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## ISSUES OF CONCEPTUALIZATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

The article examines conceptual and methodological issues related to various foundations of national identity. In Kazakhstan, there is a “dialogue” between ethnic and civil identities. Some experts on national identity emphasize the ethnic component, while others include the phenomenon of citizenship. These discussions reflect the experience of national politics, the Soviet paradigm of the national question and the long pause in the official interpretation of this concept. The purpose of this article is to determine the characteristics of the concepts of national identity and identify the factors that shape them. A review of the concepts will allow us to imagine the dynamics and prospects of state building, where there is a creative reworking of narratives, political rhetoric and conditions. Approaches to conceptualizing national identity are based on several factors, starting with the weakening of state mechanisms and the strengthening of the role of language and culture. The study is based on theoretical approaches developed by national and foreign researchers. Official historiography, state symbols, religion, modern culture, media and architecture together constitute an ethno-national trend of state building, within which the role of the Kazakh language and bilingualism is becoming increasingly prominent. The theoretical and practical significance of the article lies in deepening the understanding of the theoretical foundations of national identity, thereby enriching our understanding of the main components of the phenomenon being studied. Examination of various concepts reveals a multifaceted and evolving relationship between factors that contribute to the legitimization of national identity. The article is intended for academic, civic and political audiences and addresses a range of topics related to the dialogic process of nation-building. The article uses secondary research data from both domestic and foreign researchers.

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**Key words:** national identity, ethnic and civil identity, religious and linguistic identity, nation-building, globalization.

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### Жаһандану жағдайындағы ұлттық бірегейлік концептуалдану мәселелері

Мақалада ұлттық бірегейліктің әртүрлі негіздеріне қатысты тұжырымдамалық және әдістемелік мәселелер қарастырылады. Қазақстанда этникалық және азаматтық сәйкестіктер арасында «диалог» бар. Ұлттық бірегейлік бойынша кейбір сарапшылар этникалық құрамдас бөлікке баса назар аударса, басқалары азаматтық феномені қамтиды. Бұл талқылаулар ұлттық саясаттың тәжірибесін, ұлттық мәселенің кеңестік парадигмасын және бұл тұжырымдаманы ресми түсіндірудегі ұзақ үзілістерді көрсетеді. Бұл мақаланың мақсаты – ұлттық бірегейлік ұғымдарының ерекшеліктерін анықтау және оларды қалыптастыратын факторларды анықтау. Тұжырымдамаларды шолу баяндауларды, саяси риториканы және шарттарды шығармашылықпен қайта өңдеу жүзеге асырылатын мемлекеттік құрылыстың динамикасы мен болашағын елестетуге мүмкіндік береді. Ұлттық бірегейлікті концептуализациялау тәсілдері мемлекеттік тетіктердің әлсіреуінен, тіл мен мәдениеттің рөлін күшейтуден бастап, бірқатар факторларға негізделген. Зерттеу отандық және шетелдік зерттеушілер әзірлеген теориялық тәсілдерге негізделген. Ресми тарихнама, мемлекеттік рәміздер, дін, заманауи мәдениет, БАҚ және сәулет өнері бірге мемлекеттік құрылыстың этноұлттық үрдісін құрайды, оның аясында қазақ тілі мен қостілділіктің рөлі барған сайын көрнекті бола түсуде. Мақаланың теориялық және практикалық маңыздылығы ұлттық бірегейліктің теориялық негіздерін түсінуді тереңдетуде, сол арқылы зерттелетін

негізгі компоненттері туралы түсінігімізді байытуда. Түрлі концепцияларды сараптау ұлттық бірегейлікті заңдастыруға ықпал ететін факторлар арасындағы көп қырлы және дамып келе жатқан қатынасты көрсетеді. Мақала академиялық, азаматтық және саяси аудиторияға арналған және мемлекет құрудың диалогтық процесіне қатысты бірқатар тақырыптарды қарастырады. Мақалада отандық және шетелдік зерттеушілердің қосалқы зерттеу деректері пайдаланылады,

Бұл мақала ҚР Ғылым және жоғары білім министрлігінің гранттық қаржыландыру бағдарламасы бойынша “Қазақстандық жастардың бірегейлігін трансформациялаудағы жаһандану және глокализация” АР19680642 ЖРН ғылымы жобасы шеңберінде дайындалған.

**Түйін сөздер:** ұлттық бірегейлік, этникалық және азаматтық бірегейлік, діни және тілдік бірегейлік, ұлт құру, жаһандану.

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### **Вопросы концептуализации национальной идентичности в контексте глобализации**

В статье рассматриваются концептуальные и методологические вопросы, связанные с различными основаниями национальной идентичности. В Казахстане существует «диалог» между этнической и гражданской идентичностями. Одни эксперты по национальной идентичности подчеркивают этническую составляющую, в то время как другие включают феномен гражданства. Эти дискуссии отражают опыт национальной политики, советскую парадигму национального вопроса и затянувшуюся паузу в официальной интерпретации этого понятия. Цель этой статьи – определение особенностей концепций национальной идентичности и выявление факторов, которые их формируют. Обзор концепций позволит нам представить динамику и перспективы государственного строительства, где наблюдается креативная переработка нарративов, политической риторики и конъюнктуры. Подходы к концептуализации национальной идентичности основаны на ряде факторов, начиная с ослабления государственных механизмов и усиления роли языка и культуры. Исследование основано на теоретических подходах, разработанных национальными и зарубежными исследователями. Официальная историография, государственные символы, религия, современная культура, СМИ и архитектура в совокупности составляют этнонациональную тенденцию государственного строительства, в рамках которой роль казахского языка и двуязычия становится все более заметной. Теоретическая и практическая значимость статьи заключается в углублении понимания теоретических основ национальной идентичности, тем самым обогащается наше представление об основных составляющих изучаемого феномена. Изучение различных концепций выявляет многогранную и развивающуюся взаимосвязь между факторами, способствующими легитимации национальной идентичности. Статья предназначена для академической, гражданской и политической аудитории и затрагивает ряд тем, связанных с диалогическим процессом государственного строительства. В статье использованы вторичные данные исследований как отечественных, так и зарубежных исследователей.

