose their tangible cultural heritage – the yurt – but also their intangible cultural heritage concerning customs and traditions related to its installation. Traditional festivals, games and entertainment like hunting with birds of prey and traditional clothes of the Kazakh people likewise relate to pastoral nomadism. Thus, by restructuring the nomadic economy, the colonisers disrupted the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people (Bacon, 1958; Eitzen, 1999; Olcott, 1995; Yilmaz, 2012).

The Russian policy to maintain complete control over subjugated regions called for the abolition of their national cultures. As illustrated in Chapter 4, the Soviet system, with its unmitigated policy of Russification and colonisation, claimed that the best way to inculcate Soviet ideology and practice was through the spread of the Russian language. Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe and its effects on the Kazakh language form an interesting illustration of the impact of colonisation on the language of colonised countries. By relocating Russian peasants into the Kazakh steppe, twice changing the alphabet, closing Kazakh schools, reducing Kazakh language classes, and proclaiming Russian as the required language in official documentation, the Soviet administration exerted "top-down" pressure to diminish the Kazakh language. At the same time, having proficiency in the Russian language promised Kazakhs high status engagement with and integration into, a larger network of economic and social activity, all of which exerted "bottom-up" pressure on the Kazakh language. As a result, the majority of the younger generations, especially those who were born after the

establishment of the Soviet Union, became unable to speak the Kazakh language (Fierman, 2009). Despite this, most of the older generations and rural citizens would still speak Kazakh at home. So, even taking into account the Soviet government's attempts to replace Kazakhs with Russians in all spheres, the Kazakhs still preserved some of their traditional cultural heritage.

The Kazakhs were able to preserve some of their traditional cultural heritage by several ways. The elders, especially from rural areas have tried to pass down fragments of intangible cultural heritage from generation to generation. Moreover, the Kazakhs who migrated from the Kazakh steppe to Mongolia, China, and Turkmenistan during the forced collectivisation period and famine have been preserved their traditional nomadic cultural heritage (Kuscu, 2012). As Chapter 5 states, the Kazakhs who live in Bayan-Ulgi (Mongolia) and Xingiang (China) are able to lead a traditional nomadic life (Post, 2007). They live in traditional nomadic dwelling yurts and move from one place to the next with their cattle. Thus, the nomadic Kazakh tradition still exists in their purest form in these places. The migrant Kazakhs are more nationalistic, more linguistically and culturally pure than the Kazakhs who had stayed put and experienced the "Russification" of Kazakhstan under the Soviet Union.

The Soviet administration aimed to build an urban-oriented, proletarian, and atheist society. In order to do so, an attempt was made to liquidate all perceived religious “backwardness” practiced across the Soviet Union. As a result, Islamic mosques and madrasas were closed, destroyed, or converted into other facilities such as factories, museums, food houses or even prisons on the Kazakh steppe (Tuminez, 2000). Imams and the Islamic clergy were denounced as exploiters, criminals or corrupters of morals. Believers were subjected to physical violence and criminal sanctions were put in place for the performance of religious rituals. Despite the fact that the Soviet Union was largely successful in eliminating Islamic

practices and teachings, it could not prevent most Kazakhs from perceiving themselves as having an Islamic identity. As Olcott (1995, p.21) pointed out: "*the consciousness of having an Islamic heritage was one of the elements which for the Central Asians continued to define their identities - even if a particular individual knew almost nothing about religion and observed none of its tenets*".

Chapter 4 showed that, although the Soviets were able to effect significant changes in Kazakh traditional cultural heritage and to disrupt some aspects of it, the Russification policy did not fully achieve its aim. For instance, despite the growing focus on biomedicine [Western medicine] during the Soviet era, traditional healing methods were not forgotten and traditional Kazakh healers continued to treat people (Penkala-Gawęcka, 2013). Rural Kazakhs still strongly relied on traditional healers. In terms of the celebration of holidays and festivals, Kazakh people were not allowed to celebrate their two main religious holidays: Eid Al-Fitr (*Oraza Ait*) and Eid Al-Adhu (*Qurban Ait*) (Derbisäli, 2010). Although *Nauryz* remained a public holiday, its main purpose was changed. Originally its aim was to engage deeply with nature but after the Soviet conquest it was to celebrate the multi-ethnicity and unity of the Soviet Union. Kazakhs started to widely celebrate holidays such as International Women's Day, International Worker's Day, New Year's Day, and Victory Day that were not relevant to their former identity and origin as a nomadic people. However, Kazakhs continued unofficially to celebrate Eid Al-Fitr (*Oraza Ait*) and Eid Al-Adhu (*Qurban Ait*) (Omarov, 1990). Similarly, the Kazakh ancient tradition of oral art was seen as being in conflict with the idea of a Soviet society and was forbidden. Kazakhs were encouraged to ignore their traditional oral art and to enjoy Soviet folklore. Despite this, Soviet Kazakh writers recorded many of the ancient Kazakh epics, legends, and other oral forms and transferred them into written form, albeit with some changes. Publishing a number of Kazakh ancient epics enabled people to still enjoy them by reading and memorising them.

