

P. Sariyeva^{1*}, A. Abisheva¹, R. Sneller²,
S. Uralbayev³, K. Yermagambetova⁴

¹Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Almaty, Kazakhstan

²Academy Depth Psychology, Zoetermeer, Netherlands

³Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan

⁴L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Astana, Kazakhstan

*e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru

FASHION INDUSTRY IN KAZAKHSTAN: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION

This article examines the evolution of the fashion industry in Kazakhstan since the period of independence in the context of cultural globalization, analyzing the interaction of traditional cultural heritage and global influences. Through content analysis of fashion media and historical review, the research shows the process of merging and combining Kazakh motifs with modern design. Sustainability and digital platforms are emerging as key drivers of the impact of globalization. The results of the study suggest that while global integration has had an impact on the country's innovation and economic growth, it also poses obstacles to cultural identity. While globalization has spurred economic growth by fostering innovation and attracting investment, new tensions rose between modernization and cultural preservation. Risks of homogenization and commodification of heritage prompt reflections on identity in a globalized market. By examining these dynamics, the article contributes to broader debates on cultural globalization, offering insights into how post-Soviet nations navigate global integration while reclaiming cultural narratives. Ultimately, Kazakhstan's fashion landscape emerges as a microcosm of resilience, balancing tradition and modernity in an interconnected world. The study contributes to the debate on cultural globalization, clarifying the direction of global and national development dynamics in post-Soviet Kazakhstan.

Key words: Kazakhstan fashion, cultural globalization, fashion industry, traditional attire, sustainable fashion, globalization.

П.М. Сариева^{1*}, А.К. Абишева¹, Р. Снеллер²,
С.С. Уралбаев³, Қ.С. Ермағамбетова⁴

¹Әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті, Алматы, Қазақстан

²Терең психология академиясы, Зутермер, Нидерланды

³Абылай хан атындағы ҚазХҚЖӘТУ, Алматы, Қазақстан

⁴Л.Н. Гумилев атындағы Еуразия ұлттық университеті, Астана, Қазақстан

e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru

Қазақстандағы сән индустриясы: мәдени жаһандану жағдайындағы зерттеулер

Бұл мақала дәстүрлі мәдени мұра мен жаһандық әсерлердің өзара әрекеттесуін талдай отырып, мәдени жаһандану жағдайында Қазақстандағы сән индустриясының эволюциясын қарастырады. Сәндік медианы контентті талдау және тарихи шолу арқылы зерттеулер қазақ мотивтерінің заманауи дизайнмен үйлесу және бірігу үрдісін көрсетеді. Тұрақтылық пен цифрлық платформалар жаһандану үрдісі әсерінің негізгі драйверлері ретінде пайда болуда. Зерттеу нәтижелері жаһандық интеграция елдің инновациялар мен экономикалық өсуіне ықпалын көрстекенімен, мәдени бірегейлік үшін кедергілер туғызатынын меңзейді. Жаһандану инновацияларды ілгерілету және инвестиция тарту арқылы экономикалық өсуге түрткі болғанымен, зерттеу модернизация мен мәдениетті сақтау арасындағы шиеленісті көрсетеді. Мұраны гомогенизациялау және коммерцияландыру тәуекелдері бізді жаһанданған нарық жағдайында бірегейлік туралы ойлануға итермелейді. Осы динамикаларды қарастыра отырып, мақала посткеңестік елдердің бір мезгілде өздерінің мәдени мұраларын қалпына келтіре отырып, жаһандық интеграцияға қалай ұмтылып жатқаны туралы түсінік беру арқылы мәдени жаһандану туралы кеңірек пікірталастарға үлес қосады. Сайып келгенде, Қазақстанның сән ландшафты өзара тәуелді әлемде тұрақтылық, дәстүр мен заманауилықты теңестіретін микроәлем ретінде қарастырылады. Зерттеу посткеңестік елдердің, оның ішінде Қазақстанның, жаһандық және ұлттық даму динамикасының бағытын айқындай отырып мәдени жаһандану туралы пікірталасқа үлес қосады.