Данная статья подготовлена в рамках научного проекта ИРН АР19680642 «Глобализация и глокализация в трансформации идентичности казахстанской молодежи» по программе грантового финансирования Министерства науки и высшего образования РК.

**Ключевые слова:** национальная идентичность, этническая и гражданская идентичность, религиозная и языковая идентичность, государственное строительство, глобализация.

### **Introduction**

In understanding the diverse manifestations of social reality, including the phenomenon of identity, it is challenging to create comprehensive descriptions and explanatory models. E. Giddens argues that modern society is not simply a change from some traditions to others, which are by their nature rational, dependable, and pragmatic. Rather, it is a constant process of questioning, diversifying channels for knowledge acquisition, all of which affects the «I am», which is prone to constant reflection and

transformation. The dynamics of change in society result in the natural instability and fluidity of both social and personal identities. This is a natural consequence of the constant process of adaptation to new circumstances and challenges. (Giddens, 2004:55).

In contemporary Kazakh society, as well as in the wider global context, there are profound social transformations underway, driven by global processes that are precipitating a crisis of social identity. These transformations encompass the openness of society, secularization processes, the articulation

of ethnic and cultural factors, and the abundance of information, which are all transforming the direction and manifestation of identity. Globalization is a powerful and irreversible process that transforms the culture, economy, and other spheres of each country. Agents of transformation are social institutions that exert a powerful influence on the search for new identities, with new media and education playing a particularly significant role in this regard. The advent of global changes has prompted a re-evaluation of the conceptualization of identity. However, the concept of globality is not merely a matter of losing the origins and roots of identity; it also entails a new emphasis on diverse coordinate systems. The global economy and capital have undermined the unshakable foundations of the nation-state as the main core of cultural, political, and economic organization. Furthermore, systems of commodity exchange have become systems of cultural exchange (Jay, 2004).

The emergence of new global formations has the effect of undermining the traditional power of the nation state to govern the terms of cultural belonging. This has resulted in the reorganization of discourses of identity, with the rhetoric of the national being reduced (Ta, 2007: xiv).

The potential benefits of globalization are numerous and far-reaching. On the one hand, it can result in the loss of cultural identity and uniqueness. Conversely, it can also facilitate the emergence of new forms of identification and expression (Hedetoft and Hjort, 2002: xv).

An individual's sense of identity is shaped by the cultural practices they engage in daily. It is culture that helps to reflect, gives meaning to behaviour and action, creates new forms of language, constructs narratives, develops social relationships and self-identification, and allows for personal expression (Ta, 2007:22).

Kazakh society has at times experienced a painful process of cultural transformation, characterized by a clash between patriarchal and traditional values on the one hand and liberal values on the other. The traditional culture is attempting to adapt to the challenges associated with globalization and the dominance of urban culture. The transition period is characterized by a sense of disorientation and loss of direction. The traditional way of life and values cease to be relevant, and people find themselves struggling to comprehend the direction of the world around them. The integration of Kazakhstanis into the world trade system has been facilitated by the phenomenon of globalization. Along with foreign products, ideas, style, and lifestyle, Kazakhstanis have also been exposed to a multitude of influences

from abroad. This raises the question of whether Kazakhstanis are losing their national identity because of globalization. Identification is a continuous process whereby individuals continually redefine themselves (Beisembayev, 2023).

The article's focus is on the theoretical and practical aspects of the concept of «national identity». The subject of this study is the various components of national identity, as they are considered in different theoretical frameworks. To achieve the objective of studying the transformation of national identity, the following tasks have been set: an analysis of the spectrum of concepts of national identity and an illustration of the theoretical and ideological potential of nation-building.

### Material and Methods

The article uses research data derived from cause-and-effect relationships in the context of historical and cultural background (postcolonialism), ethnicity, territoriality, language, and social status.

A systematic review of the literature was conducted using library resources and online access capabilities through university servers to the database of the library collections of the world's leading universities: the Oxford Academic journal database, and the online database of academic publications in the Wiley Library. In addition, search engines for academic resources Google Scholar, available resources Web of science, Scopus (Elsevier), Springer Link were used, which allowed the research team to form a reliable, objective source base for the study.

The search for scientific articles was conducted in the above international bibliographic databases using the following keywords: globalization, mass culture, national identity, hybrid identity. We reviewed articles for each search term, scanned the abstracts of all potentially publicly available articles, and selected the most relevant articles for the bibliography.

Next, we conducted a standard Google search to ensure that identity transformation under globalization, which was missing from the journals, was also included in the bibliography. We considered all relevant articles on the issues under study without time restrictions. To ensure a complete and comprehensive analysis of the source base of the issue under study, we used the snowball method, which allowed us to expand the bibliographic information of the study. Thus, the initial list of keywords was expanded and supplemented with the following categories: identity, national identity, cultural identity, hybrid culture, consumerism, local culture, changes

in traditional culture, cultural hybridization, linguistic identity.

Using the search terms provided, we searched Google Scholar, combining each primary search term with each secondary search term and each tertiary search term, for example, «globalization» + «identity», «globalization» + «identity» + «new media» + «hybrid culture», etc. The analysis of the array of information on the problem under study, together with a comprehensive study of its theoretical and methodological basis, enabled the available scientific material to be systematized.

