

THE NOTION OF “KAZAKHNESS” BEHIND THE SYMBOLIC NATION-BUILDING OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Abstract

The paper deals with the processes of overcoming Russian ‘colonial’ impediments to the creation of symbolic spaces for the emergence of a new national self-consciousness in Kazakhstan. The paper highlights the importance of Nazarbaev’s decision to transfer to and construct a new capital Astana in fostering the ideas of national identity and ethnic belonging. Therefore, an attempt has been made to observe the phenomena of urbanization and reformulation of state symbols in explaining both ethnic and civic mechanisms of influences on people’s consciousness. Additionally, the works of various Kazakh intellectuals and cultural figures have been taken into consideration to examine the notion of Kazakhness and its’ contribution to the development of the Kazakh national identity. Content analysis of architectural design of Astana and state symbols is essential to understand the vision of Kazakhstan’s imagined future.

Keywords: Astana, post-Soviet, post-colonial, national identity, nation building

1. Introduction

After the breakdown of the Soviet Empire all post-communist regimes emphasized the role of ethno nationalism in establishing new nation-building projects. The model of Kazakhstan’s nation building is quite unique in terms of harmonious interethnic coexistence of a multiethnic society. Since independence President Nazarbaev initiated serious programs in an effort to start active nation-building processes. As a matter of fact, Nazarbaev’s nation and state building policies are represented for the Kazakhs as a *civilizational endeavor*. Nazarbaev took Kazakhstan through large scale administrative, legislative, social, economic and political reforms. Consequently, economic development was considered both a crucial aspect of nation-building and a process by which traditional Kazakh society became more modernized and complex. The article investigates one of the most salient manifestations of Kazakh modernization in the context of post-Soviet nation-building: the transfer and construction of contemporary capital of Kazakhstan. The decision to transfer capital from Almaty to Astana was result of long and meaningful discussions of public, presidential and parliamentarian level. According to September 15, 1995 presidential Decree *on the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan* a State Commission was formed to organize the transfer of

the highest and central authorities to the city Akmola (Astana).¹ By another presidential Decree *on declaring the city Akmola the capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, the city of Akmola became the capital of Kazakhstan and renamed Astana in 1998.²

Although Nazarbaev mentioned 32 criteria (climate landscape, seismic conditions, social and economic indicator, infrastructures, communications etc.) for transferring the capital³, the decision had also significant national implications, which were affirmed by the demographic policy of Astana and new architectural and symbolic solutions. Furthermore, the article examines the negative legacy of Russian *colonialism* on Kazakh's national identity and urban consciousness. Soviet modernization (social, political) in line with industrialization and urbanization played significant role for Soviet Russia in establishing its colonial control in Kazakhstan. The urban areas and especially rapidly growing Astana were populated by non-Kazakh (mostly Russophone) ethnic population, and especially by Russians. The organized migration of ethnic Kazakhs from rural to urban areas during the post-Soviet nation-building processes can be seen a policy towards the becoming post-colonial. The mix of national icons and western architectural motifs of various buildings of independent Kazakhstan is a kind of Kazakh post-modernism tending to overcome the Soviet '*colonial*' legacy of Kazakhstan.

The ethno symbolic approach encourages the processes of ethno-genesis, in which myths, memories, symbolism and especially *language* as mechanism of socio-cultural survival play fundamental role in analyzing formations of national identity.⁴ The incorporation of symbols of Kazakh's nomadic culture has become essential in increasing national self-consciousness among ethnic Kazakhs. As case in point, the article also investigates the interplay between Kazakhstan's ethnic politics and state symbols in explaining civic or ethnic approaches of nation-building.

Following this introduction, the paper aims to set up meaningful coherence between various theoretical ideas and nation-building policies of Kazakhstan. The theoretical framework of this paper combines review of a choice of literatures on nationalism, literature, semiotics, ethno symbolism and post-Colonial studies. The ideas derived from the theories inclined to provide support for the interpretation of the nation-building processes of Kazakhstan. The subsequent section is dedicated to the state's decision on movement and construction of capital Astana in analyzing the nation-building implications behind the decision of Kazakhstan's elite.

¹ Norsultan Nazarbaev, *The Kazakhstan Way* (London: Stacey International, 2008), 303.

² *Ibid.*, 310.

³ *Ibid.*, 299.

⁴ Anthony Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London, New York: Routledge, 2009), 46.

Additionally, both semiotic and semantic analyses of state symbols and Astana's key architectural buildings give considerable understanding of Kazakhstan's ethnic and civic nationalism. This part of the article outlines the phenomenon of the incorporation of symbols of Kazakh's nomadic culture in increasing national self-consciousness among ethnic Kazakhs.