Түйін сөздер: Қазақстандық сән, мәдени жаһандану, сән индустриясы, дәстүрлі киім,

П.М. Сариева^{1*}, А.К. Абишева¹, Р. Снеллер²,
С.С. Уралбаев³, К.С. Ермагамбетова⁴

¹Казахский национальный университет им. аль-Фараби, Алматы, Казахстан

²Академия глубинной психологии, Зутермер, Нидерланды

³КазУМОиМЯ им. Абылай хана, Алматы, Казахстан

⁴Евразийский национальный университет имени Л.Н. Гумилева, Астана, Казахстан

*e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru

Индустрия моды в Казахстане: исследование в контексте культурной глобализации

В статье рассматривается эволюция индустрии моды в Казахстане в контексте культурной глобализации, анализируется взаимодействие традиционного культурного наследия и глобальных влияний. Исследование посредством контент-анализа и исторического обзора модных СМИ раскрывает процесс слияния и объединения казахских мотивов с современным дизайном. Устойчивое развитие и цифровые платформы становятся ключевыми факторами воздействия процесса глобализации. Хотя глобализация стимулировала экономический рост, способствуя инновациям и привлечению инвестиций, исследование подчеркивает противоречия между модернизацией и сохранением культуры. Риски гомогенизации и коммерциализации наследия побуждают задуматься об идентичности в условиях глобализованного рынка. Рассматривая эту динамику, статья вносит вклад в более широкие дебаты о культурной глобализации, предлагая понимание того, как постсоветские страны осуществляют глобальную интеграцию, одновременно возвращая себе культурные нарративы. В итоге модный ландшафт Казахстана предстает как микроскоп устойчивости, балансирующий между традициями и современностью во взаимосвязанном мире. Результаты исследования показывают, что хотя глобальная интеграция, как было доказано, оказывает влияние на инновации и экономический рост страны, она также создает препятствия для культурной идентичности. Исследование вносит вклад в дискуссию о культурной глобализации, определяя направление динамики мирового и национального развития в постсоветских странах, включая Казахстан.

Ключевые слова: Казахстанская мода, культурная глобализация, индустрия моды, традиционная одежда, устойчивая мода, глокализация.

Introduction

The global fashion industry, worth a staggering \$1.7 trillion, plays a huge role in cultural exchange, innovation, and economic influence, all of which are deeply connected to the forces of globalization. Fashion is not just about looks; it is a reflection of how identity, tradition, and modernity come together. As ideas, capital, and design philosophies flow across borders, globalization has reshaped local industries around the world, often sparking debates between cultural uniformity and the need to preserve unique traditions. This makes post-Soviet countries like Kazakhstan an interesting case for exploring how societies balance integrating into global markets while holding on to their cultural heritage.

Kazakhstan, sitting at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, carries a rich history shaped by nomadic traditions, Soviet-era industrialization, and a post-independence drive for self-definition. For centuries, Kazakh identity was expressed through intricate textiles, felt crafts (*kiyiz*), and powerful symbols like the *shañyraq* (a yurt's crown, symbolizing family unity). But during the Soviet era, centralized policies suppressed these indigenous practices, replacing them with standardized, state-driven attire that reflected socialist values. Since gaining

independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has been on a journey to reshape its national identity, blending its nomadic past with the demands of a modern, globalized world. Fashion, both as an economic sector and as a cultural expression, has become a key part of this ongoing negotiation.

Today, Kazakhstan's fashion industry is caught in a complex balancing act. On one side, it embraces global trends, digital platforms, and international supply chains; on the other, it seeks to revive traditional craftsmanship and position it as a symbol of national pride. This duality mirrors broader debates around globalization, where scholars like Roland Robertson (1995, p. 25) highlights "glocalization" – the fusion of global and local influences – as a counterpoint to cultural homogenization. But Kazakhstan's experience is unique. Unlike Russia, where globalization often means Westernization and consumerism, Kazakhstan's fashion scene is shaped by its own distinct geopolitical position, ethnic diversity, and government-driven efforts to promote cultural diplomacy.

Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, is often overlooked in global fashion discussions, which typically focus on Western, East Asian, or South Asian trends. This gap in the discourse obscures the potential of Central Asian fashion to challenge the

Eurocentric narrative of globalization. Kazakhstan's fashion scene, for example, shows how post-colonial nations use their heritage as a form of soft power while still engaging with global capitalism. Designers like The Quraq Körpe who combines nomadic patterns with minimalist designs, embody this blend of tradition and modernity. Likewise, social media platforms like Instagram have helped local brands such as Aida KaumeNOVA, Aiken and Zardozi reach international audiences, all while maintaining strong cultural narratives.

This paper looks at Kazakhstan as a case study in the larger conversation about cultural globalization. It explores questions like: How does the Kazakh fashion industry manage global influences while preserving its local traditions? How do digital platforms, sustainability efforts, and state policies shape this process? By addressing these questions, this research contributes to three key areas:

1. **Cultural Globalization Theory.** It challenges the oversimplified "global vs. local" debate, showing how Kazakh fashion blends global and local elements in ways that resist both Western dominance and nostalgic traditionalism.

2. **Post-Soviet Identity Politics.** It examines how fashion has become a tool for nation-building in a region still wrestling with its Soviet past.

3. **Sustainable Development.** It looks at how traditional eco-friendly practices, like wool felting, are being revitalized to align with global sustainability trends.

In doing so, this study fills an important gap in Central Asian research and provides insights for policymakers and industry professionals trying to balance cultural preservation with the pressures of global economic forces. As Kazakhstan continues to make its mark on the global stage—hosting major events like Expo 2017 and fostering creative hubs like Almaty's Art District—the fashion industry offers a glimpse into a nation rethinking its place in an interconnected world.

Literature review

Cultural Globalization and Fashion

Theories of cultural globalization offer great insights into the movements of fashion in a globalized context. Arjun Appadurai's "scapes" concept, which consists of ethnoscap, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes and ideoscapes allows for the examination of the global flow of people, media, technology, capital, and ideas, and their effect on local fashion culture (1996, p. 25). For example, the ethnoscapes convey the global movement of designers, artisans and consumers which helps to the

creation of hybridized fashion. At the same time, mediascapes and ideoscapes are major sources for the diffusion of modern global fashion. Along the same lines, Robertson's concept of "globalization" describes the global and local parts working together and where global trends are modified to suit the local cultures. This is especially important in places outside of the Western World because fashion in these places uses a mix of global and indigenous cultures. Baynova et al. (2019, p. 146) provides a philosophical and sociological analysis of cultural globalization, consumer society, and the fashion industry, with a focus on Russia, offering insights that are highly relevant to Kazakhstan's fashion industry and its engagement with global cultural dynamics. They argue that while globalization promotes the homogenization of cultural symbols, it also triggers resistance through countercultures that strive to preserve local identities. This tension is particularly relevant for Kazakhstan, where traditional clothing and cultural heritage are increasingly being integrated into modern fashion as a form of cultural resistance and identity preservation. Lehenkyi Yu., Arefieva Ye. (2022, p. 92) suggest that fashion can act as a medium for self-expression and cultural preservation, allowing Kazakhstan to adapt global influences while maintaining its unique heritage. This aligns with the broader discourse on alter-globalization, which advocates for a more inclusive and diverse global culture. By emphasizing the importance of cultural dialogue and the harmonization of contradictions, the paper provides a framework for Kazakhstan to engage with global fashion trends without losing its cultural distinctiveness.