A comprehensive review of the literature was conducted during the study, encompassing more than 50 scientific papers from various sources. The dynamics of state policy in the field of nation-building are elucidated, the results of a KIMEP study in 2012, the results of interviews with D. Bloom, M. Sengerbai, M. Laruelle, D. A. Mikhailov, and Ternova N.M., Mkrtchyan N., Sharipova D., Burkhanova A., Alpeisova A., Seidikenova A., D.V. Mingisheva, N. Daminova, I. Kudaibergenova, Sordi A., Beymenbetova S., 2016 survey. T. Bekturganova and N. I Nurgalieva, a large-scale project of the F. Ebert Foundation and others. The use of discourse analysis made it possible to consider the space that constructs reality, forming national identity.

## Results and Discussion

A comprehensive analysis of the theoretical basis of the studied question are used to identify scientific approaches and methodological bases for assessing and understanding the problem of national identity in social sciences. Discussions about the nature and content of national identity are intensified by new theoretical and applied research; scientists are faced with the problem of conceptualization and search for interpretation. Discussions are refracted into various value-based practices: the search for identity becomes equivalent to the search for meaning and ways to create new social structures (Castells, 2006:62).

Postcolonial discourse raises questions of identity and liberation from the cultural domination of colonial forces, about power, justice and cultural equality; on strengthening cultural identity, the need to preserve and restore lost or suppressed cultural elements, languages and traditions of former colonies (carnivals, festivals, national rituals, etc.); about threats from global cultural forces to cultural diversity (fast food, fashion, tourism, etc.); about the importance of supporting local creative individuals

who contribute to the preservation of national culture through their inventiveness (artwork, handicrafts, wearing national clothing, consuming goods created by local designers, etc.).

The unifying research task is to find out what the discourses in which national identity is present are aimed at, what their goal setting is, to rethink the conceptual arsenal and how to harmoniously move from the «struggle for identity» to the «dialogue of identities». Today, it is important to promote peaceful discussion of human and social development, moving from confrontation to understanding and interaction between different identities.

Kazakhstan is part of a global trend. Among the political elite, the preferred vector of globalization is modernization without «excessive» Westernization. To offset the potentially destabilizing effects of such flows, officials made numerous efforts to promote a stable and acceptable national identity. While much of this narrative promotes an inclusive (or «civic») form of nationalism, a major component is ethnically based, with Kazakhs claiming a privileged role in policymaking (Blum, 2016).

Debates about the nature of national identity, national ideals, and the Kazakh language have been going on since 1991, with Kazakhstan gaining independence. After gaining independence, the Kazakh government could not find a worthy replacement for the established identity of the «Soviet people». Over the years, different approaches have been promoted, such as Eurasianism, Turkic brotherhood, and the civil Kazakh nation. This type of violence caused trauma and hindered the development of culture and language in Kazakhstan (Burkhanov, 2017:13).

A severe problem is the tendency of the (post-Soviet) government to make false promises about the implementation of genuine political and cultural policy in Kazakhstan. The most influential social agent, the Government, faced some challenges in its identity-building policy. Attempts by the government of Kazakhstan to create a new sense of identity met with social resistance, which is an important movement in the constructivist construction of national identity. Media discussion of issues of national identity in Kazakhstan can express and direct public reaction, positive or negative attitudes to government efforts to promote a new sense of identity (Burkhanov, 2017:13).

Different perceptions of key national identity issues, such as nation, patriotism, culture, state property, and the role and placement of Kazakh ethnic groups in modern Kazakhstan are displayed by public discourse on national identity issues in both

Kazakh and Russian public discourse (Sharipova, 2020).

Kudaibergenova (2016, p. 933) argues that political postcolonial discourse in Kazakh ethnic politics represents «a highly contextual tool for legitimizing the regime and forming political opponents». She argues that the country's colonial history formed a crucial foundation for post-soviet national development projects, although this approach has been challenged by political opponents and Kazakh ethnic nationalists. Moreover, Kazakhstan did not have much experience in this area, apart from the Soviet model of ethnic governance (Daminov, 2020; Burkhanov, 2017).

Sharipova D., Burkhanov A., and Alpeisova A. identify two approaches to the consideration of nationalism and the understanding of their content by citizens of Kazakhstan, as an element in the understanding of reality. The researchers conducted a nationwide survey (N = 1,600) by using regression analysis to analyze how trust, perceptions of discrimination, and socio-economic factors affect public support for civic and ethnic nationalism(s) in Kazakhstan.

The population's support for civic nationalism is founded, despite predictions that ethnic nationalism would rise. The research suggests that the elevated level of public trust in political institutions can help form civic and ethno-nationalist sentiments. They also note that state rhetoric and state nation-building policies may have some influence on the formation of a civil nation in Kazakhstan. What type of nationalism will prevail in a country will depend on the rhetoric of the state. The study found that low levels of perceived discrimination are associated with support for civic and ethnic nationalism. A crucial point is also the fact that many socio-demographic factors, such as gender, age, education, or place of residence, do not determine civic nationalism. Trust in political institutions, trust in fellow tribe members, non-discrimination, and income level are the factors that determine it. It is essential to promote policies that create fair and equal opportunities for everyone to foster civic engagement among the population. Regarding ethnic nationalism, Sharipova, Burkhanov, and Alpeisova found several correlations between independent and dependent variables. Interestingly, living in rural areas was not linked to ethno-nationalism as some scholars had suggested. Instead, rural residents were less likely to express ethno-nationalist sentiment in Kazakhstan. This suggests that ethno-nationalism is relatively low in rural areas. However, Kazakh people and those who speak Kazakh are more likely to support Kazakh

nationalism compared to Russians. In Kazakhstan, the state's «nationalizing» policies are confirmed. A notable finding is that other minority groups, except for Russians, also support Kazakh language promotion and other policies related to the «Kazakhization» process. This may indicate that the Kazakh government has mastered the spread of the Kazakh language. The regime does not articulate various, sometimes directly opposing approaches to nation-building, such as Eurasianism, Turkic brotherhood, and the civil Kazakh nation, to avoid potential conflict. The study by Sharipova, Burkhanov, and Alpeisova showed that public perception of issues related to national identity at the grassroots level, although still based on ethnicity, is gradually shifting towards a civic identity based on citizenship. Intra-group (ethnic) trust, income, and residency determine civic-nationalist attachments in Kazakhstan. Rural residence, Kazakh ethnicity, and other factors influence ethno-nationalism (Sharipova, Burkhanov, Alpeisova, 2017).