In these ways, Kazakhs lost sovereignty and independence over various aspects of their lives but managed to maintain in some degree their cultural heritage, leaving more for contemporary stakeholders to revive and protect. It is important to note that these stakeholders (the Government of Kazakhstan, local people, NGOs) have significant but different perspectives concerning cultural heritage.

8.2.2 An analysis of the roles and activities of identified stakeholders in reviving, preserving and promoting the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people

This research has critically examined the roles and activities of stakeholders in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. It identified the new stakeholders as the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, UNESCO and NGOs, and analysed why and how traditional Kazakh cultural heritage has been revived and preserved. Chapter 5 demonstrates that the Government of Kazakhstan is the main stakeholder in reviving and preserving traditional Kazakh cultural heritage due to its control of funding. The Government of Kazakhstan every year allocates a significant budget for the preservation of traditional cultural heritage. Kazakh cultural heritage has been revived and promoted by the Government of Kazakhstan to satisfy the following aims: to determine and strengthen Kazakh national identity; to enhance Kazakhstan's tourism industry; to improve and promote Kazakhstan's image in the international arena; and to present Kazakhstan's traditional cultural heritage when hosting major international events. However, the main motivation for the Government of Kazakhstan to revive and preserve its traditional cultural heritage is to build a national identity. Cultural heritage is viewed as a way of consolidating the status of a newly independent country, thereby creating a sense of shared identity and strengthening its national value.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Government of Kazakhstan has embarked upon a processes of state - and nation-building involving the search for a new consolidating national identity that could provide an alternative to the previously dominant Soviet nationhood. However, the official construction of a new national identity encountered some challenges. For Kazakhstan, as was the case for other newly independent Central Asian countries, it was hard to identify whether it was part of the Asian world, the Muslim world or the Turkic world. In the process of building the national identity of Kazakhstan, several countries, including Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, tried to exert their own influence; nonetheless, Kazakhstan found its own identity. The Government of Kazakhstan rejected the "Soviet-ness" it had inherited and which it related to Russian domination and instead turned to its pre-Soviet national heritage. Although Kazakhstan connects itself to the Asian, Muslim and Turkic worlds, nomadism and nomadic cultural heritage were chosen by the government to constitute the new national identity of the country (Nadirbekov *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, Kazakhstan's government adopted a policy to revive and preserve Kazakh traditional nomadic cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is an essential component of national identity as it constantly reminds nationals of the symbolic framework upon which a sense of national identity is constructed. As Gillis stated (1994), a sense of national identity is based on collective memories, myths and symbols that people of the same nation recount about themselves, including where they come from, what they celebrate, their shared historical memories, and their expectations for what it takes to become a genuine member of the community.

After declaring independence in 1991, Kazakhstan faced the challenge of building a national identity and promoting its traditional cultural heritage. The demographic composition of Kazakhstan posed a dilemma as the country's government had to choose how to ethnically, culturally and ethnolinguistically define Kazakh identity as paramount without alienating other ethnic groups living

in Kazakhstan. Would it be possible to build a multinational country by developing and promoting the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups without emphasising one over the others? In the wake of independence, the Government of Kazakhstan legitimised the Kazakh sovereignty of the country by increasing the number of ethnic Kazakhs in its population through its repatriation programme, by rewriting Kazakh history and by stressing the continuity of Kazakh rule in its territory.