Homogenization vs. Hybridization in Non-Western Contexts

Most scholars interested in fashion globalization note the conflict between homogenization and hybridization. There is, first of all, the proliferation of Western fashion brands and dominant aesthetic which seeks to endorse certain cultures. There is also the pessimistic view of the world lagged by a prevailing global branded as a mixed culture. The middle ground seeks to find intermingled forms in Asian or African societies, where local designers and consumers tend to borrow the globalized fashion for their own. For example, Japanese streetwear and African print fashion have gained global recognition for their innovative fusion of traditional and contemporary elements. These examples underscore the agency of non-Western actors in shaping global fashion narratives. Baimakhanova S. (2019, p. 113) enriches the understanding of how globalization impacts consumer behavior in the fashion indus-

try, particularly in transitioning economies like Kazakhstan, and provides strategic insights for global brands aiming to expand their reach.

Post-Soviet Fashion and Identity Reconstruction

Post-Soviet scholarship has extensively explored the role of fashion in identity reconstruction following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In countries like Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic states, fashion has served as a tool for reasserting national identities and distancing from the Soviet past. However, Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, remains understudied in this regard. The region's unique historical and cultural context, shaped by its nomadic heritage, Soviet modernization, and post-independence nation-building, offers a rich terrain for exploring fashion's role in identity formation. Kazakhstani fashion, for instance, often incorporates traditional motifs, such as ornamental patterns (*örnek*) and textiles like felt, silk and velvet into contemporary designs, reflecting a glocalised approach to fashion. Mussakhanova, M. (2022, p. 99) addresses the globalization of culture within the fashion industry, noting how international trends influence local consumer preferences. Despite the influx of foreign brands, there is a growing interest in unique, locally designed clothing that reflects Kazakh traditions and identity. This dual influence of global trends and local cultural elements is crucial for the development of the Kazakh fashion industry.

Sustainable Fashion in Kazakhstan

Sustainable fashion has emerged as a global trend, driven by growing environmental awareness and ethical concerns. In Kazakhstan, this trend intersects with local practices, such as the use of eco-friendly textiles and traditional craftsmanship. For example, Kazakhstani designers are increasingly experimenting with natural dyes, organic wool, and recycled materials, drawing inspiration from the country's nomadic heritage and its emphasis on sustainability. These practices not only contribute to environmental conservation but also promote cultural preservation by revitalizing traditional crafts. However, the lack of empirical studies on Kazakhstan's fashion ecosystem limits our understanding of how sustainable fashion is being adopted and adapted in the local context. Musakhanova, Zh. (2016, p. 323) underscores the importance of state support and technological modernization for the light industry, which is crucial for the fashion sector's growth. It also points out the potential for Kazakhstan to leverage its rich natural resources, such as cotton and wool, to reduce dependency on imports and boost local production. Furthermore, she discusses the social and economic significance of the fashion indus-

try, particularly in providing employment opportunities, especially for women.

Gaps in the Literature and Research

While existing studies provide valuable insights into cultural globalization, hybridization, and post-Soviet identity reconstruction, there is a notable gap in research on Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan. The region's fashion ecosystem remains underexplored, with limited empirical data on how global trends are localized, how traditional practices are modernized, and how sustainable fashion is evolving. This gap presents an opportunity for future research to investigate the following questions:

1. How do Kazakhstani designers and consumers navigate the tension between global fashion trends and local cultural identities?
2. What role does sustainable fashion play in Kazakhstan's fashion industry, and how does it intersect with traditional practices?

How can Kazakhstan's fashion ecosystem contribute to global discussions on cultural hybridization and sustainability?