2. Theoretical Framework

Although it is assumed that nationalism is a Western phenomenon, John Plamenatz distinguishes Western nationalism from Oriental nationalism. To Plamenatz the dichotomy between Western and Oriental nationalisms is that the former feels disadvantage but has enough cultural potential to overcome those deficiencies, while the latter, which is typical to African, Asian and even Slavic civilizations, has no strong cultural base to resist the imperial or colonial domination of "Others".⁵ In Eastern kind of civilizations nationalism in line with innovative policies are used by certain leaders or regimes in an attempt to respond to the externally given challenges and achieve public legitimacy for their authority. However, even considering that there is no considerable cultural base in a society, nation-building can be supported by national resources and a charismatic political leader who holds the nation together. Since the final years of Soviet Union the personality of Nazarbaev has been associated with the emergence of national self-consciousness. The origins of public perception of Nazarbaev as a leader of nation are derived from the age of Gorbachev's perestroika. The political decision of Gorbachev to replace Kunaev from the post of First Secretary of the Party with an ethnic Russian Gennady Kolbin awakened ethnic mobilization among Kazakhs. Gorbachev's decision was conceived by ethnic Kazakhs as a negative attempt to subordinate the sense of *Kazakhness*.

As a consequence, on June 22, 1989, Moscow decided to remove Kolbin and appoint an ethnic Kazakh speaking politician Nazarbaev who had special attitude towards national and traditional values and was enjoying the people's respect.⁶ After the establishment of an independent Kazakhstan, the shared visionary future of national imagination provides an opportunity for the authority of Nazarbaev to achieve charismatic values. In this context, these characteristics of charismatic authority differ from the classical concept of charisma developed by Max Weber, who describes charismatic leadership as a "certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with

⁵ John P. Plamenatz, "Two Types Of Nationalism", Eugene Kamenka, ed., *Nationalism and Evolution of an Idea*, (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973). 32-34.

⁶ Martha Brill Olcott, *Kazakhstan: Pushing For Eurasia*, in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, eds., *New States, New Politics: Building The Post-Soviet Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997). 553.

supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities".⁷ The leadership of Nazarbaev can be defined as charismatic because he has been successful in trying to change the attitudes of his followers towards the acceptance of advocated vision.⁸ During the whole period of his rule Nazarbaev's 'plan-based political activity' tended to meet his followers' needs in terms of creating spaces for national imagination and opportunities for overcoming threats and challenges of the past. What can be pointed out here is that we should perceive the idea of Nazarbaev's charismatic leadership as a consequence of successful counter-challenge struggle in favor of nationhood and nation building.⁹

The problems concerning identity crisis of the Kazakh nation are highly comprehended by Nazarbaev's regime. It would be wrong to assume that those challenges are only typical to the Kazakh nation. The phenomenon should be examined within its civilizational context: the fall of Soviet Union created different challenges not only for Kazakhstan but also for fifteen other former Soviet republics. The concept of "challenge and response" is introduced by great thinker Arnold Toynbee to describe the rise and fall of Civilizations. According to Toynbee's developed theory the idea of a challenge provides positive opportunity to a particular group of a people to demonstrate visionary driven leadership in overcoming threats created by the history or past.¹⁰

The post-Soviet nation-building policies of Nazarbaev regime including aspects of urbanization, language politics, ethnic management and identity politics, seem to be considered as efforts exerted to provide responses to Soviet and even Tsarist challenges. However, it is important to mention that the creation of the sense of national identity among Kazakhs is not a mere political process baked by the leader of the nation. The creation of national identity is a phenomenon that is supported by multidimensional cultural and social disciplines. In order to permit national identity to be organized and manifested, it is necessary to set up particular environments and socio-cultural texts such as urban, verbal and oral communication spaces.

⁷ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, eds. Talcott Parsons (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 358.

⁸ Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, "Towards a Behavioral Theory of Charismatic Leadership In Organizational Settings," *The Academy Of Management Review*, (1987): 640.

⁹ Rico Isaacs, " 'Papa' – Nursultan Nazarbayev And The Discourse Of Charismatic Leadership And Nation-Building In Post-Soviet Kazakhstan," *Ethnicities And Nationalism* 10 , no. 3 (2010): 439.

¹⁰ See, Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History: Volume I: Abridgement of Volumes I-VI*, ed., D. C. Somervell (London: Oxford University Press, 1987). 56-60.

Nevertheless, among various cultural texts the phenomenon of literature should be emphasized. Generally literature is considered the most essential sphere through which one can illustrate not only cultural distinctiveness of a certain nation, but also the dynamic of identical transformation. Literature which is also known as "high culture" is directly connected with identity construction. Similarly, in the 1960s the national and cultural identities of the British were shaped under the influence of "high culture-Shakespeare and the tradition of English literature".¹¹ The literary methodology of identity study is common especially in post-colonial studies in which literary resistance is one of the best ways to identity formation. However, considering the fact of strict Soviet censorship it can be assumed that the writers and other intellectuals of the Kazakh nation could hardly express clear national values in their works. On the other hand, it should be noted that in the case of analysis of the literature of other states of the same Soviet system, such as Armenia, there appears to have been some misunderstanding concerning literary resistance.