Rewriting history aims to correct the distorted colonial version of the history of the Kazakh people, as during the colonial period only history that fitted with the Soviet ideology was allowed to be written. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, all five Central Asian states dramatically reshaped their narratives about some periods of the Soviet era. In fact, each republic developed a different approach about the Soviet past. Turkmenistan totally rejected the Soviet legacy. Uzbekistan created a discourse concentrated on the victimisation of the Uzbeks by the Russian/Soviet repressor. Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan equate the Soviet period with modernization and progress. In Kazakhstan, for example, in school textbooks, the Soviet past is associated with modernisation and urbanisation of the nation, while liability for the offences of the system is laid upon Stalin. History textbooks are still hesitating between victimisation and responsibility. There is a wide gap between government-led historical narratives and individual memories. Whereas rewritten history emphasises the reviving of the independent state in 1991 after years of struggle for national independence, individual memories look back to the Soviet legacy nostalgically. This imbalance is creating misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about the history of the Kazakh people, especially among young generations. Therefore, government-led and individual historians and scholars should collaborate in order to create a more coherent, less fictional and decolonised narrative of national identity in rewriting history. Their primary concern should be to salvage the history of the Kazakh

people that colonialism has manipulated, to reclaim that which has been misappropriated and to reconstruct that which has been damaged.

The Kazakhisation policy included the establishment of Kazakh as the national language, shifting the alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin, and reviving and promoting the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. Almost all of the governmental programmes on cultural heritage have mainly concerned Kazakh cultural heritage. Kazakhstan has undertaken a conscious effort to rebuild its society on the basis of traditional Kazakh culture. As a consequence, the Government of Kazakhstan has been criticised for implementing a nationalistic approach (Scriven, 2013). On the other hand, the country's President has developed a neo-Eurasian programme in order to create a platform that does not place emphasis on any particular culture, religion, or ethnicity (Mostafa, 2013). Moreover, the President established the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan to preserve and promote the different languages, traditions and cultures of all the peoples of Kazakhstan. This has led to Kazakhstan being described as a country of two identities by some Western scholars (Ferret, 2016). Despite the fact that all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan have opportunities to preserve and promote their cultural heritage, the Government of Kazakhstan is mainly concerned with the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. As such, almost all governmental cultural programmes are focused on reviving and preserving Kazakh cultural heritage.

Reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is therefore regarded as significant; although its significance is interpreted and perceived differently by Kazakhs. The Kazakh participants in this research from various backgrounds have different attitudes towards reviving the traditional nomadic cultural heritage. *Qazaqshildar* are those who are focused on reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, and they

remind Kazakhs of their past and current history in order to implement the basis for the future nation-state of Kazakhstan. In terms of the political stability in Kazakhstan, *Qazaqshildar* risk fuelling tension between ethnic groups within the republic. *Orysshyldar* (Russianists) are those who graduated from Russian schools and speak very little Kazakh. These types of people advocate Russian and Russian culture over that of Kazakh. Moreover, *Orysshyldar* criticise those who esteem the Kazakh language and cultural heritage as nationalists, religious fundamentalists and as backward. It will take decades to inculcate an appreciation of and respect for the traditional cultural heritage of their ancestors. *Tanirshilder* (Tengrists) are those who demand that the Government of Kazakhstan revive and restore Tengrism to a central place in Kazakh cultural and national life. On other hand, *Dinshilder* (religionists) aim to build an Islamic state. Tengrists and religionists can also fuel tensions between ethnic groups within the country. *Batysshyldar* (Westernizers) are western-oriented Kazakhs who take the USA and European countries as a model for development. The disunity created by these different groups and positions inevitably slows down the process of reviving and promoting Kazakh traditional cultural heritage.

From the beginning this research raised the questions of "whose heritage is it?", and "who decides which aspects of cultural heritage are to be revived and promoted or not?". Chapter 5 indicates that the Government of Kazakhstan is the main stakeholder in reviving and preserving the disrupted cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the central executive body for heritage preservation at the national level. However, the Government of Kazakhstan in the form of the Ministry of Culture and Sport is, to some extent, repeating the policy of its Soviet predecessor. Culture is considered one element of giving young people a patriotic and moral education. The definitions of culture and cultural heritage given in the "Law on Culture" (2006) of the Republic of Kazakhstan show that culture is regarded as a way of

building and improving a sense of national identity (World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), 2018). The government decides why and how to preserve and promote, which form of cultural heritage to support, and whether to open, close or relocate cultural organisations. Only those types of cultural creativity that fit with national standards are allowed. Moreover, although the Government of Kazakhstan allocates a significant amount of its budget for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, corruption remains a significant barrier to the implementation of national programmes aimed at reviving traditional Kazakh nomadic cultural heritage. Despite the fact that the Kazakh Civil Service Affairs and Anti-corruption Agency has tried to prevent and detect corruption offences, corruption continues to harm the development of every sector in Kazakhstan, including that of culture (DayNews.kz-International Information Portal, 2018).