Contributions of Kazakhstani and Post-Soviet Authors

Recent contributions from Kazakhstani and Post-Soviet authors have begun to address these gaps. For example, Kazakhstani scholars like Alimbay, N., & Yermekbayeva, A. (2021, p. 33) have explored the role of traditional textiles and craftsmanship in contemporary Kazakhstani fashion, highlighting the importance of cultural preservation in a globalized world. Similarly, Russian scholars such as Gurova, O. (2014, p. 15) have examined the role of fashion in post-Soviet identity reconstruction, providing a comparative perspective that can be extended to Central Asia. By documenting and analyzing traditional clothing, the research not only enriches the academic understanding of Kazakh culture but also fosters a deeper appreciation for its uniqueness in the global fashion landscape (Alimbay & Yermekbayeva, 2021, p. 34). This humanized approach to cultural preservation highlights the emotional and historical connections people have with their attire, making it a powerful tool for cultural diplomacy and global cultural exchange. These studies lay the groundwork for further research on Kazakhstan's fashion ecosystem, offering valuable insights into the region's unique cultural dynamics. The literature on cultural globalization and fashion provides a solid foundation for understanding the interplay between global and local forces in shaping fashion practices. However, the underrepresentation of Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan, in this discourse highlights the need for more empirical studies. By exploring the region's fashion ecosystem, research-

ers can contribute to broader discussions on cultural hybridization, identity reconstruction, and sustainable fashion, while also shedding light on Kazakhstan's unique cultural heritage and its evolving role in the global fashion landscape.

Methods and methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore the evolution of Kazakhstani fashion from 2010 to 2024. The research is structured into three main phases: historical review, content analysis, and thematic and visual analysis.

Historical Review: The historical analysis traces the development of Kazakhstani fashion from the post-Soviet era to the present day. It examines key milestones, such as the revival of traditional crafts, the emergence of local fashion weeks, and the influence of global trends. Archival data, including fashion magazines, government reports, and interviews with industry pioneers, were analyzed to contextualize the shifts in design aesthetics, consumer behavior, and industry infrastructure.

Content Analysis: A content analysis of more than 20 Kazakh fashion designers' digital platforms (Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and brand websites) was conducted to identify trends in cultural hybridization, sustainability, and digital engagement. The sample included both established and emerging designers, ensuring a diverse representation of styles and practices. Data collection focused on:

Visual content (e.g., designs, runway shows, and promotional materials).

Textual content (e.g., captions, hashtags, and user comments).

Engagement metrics (e.g., likes, shares, and follower growth).

The time frame for content analysis spanned from 2010 to 2024, capturing the rise of social media as a tool for fashion branding and global outreach.

Thematic and Visual Analysis: Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns in designers' narratives, such as the use of traditional motifs, sustainability claims, and global aspirations. Visual analysis focused on the aesthetic elements of designs, including color palettes, materials, and silhouettes, to assess how traditional and modern elements are combined.

Findings and discussions

The analysis of Kazakh fashion designers' social media content and fashion events revealed several key trends and insights:

Cultural Hybridization:

Designers like Aya Bapani, Tamyra and Saltanat Baimukhamedova with her brand "Salta" have gained recognition for integrating traditional Kazakh elements, such as *kiyiz*, *shañyrak* (nomadic symbols), and *örnek* (ornamental patterns), into contemporary designs. For example: Aya Bapani collections often feature modern silhouettes adorned with intricate felt appliques, creating a bridge between nomadic heritage and global fashion trends.

Baimukhamedova's use of shañyrak motifs in evening gowns has been widely celebrated for its symbolic representation of unity and resilience.

Social media platforms have played a crucial role in showcasing these hybrid designs to a global audience, with hashtags like #kazakhfashion and #nomadicchic gaining traction.

Digital Influence and Global Reach:

Instagram and TikTok have become powerful tools for Kazakh designers to amplify their brands. For instance: the hashtag #KazakhFashion has garnered over 2 million posts, reflecting growing international interest in the region's unique aesthetic.

Designers like Yang Lain and Nera We Nera have leveraged influencer collaborations and viral content to reach audiences in Europe, the U.S., and Asia.

Live streaming of fashion events, such as Almaty Fashion Week and Astana Style Week, has further expanded the global visibility of Kazakhstani fashion.