Researcher N. Mkrtychyan uses semantic and semiotic analysis to study urbanization processes and the building of Astana as a new capital of independent Kazakhstan. It shows how ethnicism is promoted through state symbols and national identity. And how national symbols affect public opinion. The creation of national identity requires the creation of a special environment and socio-cultural texts. Thus, writers, seeking to preserve their ethnic identity and Kazakh heritage, have included in their works national narratives and cultural values. The relocation of the capital was accompanied by the migration of ethnic Kazakhs from rural regions to the new capital, which influenced the process of formation of the urban population. However, an urbanized society cannot be created overnight because it requires significant cultural changes. The urban-rural divide is due to differences in culture and behaviour: urban culture is more open, modern and secular. While rural is more closed, religious, and traditional. Kazakhstan has experienced the two types of colonization described by A. Nandi: physical and cultural, which have altered not only the body but also the minds, which significantly changes cultural priorities. The change in cultural and linguistic preferences under the influence of colonialists was a vivid sign of the marginal Kazakh identity.

After independence, Kazakhstan focused on creating a unified Kazakh identity. Independent Kazakhstan, along with modern political, economic, and social transformations to democratize society, is actively reviving the cultural and traditional aspects of the Kazakh nation, largely lost during the Russian

colonization of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has gone through a period of «soft» and «hard» colonization, firmly integrated into Russian values and culture. Therefore, a noticeable sign of the marginalization of the Kazakh identity was the change of cultural and linguistic priorities regarding the colonizers (Mkrtchyan, 2014).

The paradigm of state-building in Kazakhstan focuses not only on the power of ethnicity, but also on civic values. Urbanization in post-Soviet Kazakhstan is based on a combination of ethnic and civic approaches to nation-building. The inclusion of symbols of nomadic culture of Kazakhs in the architectural design of the new capital of Astana became a principal factor in raising national consciousness among ethnic Kazakhs. The installation of monuments to national heroes and traditional symbols also played a significant role in transforming the Soviet thinking of the people. The construction of Astana was accompanied not only by the introduction of national symbols and archetypes, but also by new social and demographic policies aimed at supporting ethnic Kazakhs. However, the inclusion of national symbols in the context of state symbols may create certain difficulties for representatives of other ethnic groups of Kazakhstan in the attempt to find a rational form of identification with the Kazakh nation. Kazakhstan's policy demonstrates strong ethnic tendencies, emphasizing ethnic affiliation and legitimizing the regime's authority (Mkrtchyan, 2014).

Urbanization plays a significant role in nation-building, and the project to build Astana served as a key component in this process. As a new post-Soviet capital, Astana contributes to the formation of both national and civic identity. The ideological basis of Astana's architecture aims to strike a balance between these two aspects of identity, incorporating elements that legitimize Nazarbayev's ethno-political vision and symbolize the transition from tradition to modernity. The urban landscape of Astana has become a place where cultural production takes place, shaped by national ideologies and serving as a space for expressing national identity. The city's ideological landscape, embodied in monuments and architectural complexes like «Kazakh Ely», Baiterek and Khan Shatyr, supports the development of ethnic identity by linking the present with archetypal past. The symbolism of Astana aims to overcome the consequences of Russian colonialism and contribute to the creation of a national identity for the Kazakh-speaking population in Kazakhstan. The inclusion of symbols from the nomadic culture of the Kazakhs has been a signifi-

cant factor in strengthening their national identity among Kazakhs living in the city.

The Kazakhs, as the titular nation, must prove that they were the indigenous autochthonous population of the territory with deep historical roots. In this context, the ethno-symbiotic approach promotes the process of ethnogenesis, in which myths, memories, symbolism and especially language serve as mechanisms of socio-cultural survival and play a decisive role in the formation of national identity. Astana, as the new capital of the 21st century, unwittingly creates an epistemological tension between political and modernization breakthroughs. When planning Astana, Kise Kurakawa warned against «cultural schizophrenia», when modernization/Europeanization poses the danger of losing certain cultural capital. «Architecture sets as its goal the symbiosis of the universal and the regional» (Bissenova, 2023: 55). The eclectic architecture of Astana reflects the process of searching for a new identity, understanding one's place in the world as defining what is unique in a globalizing world.

Major national symbols, such as the flag, anthem, and coat of arms, play a key role in strengthening national identity and can help create a sense of unity among citizens. However, in multi-ethnic societies, these symbols sometimes become a source of controversy, as they symbolize the identity of a particular nation. Dave B. (2007, p.18) emphasizes that the inclusion of cultural symbols of the Kazakhs in the state emblem provides emotional satisfaction and psychological peace for the dominant nation. However, at the same time, there is a question about the sense of equality among less represented national groups. During the Soviet period in Kazakhstan, social progress, including urbanization, was often associated with the development of the Russian language. This often led to a loss of knowledge of the Kazakh language among the population. Post-Soviet Kazakhstan represents a striking example of «symbolic language policy», where language has become a symbol of state independence and national identity. The political elite or the charismatic president became important agents in establishing national identity.