Although nomadism is no longer an active tradition in Kazakhstan, it remains a fundamental element of the nation's self-image. Despite the fact that, during the Soviet period, the nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people was disrupted, Kazakhs have been able to preserve some aspects of their heritage and transmit these to younger generations. Indeed, nomadic heritage has left a powerful emotional and psychological imprint on the Kazakh people. For instance, the Kazakhs feel very proud of being descendants of their nomadic ancestors. Moreover, the nomadic tradition has been used to distinguish Kazakhs from other Muslim and Turkic nations, including neighbouring Central Asian states. As shown in Chapter 5, the footprints of nomadic cultural heritage can be seen in the national symbols of Kazakhstan, in architectural constructions, monuments and sculptures, and in film productions. Nomadism has been established as the national image of Kazakhstan to be presented during the hosting of major events. Moreover, nomadism plays a core role in the development of the tourism industry in Kazakhstan. As Chang *et al.* (1996, p.287) point out: "although heritage tourism may be the chosen strategy, different destinations tend to accentuate

themes peculiar to their culture and location as a way to differentiate themselves from competitors". Among potential trends in the development of the national heritage tourism sector in Kazakhstan, much attention has been paid to the ancient Silk Road. By forging this nomadic image, the Government of Kazakhstan has sought to entice travellers to experience the lifestyle of nomads. All of the stakeholders interviewed for this study referenced cultural tourism (nomadic tourism) as a potentially significant niche in the development of Kazakhstan's tourism industry.

However, inappropriate employment of cultural heritage for the tourism purposes can create conflict between the government and local people. The commodification of cultural heritage places to tourists currently become "big business" (Sharpley, 1994, p.156). As Chapter 5 shows, with the case of Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park where the Government of Kazakhstan aims to construct a world-class mountain-skiing complex "Kok-Zhailau" with all of the necessary infrastructure. Although Kazakhstani people argue that the construction of this complex would negatively impact on the local environment and wildlife of Ile-Alatau State National Nature Park, the Government forces its hegemony on the local people by stating that this mountain-skiing complex will bring economic growth. Heritage, therefore, rises the consequential question of "whose heritage?" but is also logically defined only in terms of that market. With the rapid growth of tourism and the wish to gather in from this growth, planning and selling tourism attractions can sometimes lead to the undesirable and unintended consequences. Therefore, tourism planning and development should be made carefully to avert the negative consequences.

Although there are some families who still practice a nomadic way of life today, the majority of Kazakh people no longer actually live this way. Consequently, the Government of Kazakhstan has been criticised by Western scholars for fabricating

an inaccurate image of the country (Cummings 2010; Ferret 2016; Laruelle 2008; Norris 2012; Megan, 2009). This research has found after regaining its independence, the patrimonialisation of nomadic heritage has been more related to intangible cultural heritage. During the hosting of international events and receiving of foreign tourists Kazakhs have sought to present intangible aspects of nomadic heritage. Although nomadism is not currently the dominant lifestyle in Kazakhstan, the Kazakhs do then practice it as a form of intangible cultural heritage.

UNESCO has been identified in this research as the next most significant stakeholder in reviving and promoting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. The research findings show that the inclusion of various elements of Kazakh culture on several of UNESCO's lists and registers enables the promotion of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of Kazakhstan at the international level and the extension of systematic measures for its preservation domestically. According to participants in this research working in UNESCO's Almaty Office and those who are actively engaged in the nomination of cultural heritage sites and elements on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the Government of Kazakhstan is actively contributing, through UNESCO, to the protection and safeguarding of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

However, as exemplified by the work of scholars like De Cesari (2010), Labadi (2016), Meskell (2009), and Steiner (2011), the role and activities of UNESCO in reviving and preserving cultural heritage has received growing levels of scrutiny on ethical grounds. Chapter 6 indicates that cultural heritage often becomes the focus of debate over its ownership, and that those who have more power and authority usually have a more influential say over its management. The findings of this research indicate that the most significant drawback of being a member of