Sustainability and Traditional Practices:

Many designers are embracing eco-conscious practices, drawing inspiration from Kazakhstan's nomadic traditions. Key findings include:

The revival of natural dyeing techniques using local plants, such as madder root and indigo, to create sustainable textiles.

The use of organic materials like felt, wool, silk and velvet which align with global sustainability trends while preserving traditional craftsmanship. The fashion house "Kuralai" founded by the famous Kazakh designer Kuralai Nurkadilova in 1995, used in her products a large amount of handwork with the use of elite fabrics and precious stones. Later, other segments appeared: children's clothing, sportswear, military uniforms, Muslim clothing, etc. The uniqueness of this brand is in its individual approach to the client and it is one of the first fashion houses on the market of Independent Kazakhstan. Balnur Asanova, an art director of the fashion house "Symbat", was one of the first in Kazakhstan to present its collection at international fashion weeks. The "Symbat" brand positions itself as modern clothing with the Kazakh national flavor. The uniqueness of

the brand's collection is in the use of elements of traditional nomadic culture.

Brands like “Assel” and “Mandarin Narbayeva” have positioned themselves as pioneers of sustainable fashion in Central Asia, emphasizing zero-waste production and ethical labor practices.

Challenges and Barriers:

Despite these successes, Kazakhstani designers face significant challenges:

Competition from Fast Fashion: The influx of cheap, mass-produced clothing from global fast fashion brands has made it difficult for local designers to compete on price.

Intellectual Property Issues: Cases of design plagiarism and lack of legal protection for traditional motifs have hindered the growth of the industry.

Limited Infrastructure: A lack of funding, production facilities, and international marketing expertise has constrained the scalability of local brands.

Emerging Trends:

The analysis also identified several emerging trends:

Gender-Neutral Designs: Designers like Qazaq Republic and Howe are experimenting with gender-neutral collections, reflecting global shifts in fashion and societal norms.

Tech-Infused Fashion: The incorporation of technology, such as 3D printing and smart textiles, is gaining traction among younger designers.

Collaborations with Artisans: Partnerships with local artisans and craft communities are fostering innovation while preserving cultural heritage.

The findings highlight the dynamic interplay between tradition and modernity in Kazakhstani fashion. Designers are not only preserving their cultural heritage but also reinterpreting it in ways that resonate with global audiences. Social media has emerged as a critical enabler of this process, providing a platform for storytelling, brand building, and cross-cultural exchange. However, the industry's growth is constrained by structural challenges, underscoring the need for targeted interventions, such as government support, intellectual property reforms, and investment in sustainable practices.

The fashion industry of Kazakhstan, as illuminated by the findings, presents a compelling narrative of cultural resilience and adaptive innovation within the globalized economy. This discussion synthesizes these findings through the lens of globalization theory, revealing both the transformative opportunities and systemic challenges faced by Kazakh designers.

The integration of traditional Kazakh motifs – *kiyiz*, *shañyraq*, and *örnek* – into contemporary de-

signs exemplifies glocalization, where global trends are reinterpreted through local cultural frameworks. Designers like Saltanat Baimukhamedova “Salta brand” embody Appadurai's concept of “cultural flows,” navigating the tension between homogenization and heterogenization. Their work transcends mere aesthetic fusion; it recontextualizes nomadic heritage as a dynamic, living practice rather than a static relic. This strategic glocalization positions Kazakh fashion as a bridge between Central Asian identity and global haute couture, resonating with global consumers seeking authenticity in an increasingly standardized market. Social media's role in amplifying this hybridity (e.g., via #NomadicChic) underscores the dual-edged nature of digital platforms: while they risk cultural commodification, they also empower marginalized narratives to enter global discourse.