Current research on state-building processes in Kazakhstan focuses on the significant role of the ethnocratic government of Kazakhs in shaping national identity. Laruelle emphasized the impact of the media, mostly controlled by the autocratic government, in reinforcing Kazakh cultural identity. It is also pointed out that Nazarbayev constructed an «imaginary» portrayal of the Kazakh state through official historiography (Laruelle, 2015:321-340).

Mukhtar Sengirbay highlights the significant changes in the perception of the identity of ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan, which occurred because of the strengthening of the ethnic Kazakh identity, actively supported by the state. For the analysis, he used statistical and demographic data collected in a survey among ethnic Russians living in different regions of Kazakhstan. The survey questions were based on Smith's theory of the development of ethnic identity (1991). The sample was made using generally accepted criteria such as geographical location, age, sex, level of education, profession, etc. Only Kazakh citizens who define themselves as ethnic Russians participated in the study, which collected 1,244 responses and included two deep semi-structured interviews with political activists.

Sengerbay focuses on three principal areas in the understanding of ethnic identity. First, the national elites have always sought to shape the image of their compatriots by suppressing their ethnic characteristics, such as language, religion, and history, either by replacing their characteristics as a dominant ethnic group or by creating artificial supranational entities. Second, even empires have failed to create a multicultural civil nation and reduce the role of ethnicity, making it the most powerful collective identity and potential source of international conflict. Third, ethnic identities can adapt and change, and different ethnic identities can become visible for varied reasons, even without external manipulation and teleological purposes.

In Kazakhstan there are significant changes in language preferences among ethnic Russians. The new generation is gradually adopting a trend towards Kazakh Russian bilingualism, which is actively supported and promoted by the Government of Kazakhstan, especially the ethno-Kazakh political elite. The number of Kazakh Russian bilinguals is gradually increasing, which affects the change of the ethnic identity of Russians. Russians in Kazakhstan, who were formerly a monolingual group with Russian domination in all areas of Soviet life, are now becoming bilingual.

The linguistic consciousness of Russians is also changing under the influence of the Kazakh way of life and world view. Linguistic assimilation occurs naturally because of integration into society. The cultural identity of Russians in Kazakhstan is shaped by the influence of Asian Kazakh culture, which is developing at the community level without direct state intervention.

It is interestingly, M. Sengerbay also suggests that Kazakh Russians exhibit a keen sense of indigenous nationalism, expressed in a clear cultural

distance from the Russian home. Their passive desire to protect their cultural identity is due to their unclear conception of the nationalism of their homeland, Russia.

In recent years, the Russian government has become more aggressive and militaristic in its protection of the interests of Russian citizens in Kazakhstan. However, until recently, these interests were easy to defend due to several factors. Firstly, some members of the Russian elite view Kazakhstan as an integral part of Russia's identity and Russian citizens in Kazakhstan as indigenous people living on their own land. This view supports the need to protect the rights and interests of these Russians. Secondly, the demographic dominance of Russians in some northern regions of Kazakhstan makes it difficult for the Kazakh government to promote its policies (such as the promotion of the Kazakh language and culture) successfully, as it is easier to do in regions where Kazakhs outnumber Russians. Third, until 2001, Russia did not have a keen sense of nationalism among Russians in Kazakhstan, which made it difficult to mobilize political elites and the public to protect their compatriots. Fourth, most of the Russian population in Kazakhstan does not identify with Russia as their homeland, but rather with Soviet culture and history, which reduces their attachment to Russia and reinforces their sense of belonging within Kazakh society. These factors, together, explain the relatively soft response of Russia to the issues and interests of its people in Kazakhstan until recently.

The defense of the interests of Russian compatriots in Kazakhstan has become more active and military-oriented by the Russian government. However, until recently there was less intensive support for these interests, which can be explained by several reasons. First, a part of the Russian elite sees the territory of Kazakhstan as an integral part of the historical and cultural land of Russia and considers Russians living in Kazakhstan as indigenous people. Secondly, the dominance of Russians in the northern regions of Kazakhstan makes it difficult for the Kazakh authorities to implement policies aimed at strengthening the Kazakh language and culture, especially in comparison with the southern regions, where Kazakhs are in the majority. Thirdly, until 2001, Russia had not developed a strong nationalist sentiment in Kazakhstan, which made it difficult to actively mobilize the political elite and society to protect their interests in that country. Fourth, most of the Russian-speaking population of Kazakhstan feels connected with Soviet history and culture, and not with Russia as the motherland. This reduces

their identification with Russia and strengthens their sense of identity within Kazakh society. These factors explain why the Russian Government's support for its compatriots in Kazakhstan was previously less pronounced and active than at present.

The new local identity of Russians in Kazakhstan is formed by considering the cultural features that distinguish them from those in Russia. They incorporate words and expressions from the Kazakh language and adhere to Kazakh family values and culinary traditions. In their cultural life, they rely on local media and have close ties with Kazakhs, which helps them to adapt and develop a unique identity. Russians in Kazakhstan see Kazakh ethnicity as an important part of state-building, while also wanting to maintain the status quo and view Kazakhstan as a modernized version of the Soviet Union with Kazakhs playing the role of a «brotherly people». The Russian Orthodox Church in Kazakhstan plays a significant role in preserving and promoting Russian identity, supporting a pro-Russian stance in identity formation (Sengirbay, 2019).