UNESCO for Kazakhstan is that UNESCO and its inscriptions of cultural heritage have become subjects of cultural debate and have created “heritage wars” between neighbouring countries and even within countries. While UNESCO aims to unite people through intercultural comprehension, certain decisions made by its committees have led to problematic consequences. “Heritage wars” between nations caused by the UNESCO World Heritage List have become a significant topic among some scholars (Park, 2010; Kim and Jang, 2012; Lixinski, 2012; Jin, 2008). However, there has been no research focusing on “heritage wars” in Kazakhstan, as well as other Central Asian countries. Research focused on "heritage wars" in Central Asia might contribute to preventing conflicts between the Central Asian countries. Conflicts in the form of competition between the Central Asian states is rooted in the Soviet period and even after the breakup of the Soviet Union is getting worse. Since its collapse, Central Asian states have all been involved in border disputes which can be traced directly back to a difficult Soviet legacy. “Heritage wars” between these states caused by the UNESCO World Heritage List aggravate nationalist sentiments and an environment of mutual mistrust.

While the Government of Kazakhstan invests heavily in the protection and inscription of Kazakhstan’s cultural heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List, Kazakhstan as a member of UNESCO benefits from applying to the World Heritage Fund for financial assistance, and also benefits economically by attracting additional funding from NGOs and foreign countries. Beyond this, one of the most significant aspects of being a member of UNESCO is that this international organisation encourages the participation of the local population in the preservation of its cultural and natural heritage (Labadi, 2016; Lee and Jayakumar, 2021; Logan, 2007).

NGOs are identified as the next most significant stakeholder in safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible. UNESCO encourages international NGOs to work at the local level with very specific projects, often being the main actors engaged in the fund-raising, promotion, empowerment and capacity-building processes that enable the participation of local communities in the management of their cultural and natural heritage. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, international NGOs have invested in the development of Kazakhstan (Popova, 2013). However, there are no international NGOs that are directly concerned with safeguarding and promoting the cultural heritage of Kazakhstan. As mentioned above, the subject of this research - reviving and preserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people - is a politically sensitive topic. This is probably the reason international NGOs do not engage in this research. Although Kazakhstan is naturally rich in resources such as oil and coal, less than quarter of the population are receiving less than average salary (OECD, 2015). There is no clean water and electricity in some cultist areas. Moreover, Kazakhstan has environmental problems because of nuclear weapon testings, the shrinking of Aral Sea, and producing many natural resources rapidly, icluding as fossil fuels (Weinthal and Luong, 2002). Therefore, international NGOs are mostly concerned with improving environmental and economic conditions in Kazakhstan.

Since Kazakhstan's declaration of independence, the non-profit sector in the country has developed considerably. The Government of Kazakhstan has created conditions for the sustainable development of local NGOs by reducing tax rates and financially supporting them through social grants. Such cultural revivalism in Kazakhstan has led to the emergence of many local NGOs, whose official purpose is to revive the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. These local NGOs are mostly concerned with reviving Kazakh language, oral literature, costumes, traditions, traditional music, sports, games and handicrafts. However,

there has been considerable debate among local NGOs regarding reviving and restoring Tengrism or Islam as a central part of Kazakh culture and national life (Nurtazina, 2003). All the attempts of local NGOs to revive Tengrism as a state religion and national ideology have so far been unsuccessful because they have involved only certain nationalist intellectual élites. Moreover, the Government of Kazakhstan does not support the Tengristic movement as it contradicts the multicultural and multi-vector policies of the country. In addition, the development of local NGOs aimed at reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people has created some ethnic discontent. During the first years of independence, the Ministry of Justice rejected the registration of the Russian- and Cossack-based NGOs that aimed to promote Russian and Soviet Union politics (Ivanova, 2014). These local NGOs blamed the government for applying nationalistic approaches. In addition, Western scholars have criticised the emergence of NGOs for minor ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan as no more than propaganda tools to promote a positive image of Kazakhstan as a multicultural country (Davenel, 2012; Diener, 2004; Eitzen, 1999). However, it should be noted that the government supports all ethnic groups to create and develop NGOs and primarily denies the official registration of an NGO that promotes or practices racial, ethnic, social or religious intolerance, makes public appeals for the violent overthrow of the constitutional regime, or challenges the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan.