Instagram and TikTok have democratized access to international audiences, enabling Kazakh designers to circumvent traditional gatekeepers of the fashion industry. The viral success of designers like Shoqan highlights the algorithmic logic of digital globalization, where niche aesthetics can rapidly gain traction. Live-streamed events such as Kazakhstan Fashion Week and Almaty Fashion Week further illustrate how spatial barriers dissolve in the digital age, fostering real-time global engagement. However, this digital dependence raises questions about sustainability—algorithmic visibility is ephemeral, and designers must balance trend-driven content with enduring brand identity. The “influencer economy” also risks privileging style over substance, potentially diluting cultural narratives in favor of marketability.

Kazakh designers' revival of natural dyes and organic materials aligns with global sustainability movements while anchoring ecological practices in nomadic traditions. Brands like Basqa leverage this duality to carve a niche in the circular economy, echoing global discourses on ethical consumption. Yet, this alignment also exposes vulnerabilities. The premium pricing of sustainable fashion clashes with fast fashion's affordability, complicating market penetration. Moreover, the lack of standardized certifications for “sustainability” in Central Asia may hinder international trust, necessitating partnerships with global eco-labels.

The influx of fast fashion underscores the asymmetrical power dynamics of globalization, where developing industries face stifling competition from entrenched transnational corporations. Intellectual property (IP) vulnerabilities further reflect the colonial legacies of cultural appropriation; tradi-

tional motifs risk being co-opted without reciprocity. Kazakhstan's nascent legal frameworks for IP protection lag behind digital globalization's pace, demanding urgent policy innovation. Infrastructure gaps – limited funding, production bottlenecks – reveal the paradox of globalization: while digital tools enable visibility, physical scalability remains constrained by local resource disparities.

Gender-neutral collections and tech-infused designs signal Kazakh designers' engagement with global sociotechnical shifts. Howe's work mirrors broader societal debates on gender fluidity, while 3D printing experiments align with the Fourth Industrial Revolution's impact on fashion. Collaborations with artisans, however, offer a counter-narrative to technological determinism, emphasizing human-centric innovation. These trends highlight Kazakhstan's dual role as both adopter and innovator, navigating global currents while preserving cultural specificity.

To harness globalization's potential, Kazakhstan must address structural inequities. Policymakers could incentivize sustainable production, establish IP protections for traditional knowledge, and invest in textile hubs. Educational initiatives fostering digital literacy and international marketing skills would empower designers to compete globally. Cross-border collaborations, akin to the EU's creative industries programs, could amplify Central Asia's collective voice in fashion. Future research should explore consumer perceptions and offline market dynamics to complement this study's digital focus.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the Kazakhstani fashion ecosystem, shedding light on its contributions to global fashion discourse. By combining historical analysis with content and visual analysis, the research captures the multifaceted nature of cultural hybridization, sustainability, and digital innovation in the region. Kazakhstan's fashion industry exemplifies the dynamic interplay between global influences and local traditions, offering a compelling case study of how a post-Soviet nation navigates the complexities of globalization while preserving its cultural identity.

The findings reveal that Kazakh designers are not merely passive recipients of global trends but active participants in shaping a hybrid fashion narrative. By integrating traditional elements such as *kıyız*, *shañyraq* and *örnek* into contemporary designs, they create a unique aesthetic that resonates

with both local and global audiences. This cultural hybridization, amplified by digital platforms like Instagram and TikTok, positions Kazakhstan as a significant player in the global fashion landscape. However, the industry's reliance on digital tools also underscores the need for robust infrastructure and policy support to ensure sustained growth and scalability.

Sustainability emerges as a key theme, with designers drawing inspiration from nomadic traditions to align with global eco-conscious movements. The revival of natural dyeing techniques and the use of organic materials highlight the potential for Kazakhstan to lead in sustainable fashion within Central Asia. Yet, challenges such as competition from fast fashion, intellectual property vulnerabilities, and limited infrastructure reveal systemic barriers that must be addressed to unlock the industry's full potential.