In Kazakhstan, which is a multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious country, the religious aspect is also an essential component of identity formation and nation-building. G. Emelyanova argues that state-building in Kazakhstan often emphasizes the significance of religion in shaping identity and national identity. However, she also notes contradictions in the official stance of the country towards the Islamic revival. The government of Nazarbayev officially recognized Kazakh Sufi traditions and the Hanafi branch of Sunni Islam as traditional expressions of Islam among Kazakhs, integrating them into the process of national identity formation. Nevertheless, many members of the political elite have ignored or suppressed Kazakh Sufism in favor of Salafi Islam, due to their own lack of knowledge about Islam or the influence of secular Soviet traditions and Salafi ideas imported from abroad. The result is a duality in religious politics and the search for a national identity in Kazakhstan. While the official promotion of national unity aims to build a Kazakh nation, various groups in society, including younger Kazakhs and Muslim communities, share different perspectives on identity and the role of Islam in Kazakh society (Yemelianova, 2014: 286 – 301).

The research of Mikhailov D.A. and Ternov N.M. explores the role of Islam in the national development of Kazakhstan, identifying four approaches to the formation of «Kazakh Islam»: the state, opposition, religious, and academic. The state approach seeks to separate Islam from Orthodox

influences, while maintaining its essential features and neutralizing the influences of foreign countries and extremist groups. It also has an ambivalent relationship with Islam, which includes both support and control. Islam has the potential to be an important part of the national identity in Kazakhstan, but Arab-dominated, dogmatic Islam is beginning to weaken this identity by limiting the unifying and mobilizing power of the state's ideology. This has led to a policy of «nationalizing» Islam and creating an image of a different type of Islam. The opposition in Kazakhstan often criticizes the government's policies towards Islam, citing the loss of national identity as a result and mobilizing voters in support of their position. Islam in Kazakhstan receives constant attention and discussion in both the media and academic circles, reflecting the complexity of identity formation and strategies for national unity in modern Kazakh society. «Kazakh Islam» in the language of the SAMK (is positioned as «Sunni Islam of the Hanafi madhhab», and «other Islam» as the soil of extremism and radicalization, a set of religious practices unusual for Kazakhs, denying cultural heritage, cults, and rituals. However, this rhetoric turns out to be ineffective in dialogue with radical believers, i.e., with people deeply involved in theological subtleties.

The researchers from the Institute of Philosophy, Political Science, and Religious Studies at the Committee on Science of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan highlights the significance of preserving cultural and national identity in the context of modernization. Their proposed concept of «Kazakh Islam» integrates Islamic principles within the framework of liberal values and the «Euro-Islam» concept, aiming to foster constructive interaction between Muslim and Western societies. This approach seeks to create a harmonious coexistence between different religious and cultural backgrounds, promoting mutual understanding and respect. The authors express dissatisfaction with the politicization of Islam and its perception in the West, seeing it as an alarming trend. They seek to integrate «Kazakh Islam» into the European context by promoting dialogue and complementarity between Islamic and Western values. This approach is suitable for interpreting «Kazakh Islam» in the context of modern dialogue, allowing for the development of a national project based on a traditionalist ideology that combines religious and secular elements.

The study conducted by independent researchers at the University of KIMEP in 2012 emphasized the significance of civic identity among Ka-



zakhstani citizens during the period from the 2000s to the early 2010s. According to this study, 87% of the Kazakh population had a strong or extraordinarily strong civic identity (Spehr & Casanova, 2012). These beliefs were shared by all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, except for the Chechens, who were more likely to identify with a religious identity. These results can explain the stability of inter-ethnic relations in society, as most people identified with common «Kazakh» values. These findings emphasize the importance of civic identity in the nation-building process of Kazakhstan, helping to maintain stability and social harmony within the country's diverse ethnic environment (Daminov, 2020:133–143).

In Kazakhstan, young generation have an increased interest in preserving their national identity in a globalized world. This interest manifests itself through the adaptation of local cultural elements to global trends and the incorporation of traditions into Global culture. While there has been significant research on state-building in Kazakhstan, less attention has been paid to the perception of national identity among Kazakh youth. In today's globalized world, young people seek to maintain and strengthen their cultural identities. They are interested in preserving the traditions, customs, and language that form the foundation of their national identities. At the same time, they actively adapt local cultural elements to contemporary global contexts, incorporating them into global culture. This allows them to participate in the global community while maintaining a connection to their cultural roots. Research in this area can help us better understand how youth experience globalization and how they adapt to changing cultural and social environments while maintaining their national identities.

Creative approaches and mixing of elements of local culture with global culture began to appear in painting and music. Products with semiotic meaning that contain meaning for the reflection of national identity are becoming increasingly popular. Youth express national identity in various contexts, both material and semiotic, both in leisure and at home, at school, at work, in everyday life and in the political sphere. Likewise, adopting aspects of Western culture should not be assumed to convey any political message; instead, it may be intended as an expression of fashion, personal sophistication, and/or modernity. In Kazakhstan, as in other parts of Central Asia, Kirmse suggests, globalization provides a «marketplace of styles and identities» in which people can exercise significant choice (Blum Kirmse, 2006).

Young people are increasingly immersed in global culture, especially in Western countries. They notice that most cinematic hits are American, and Hollywood has the widest audience. However, they also appreciate the opportunity to watch films from other cultures, such as Turkey, Russia, and India. The music scene reflects this trend, with the popularity of artists like Kanye West and Lady Gaga in major cities. Youth access Western media through TV channels and interpret them according to their own perceptions. This process may not always be controlled and could pose a challenge to preserving national and cultural identities» (Blum, 2016)

Messages and symbols are disseminated by various «cultural industries», including print and electronic media, cinema, museums and even sports. The state plays a decisive role in all these areas, participating in licensing, as well as regulating public order and morality.

Such paternalistic concerns have also given rise to a fragmented set of policies aimed at managing globalization. The Kazakh public yearns for a unifying ideology or national idea that is seen not as a top-down project, but as an expression of organic unity and identity (Blum, 2016). Similar sentiments are evident in the combination of modern «ethno-rock» and nostalgic historical images found in Kazakh videos, which reflect a combination of government support and public demand. Much the same can be said about modern Kazakh cinema, whose young directors struggle with historical themes to build a meaningful past. Not surprisingly, there appears to be a reciprocal relationship between this ethnic component of nation-building and the contours of political legitimacy. Just as Kazakhs are favored in official representations of belonging, Kazakhs demonstrate the highest level of identification with the state (Blum, 2016).