As the operation of NGOs is mainly a new phenomenon in Kazakhstan, the majority of the local population do not entirely understand their activities. Many feel that NGOs are steeped in personal interests or are even "spiders of Western states" (Aleksandrov, *et al.*, 2014, p.65). In addition, local NGOs face many challenges in operating and implementing their programmes in the country. Issues of funding, financial viability and a lack of professional, skilled managers, qualified staff and volunteers are all create barriers for the development of the

non-profit sector in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Republic of Kazakhstan states in their reports that the role and activities of local NGOs in reviving and conserving the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people is not that significant (Anti-corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). However, interviews with leaders and directors of local NGOs indicated that their activities and programmes to revive Kazakhstan's cultural heritage is vital for the Kazakh people. As shown in Chapter 7, there are 313 active local NGOs that contribute to the revival and advancement of the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people and so increase public awareness of the need for the protection of that cultural heritage. In the case of Kazakhstan, then, local NGOs act as a bridge between the government and the population in reviving and preserving cultural heritage. Certainly, efforts to preserve and protect cultural heritage require the collaboration of various stakeholders (Garrod *et al.*, 2012; Góral, 2018; Labadi, 2016; Lee and Jayakumar, 2021; Ripp, 2018).

8.3 Limitations of the current research and directions for future research

In assessing the impacts of the Russian colonisation of the Kazakh steppe on the traditional nomadic cultural heritage of the Kazakh people, the researcher primarily used secondary literature written by Kazakh-, Russian- and English-speaking scholars. Further research could be conducted using original documents housed in Kazakh and Russian archives. In particular, Kazakh and Russian archives such as The Presidential Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Central State Archive of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the State Archive of the Russian Federation, and the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History have been a largely untouched resource, despite their accessibility and important holdings. These archives hold valuable official documents on shifting the Kazakh language, religion and culture to Russian. During the Soviet period, access to the

national archives was restricted to researchers. Furthermore, archival sources were selectively employed to create a narrative of a good and happy life during the Tsarist and Soviet periods.

Further research similar to that already performed could also be conducted to include more of the stakeholders involved in reviving and preserving Kazakh traditional cultural heritage, such as those from foreign direct investment countries. Since Kazakhstan's independence, the state government has paid significant attention to its investment policy as one of the fundamental factors for economic growth and development. Investment projects enable a rise in living standards, social welfare and cultural development. Moreover, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region of post-Soviet Central Asia became an arena of competition amongst developed countries. Specifically, Russia, the United States and China all have their own strategic and economic interests in the region (Menon, 2003). Russian power is understandable given its previous recent historical control over the region. Kazakhstan still depends on Russian pipelines to sell natural gas and oil to foreign countries (Qamar and Sumera, 2014). The United States has been involved in the Kazakh economy since it declared independence. Chinese investment in Kazakhstan is also increasing every year. Many projects were initiated by those aforementioned major powers in the sphere of economics, politics and social areas. Therefore, it would be useful to analyse whether or not foreign investment projects contribute to protecting the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people. For example, one of those projects is the " New Silk Road", which was initiated by China in 2013 (Shen, 2015), and forms part of their global 'Belt and Road' programme. The purpose of the project is to integrate an interconnected economic area by constructing infrastructure, developing cultural exchanges, and expanding trade (Yiwei, 2015). Taking into account criticisms regarding this project (Kim and Indeo, 2013; Nogayeva, 2015, O'Neill, 2014), which regard it as a form of preparation for economic and political

Chinese expansion into Kazakhstan and Central Asia, it is relevant to analyse whether or not China's New Silk Road project contributes to the revival and protection of Kazakh traditional nomadic heritage. China's growing involvement in Kazakhstan is a long-term phenomenon and a turning point in Kazakhstan's post-Soviet history and economic-political development (Laruelle, 2018, b; Mamirkulova *et al.*, 2020).

Comparative research could also be undertaken on the roles and activities of various stakeholders in reviving and preserving disrupted nomadic cultural heritage in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. As mentioned, compared to other Central Asian peoples, the Kyrgyz and Kazakh share a nomadic past. It would be interesting to see whether the research results of this thesis are applicable to Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, a larger comparative study on the role of cultural heritage in the rebuilding and development of national identity in other Central Asian postcolonial countries could contribute towards developing a more widely applicable model of rebuilding a new national identity after colonisation.