Looking ahead, the study identifies several promising directions for future research. Exploring the consumer perspective could provide valuable insights into how local and global audiences perceive and engage with Kazakhstani fashion, shedding light on market dynamics and consumer behavior. Comparative studies with other Post-Soviet and Central Asian countries could offer broader insights into regional trends and shared challenges, fostering cross-border collaborations and knowledge exchange. Additionally, investigating rural-urban divides within Kazakhstan's fashion ecosystem could reveal disparities in access to resources and opportunities, informing more inclusive policy interventions. Longitudinal studies tracking the evolution of the industry over time would also provide a deeper understanding of its resilience and adaptability in the face of global shifts.

For policymakers, the findings underscore the importance of supporting craftsmanship, digital infrastructure, and sustainable practices. Initiatives such as funding for local designers, legal protections for traditional motifs, and investments in production facilities could strengthen the industry's foundation. Educational programs focused on digital literacy, international marketing, and sustainable design would empower the next generation of Kazakh designers to compete on a global stage.

In conclusion, it is my claim that Kazakhstan's fashion industry reflects a dynamic negotiation of global and local forces, offering a model for cultural preservation through innovation. By embracing its nomadic heritage while engaging with global trends, the industry not only contributes to the diversifica-

tion of global fashion but also asserts its cultural identity in an interconnected world. With strategic support and continued innovation, Kazakhstan has

the potential to become a beacon of sustainable and culturally rich fashion, inspiring other regions to navigate globalization with creativity and resilience.

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Автор туралы мәлімет:

П.М. Сариева – докторант, әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті Философия және саясаттану факультеті (Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru)

А.К. Абишева – доцент, әл-Фараби атындағы Қазақ ұлттық университеті Философия және саясаттану факультеті (Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: abishevaliya@mail.ru)

Р. Снеллер – PhD профессор, Терең психология академиясы (Зутермер қаласы, Нидерланды, e-mail: h.w.sneller@gmail.com)

С.С. Уралбаев – аға оқытушы, Абылай хан атындағы ҚазХҚЖӘТУ (Алматы, Қазақстан, e-mail: uralbaev.s@ablaikhan.kz)

Қ.С. Ермагамбетова – философия докторы (PhD), Л.Н. Гумилев атындағы Еуразия ұлттық университеті философия кафедрасының доценті м.а. (Астана, Қазақстан, e-mail: quralai.sergabylyzy@mail.ru)

Information about the author:

P.M. Sariyeva – PhD student, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science (Almaty, Kazakhstan. e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru)

A.K. Abisheva – Professor, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Faculty of Philosophy and Political Science (Almaty, Kazakhstan. e-mail: abishevaliya@mail.ru)

R. Sneller – PhD Professor, Academy Depth Psychology. (Zoetermeer, Netherlands, e-mail: h.w.sneller@gmail.com)

S.S. Uralbayev – Senior Lecturer, Kazakh Ablaikhan University of International Relations and World Languages (Almaty, Kazakhstan, e-mail: uralbaev.s@ablaikhan.kz)

K.S. Yermagambetova – Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Associate Professor at the Department of Philosophy, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University (Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: quralai.sergabylyzy@mail.ru)

Сведения об авторах:

П.М. Сариева – докторант, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, факультет философии и политологии (Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: perizat_sm@mail.ru);

А.К. Абишева – доцент, Казахский национальный университет имени аль-Фараби, факультет философии и политологии (Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: abishevaliya@mail.ru);

Р. Снеллер – PhD профессор, Академия глубинной психологии (Зутермер, Нидерланды, e-mail: h.w.sneller@gmail.com);

С.С. Уралбаев – старший преподаватель, КазУМОиМЯ имени Абылай хана (Алматы, Казахстан, e-mail: uralbaev.s@ablaikhan.kz);

К.С. Ермагамбетова – доктор философии (PhD), и. о. доцента кафедры философии Евразийского национального университета имени Л.Н. Гумилева (Астана, Казахстан, e-mail: quralai.sergabylyzy@mail.ru).

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