The interest in the issue of national identity in Kazakhstan is influenced by both internal and external factors. Recently, events such as the war in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea have raised important questions about national identity and sovereignty. These events have stimulated discussions in Kazakhstan about what it means to be a nation and what cultural, historical, and political aspects shape national identity. For a country like Kazakhstan, with a diverse population and a multicultural society, external factors like border conflicts and changes in the geopolitical landscape can play a significant role in shaping and strengthening national unity. Discussing these issues can contribute to the process of nation-building and help consolidate society around shared values and identity. Therefore,

external factors, such as global conflicts and shifts in international relations, can have a significant impact on Kazakhstan's internal processes of self-determination and nation-building (Sharipova, 2020:1).

What do Kazakhs think about their national identity? According to a current survey conducted in January 2016, most people (93%) are «proud» to be citizens of Kazakhstan. No major differences were found between ethnic groups, place of residence or gender. However, it is important to note that the percentage of those who are «very proud» to be Kazakh has increased over time. For example, in 2006, 50% of respondents confirmed that they were «very proud» of having Kazakh citizenship; in 2011 this number was 62 %; and in 2016 it rose to 78%. This positive trend can be explained by the improvement in living standards compared to the 1990s and early 2000s. Kazakhstan has some socio-economic advantages over other Central Asian states due to significant oil revenues. Economic empowerment helps people feel proud of their country. In addition, state rhetoric contributes to a positive attitude towards the country among the population, promoting a positive image of the country in the international arena and in the Central Asian region. As a result, 91% of respondents noted that they have an extraordinarily strong sense of belonging to their country. However, the distribution varies among ethnic groups. More ethnic Kazakhs (95%) than ethnic Russians (77%) feel a keen sense of belonging to their country. It is obvious that the Kazakhs, as part of the titular nation, consider themselves «masters of the state», since they represent most of the population and associate themselves with the territory where their ancestors lived for a considerable time (Sharipova, 2020:5).

The study reveals a phenomenon of mixed cultural identity among young Kazakhs. This implies that young people maintain and convey traditional values, such as group solidarity, harmony, paternalism, and familiarity, while also embracing modern values like individual achievement and competition. This combination of traditional and modern values allows young people to adapt to changing socio-cultural circumstances while preserving important aspects of their cultural heritage. They do not reject their traditional roots but actively engage with global trends and ideas, demonstrating their flexibility and adaptability. This phenomenon is significant for understanding the process of nation-building in modern Kazakhstan, where preservation of tradition is combined with an openness to current ideas and outside influences (Blum Kirmse, Youth and Globalization in Central Asia.) One of the issues addressed

in this study is the composition of civic national identity. Respondents were asked about how important it is to have Kazakh citizenship, to be born in Kazakhstan, or to speak Kazakh to be Kazakh. According to the distribution, most respondents believe that it is important to have Kazakhstani citizenship (95%); be patriotic (94%); know the history of the country (93%); respect the law and political institutions (93%); born in Kazakhstan (86%); speak Kazakh (71%); and practice Islam (54%). As the data shows, citizenship is one of the most essential elements of Kazakh identity. One focus group interviewee noted: «In terms of civic identity, America [the United States] seems to be the best example because they are not divided into ethnic groups; they are all Americans. If you were born in America, you are an American; it [ethnicity] is not listed on their ID cards or passports like it is on ours» (Sharipova, 2020:8).

The research conducted by Seidechenova, Akkari, and Bakitov explores the difficulties and contradictions associated with the formation of citizenship in Kazakhstan throughout various historical periods, ranging from the Soviet era to the present day. During the Soviet period, Kazakhstan served as the site for various migratory events, including deportations, evacuations, and mass relocations, and it was used as a symbolic representation in allied relations. These events created a complex understanding of citizenship that was influenced by the Soviet legacy. Since Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991, it has faced rapid and significant transformations, such as globalization, migration, and new language policies that aim to maintain multilingualism. The adoption of trilingual policies (Kazakh, Russian, and English) has emerged as an important aspect of civic education, offering new opportunities for education and identity formation. In recent years, political changes aimed at achieving a more democratic transition in 2019 have also impacted the ethnic and linguistic landscape in Kazakhstan. These changes have created uncertainty and require novel approaches to identity and social integration in a rapidly changing political and social environment. The tension surrounding the concept of citizenship in Kazakhstan remains a relevant topic due to the need for a balanced approach towards ethnic and linguistic diversity within the country, considering contemporary challenges and transformations (Seidikenova, Akkari, Bakitov, 2020).

Ta Lynn M., in contrast to the liberal approach that considers citizenship in the context of the nation state, studies civic identity as a contested territory between the national and the global. The migration

of capital, people and culture undermines the nation-state's control over citizenship and cultural identity. Ta Lynn M. analyzes how globalization affects the cultural component of American citizenship, how the reorganization of the global labor economy affects gender, race, sexuality, and nationality, as well as the prospects for universal citizenship beyond national borders (Ta, 2007:2).

Movements of cultural products, people, capital, communications, ideas not only weaken the authority of the nation state, but also displace the figure of the citizen from membership in the national community. A global world without borders expands identification beyond nation and territory, as well as greater planetary hybridization. Citizens articulate their citizenship in non-nationalist terms, often identifying more clearly with features of their identity such as country of origin, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, sexuality. Nevertheless, the national continues to be a viable factor of identity. As multi-ethnicity grows, citizenship in many countries is no longer based on national cohesion, due to obvious ethnic and racial differences. Understanding civic identity, according to Richard Falk, means «the subjugation of specific identities» in exchange for the provision of order and protection in civil society» (Falk, 2004:172).