Similarly, a larger comparative study could also be conducted in order to build a more general model of the impacts of Russian/Soviet colonisation on the traditional cultural heritage of post-Soviet countries.

8.4 Implications for the future development of cultural heritage in Kazakhstan based on the research findings

This section considers the evidence and analysis undertaken in the research and links it together to make recommendations.

Chapter 5 shows that, the Government should change its "top down" policy and the people should be given a stronger voice in deciding how and which forms of cultural heritage to support. In other words, the Government should collaborate and negotiate more actively with the people of Kazakhstan in terms of how to

approach its traditional cultural heritage. Professional practitioners and bearers of the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people should create and develop a Commission for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. The Commission needs to outline a set of actions to keep cultural heritage high on the political agenda by involving independent experts from NGOs and UNESCO. The Commission should organise training to the local people to pass knowledge and skills relevant to the protection and safeguarding of specific types of cultural heritage. The Ministry of Culture, the Commission for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, and all regional heritage departments should ensure public participation in protection and safeguarding activities through identified promotional activities. It is arguably a basic human right to claim, protect, and decide how to portray heritage.

As discussed in Chapter 7, it is essential that the Government of Kazakhstan changes its policy on the operation of local NGOs that are focused on reviving and promoting the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people by giving them more freedom and exerting less control over their activities. Chapter 7 shows that social grants are the main source of funding for local Kazakhstan NGOs, they cannot be considered as fully belonging to the non-governmental sector. This issue could be alleviated in part by allowing and encouraging international NGOs to work properly in the country.

Chapter 5 indicates that another important factor for the Government to consider is multicultural society in Kazakhstan. The policies and programmes for reviving and promoting cultural heritage of the Kazakh people need to be well-balanced to avoid damaging inter-ethnic relations between the majority Kazakh population and minority national groups. The current unique Kazakhstani approach to safeguarding inter-ethnic harmony needs to be well maintained. This requires the Government to continue to support all necessary conditions for the development of the culture, language and traditions of all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan.

Diversification of the economy away from excessive dependence on natural resources is also important for Kazakhstan. Chapter 5 demonstrates that, there are significant cultural opportunities for promoting heritage tourism. The exceptional cultural heritage of Kazakhstan creates significant opportunities for Kazakhstan to become the leader of sustainable tourism in Central Asia. This is worth promoting and can support economic development.

There are, however, several factors that currently limit and negatively affect the country's opportunities here. These include an old and damaged infrastructure, a shortage of hotels and high-quality services, a lack of qualified human resources, and an absence of IT tools and audio guides, especially in small cultural cities (Seidahmetov *et al.*, 2014). The government needs to allocate a budget to renovate and reconstruct the country's old airports. In order to create the required infrastructure for the development of tourism it is essential to reconstruct roads. There is a need to encourage international hotel brands to open their branches in cultural cities. In addition, there is a need to reconstruct the older hotels in cultural cities. For those who want to learn about the daily life of nomadic people it would be useful to offer yurt campsites with traditional Kazakh foods as an accommodation option in most rural areas of Kazakhstan. In addition, in order to attract more international tourists, it is important to develop multi-lingual audio guides at heritage sites.

Moreover, it is important to educate and train qualified heritage managers and professionals in Kazakhstan (see Chapter 5). There are only two universities that have a cultural heritage programme. As mentioned in the subchapter 5.2.2 due to the fact that the salary of heritage professionals is less than GBP 145 per month (Agency for Strategic planning and reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan Bureau of National statistics, 2021, b), students prefer to study for better paid professions. There is a shortage of students in the cultural heritage programmes at universities.

Therefore, in order to increase the number of qualified heritage professionals it is vital to increase their salary.

During colonial times, the cultural heritage of the Kazakh people survived multiple disruptions (see Chapter 4). Since Independence, Kazakhstan has gained an opportunity to revive and promote the traditional cultural heritage of the Kazakh people—one in which multiple stakeholder can play a part. In order to successfully accomplish this vision, this research has shown that it is important to build strong collaborations and to have actions properly executed by all stakeholders, including government authorities, international organisations, local and international NGOs. Such collaboration will empower and energize Kazakhstan's cultural heritage to overcome future challenges, and to sustain it as meaningful to future generations.

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