Nationalism has long been an organizing principle for people's understanding of citizenship and identity. Although the components of citizenship remain the same, the emphasis is different. citizenship is inextricably linked to issues of identity and subjectivity, demonstrating a discrepancy between a sense of territoriality, on the one hand, and a sense of belonging, on the other, individuals can live in a particular community or state and even be a full citizen, but at the same time feel a lack of belonging. Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort put it graphically: «Our «cultural» or «ethnic» home does not correspond to our «political» or «civic» home, because «belonging» breaks down into two components: «being» in one place and «longing» in a different». Their lack of home and belonging essentially becomes «the home they want to be».

Jay Paul argues that globalization is weakening the traditional power of the nation state to control citizenship and cultural affiliation. Globality has not only increased identification with the world at large, but also created opportunities for greater global interdependence (Jay, 2004).

Globalization brings new perspectives to the field of identity, offering alternative ways of forming identity compared to the traditional nation-state. As Hedetoft and Hjort note, globalization allows for

the separation of citizenship and identity from the territorial borders of the nation-state. This process is facilitated by participation in non-governmental organizations, international training institutions, and other forms of international cooperation. The authors use the term «McDonaldization» to describe the spread of cultural and political diversity associated with globalization. However, globalization has not fully replaced the role of the nation state as a factor in identity. The nation state remains an important player, especially in terms of protecting sovereignty, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting social integration. Discussions about the role of the nation state and its impact on identity continue to be relevant, particularly given the challenges posed by globalization and the increasing flow of information and cultural influences. Additionally, globalization can sometimes lead to the emergence of neo-nationalist movements that seek to express alternative forms of national identities. These movements may adapt to the realities of a globalized world, but they can also cause tensions and debates about how to preserve and promote national and cultural distinctiveness in the context of global integration.

Neo-nationalism opposes globalization processes in attempts to «save the nation», to preserve local culture from global capitalist penetration. There is a tension between two competing forces over «territory, power and rights»: the centripetal force of a consolidating national and the centrifugal force of a reorganizing global. Hedetoft and Hjort approach globalization from three different perspectives: as a curse, a blessing, and an opportunity. They point out that globalization does not erase national identities, but it has various effects on them. Their three approaches reflect different views on the impact of global processes on individuals and society». The nation state and ideology will not disappear, and the idea of global citizenship is unlikely to surpass the national idea. Globality and nationality discipline and construct the intermediate citizen in diverse ways.

Ta Lynn M. argues that the nation state remains the main factor of identity in the context of neonationalism, as opposed to globalization, and uses a cultural approach to understanding identity. He proceeds from the fact that the nation also contains a cultural dimension of identity: people learn their identity, their role as (non)citizens through everyday cultural practices. Citizenship is an acquired, active process through which culture helps create meanings, construct relationships, and construct identities.

In the context of globalization, civic/national identity may become less ethnically orientated and more universal. The fundamental difference be-

tween the extroverted West and the introverted East is being erased (Jung, 1994).

### Conclusion

From the beginning of the Soviet era to the present day, the concept of national identity in Kazakhstan has undergone numerous changes, particularly in response to political regime shifts, demographic transitions, and economic fluctuations. Approaches to the conceptualization of national identity are based on an entire range of factors. In Sharipova D., Burkhanov A., Alpeisova A., civic nationalism is determined by the level of income, trust in political institutions, in fellow tribesmen, therefore the decisive factor is the rhetoric of the state and fair social policy. Ethnic nationalism in Kazakhstan depends heavily on language policy and the country's further development as a nation-building state. At the level of ethnic identity, there has been a gradual transition towards a civic identity based on citizenship. Mkrtychyan emphasizes the importance of political, economic, and social factors in the formation of this identity, paying particular attention to cultural and traditional aspects of the Kazakh people. Dave B. also emphasizes the national emblem, political leaders, and language policies as symbols of national self-affirmation. Laruelle considers the ethnocratic government and official historiography as the main factor shaping the processes of formation of national identity. Sengirbay identified growing bilingualism in national identity, linguistic assimilation of Russians in Kazakhstan, and their cultural integration into society. Most Kazakh Russians see themselves not as new immigrants, but as an indigenous community living on their historic land. However, in a multi-cultural society, the promotion of religious teachings, especially the spread of «Kazakh Islam», in the context of a growing Kazakhstani linguistic sphere, is causing discontent among

minority groups, primarily the Russian-speaking population. The integration of religious beliefs into the process of nation-building is becoming a source of internal conflict in such a diverse society. Emilyanova attributes the ambivalent official position on religious policy to a secularized political elite, extreme ignorance of Islam, and the growing influence of young Salafist Muslims. Mikhailov D.A., Ternov N.M. They believe that there is a combination of religious, national, and secular ideologies and identify a complex and dynamic relationship between religion and nationalism.

The formation of national identity is influenced by state policies on youth, local conditions for development, and the normative frameworks for gender, religion, and ethnicity. Additionally, the standard of living and overall quality of life in society play a significant role. Bloom believes that in Kazakhstan, collectivist sentiments still prevail over individualism. There is considerable tension between modern rights-based notions on the one hand and traditional or Islamic expectations. This is especially true for issues of family ties, obedience to elders, gender roles and sexuality. Research shows that ideas about one's national identity are diverse and changeable. Future research should focus on other aspects of self-identification to move beyond the civic-ethnic dichotomy and gain a more complete picture of nation-building in Kazakhstan. Thus, there are some significant differences between the actual policy-making process in Kazakhstan and the theoretical concept of national identity formation.

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