As a point of clarification, the works of Soviet Armenian writer Hrant Matevosyan like *Hangover* provide clear illustration of literary resistance against the Soviet ideology.¹² The novel of Matevosyan, written in the last years of Soviet Union, describes modernization policies of Soviet Union as attempts towards sovietization which caused the crisis of Armenian national identity.¹³ Of course, we can't say that cultural actors and intellectuals of Soviet Kazakhstan did not play serious role in transmitting national impulses to identities of the Kazakhs. Additionally, if we take into account that literary works of Kazakh intellectuals were mostly written in Russian, then it would be considered odd for someone to think about literary resistance against national identity crisis. In the case of Kazakhstan the problem also is that Kazakh writers were "unable" to include any concrete undesirable literary topics in Soviet Kazakh literature describing national awakenings like Kenesary's¹⁴ activity against colonial rule or Alsh nationalist movement¹⁵, or national traumas like Virgin Land Campaign or deportation of nations.

¹¹ Jonathan Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997), 53.

¹² For More Detail See Hrach Baydyan, "Soviet Armenian Identity and Cultural Representation", in *Representations on the Margins of Europe: Politics and Identities in the Baltic and South Caucasian States*, eds., Tsyplma Darieva and Wolfgang Kaschuba (Campus Verlag GmbH, 2007), 208.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁴ Kenesary Kasymov or Kenesary khan (1802 - 1847) being the last ruler of the Kazakh Khanate, led national liberation war against the Russian colonial conquest (1837 - 1847). Kasymov's national liberation movement has been known in the Kazakh history as period of 'great' revolt against Russian colonization. See, Steven Sabol, "Kazak Resistance to Russian Colonization: Interpreting The Kenesary Kasymov Revolt, 1837-1847," *Central Asian Survey* 22, no 2-3, (2003): 231.

¹⁵ Alash nationalist movement was formed in resistance to Russian colonization in 1905. The movement was headed by Alikhan Bukeikhan and other Russian educated Kazakhs

However, it would be quite meaningful to draw reader's attention to some literary works of Soviet Kazakh writers who, in any case, tried to express national ideas in their works. The outstanding ones among those writers are Mukhtar Auezov and Ilyas Yessenberlin, who used national narratives and cultural values in their works "in search for Kazakhs' own ethnic identity and heritage".¹⁶ In this regard the nation-building process of Nazarbaev seems also to be a search for Kazakh's ethnic identity for the population. The relocation of capital in line with ethno-linguistic politics of Nazarbaev¹⁷ is among various official policies concerning the publicization of Kazakh's national identity. The relocation of capital has been accompanied by the movement of ethnic Kazakh speaking people from rural areas to newly established capital. Indeed, this policy has its real demographic aspect aiming at encouraging the notion of 'Kazakhness' among urban population.

Urbanization is among key responses to Soviet challenges: due to Soviet politics ethnic Kazakhs especially were concentrated on agricultural works. There are two

intellectuals like A. Baytursynov, Kh. Dosmukhamedov, Zh. Dosmukhamedov, M. Dulatov, Kh. Gabbasov, S. Amanzholov, M. Tynyshbaev, B. Kulmanov, M. Zhumabaev, M. Chokaev, G. Karashev, A. Ermekov whose activity became effective in resisting colonial yoke, resurrecting statehood and incorporating Kazakh society into the ranks of civilized nations. See, Nurpeis, K., "Kazakhstan", in *History Of Civilizations Of Central Asia, Volume VI, Towards the contemporary period: from the mid-nineteenth to the end of the twentieth century*, eds., Chahryar Adle, Madhavan K. Palat, Anara Tabyshalieva, (Paris: UNSECO publishing, 2005) 253-254. Charles F. Carlson, "The Concept of Sovereignty In Kazakhstan From Kultegin To The Present", in *Altaic Berolinensia: The Concept Of Sovereignty In The Altaic World*, ed. Barbara Kellner-Heinkele (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasswitz, 1993). 64.

¹⁶ Diana T. Kudaibergenova, "Imagining Community" in Soviet Kazakhstan. An Historical Analysis Of Narrative on Nationalism in Kazakh-Soviet Literature, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal Of Nationalism and Ethnicity* 41, no. 5 (2013): 841.

¹⁷ The linguistic policy of Nazarbaev is considered as inseparable and decisive aspect of Kazakhstan's Nation Building Processes, Which will be analyzed in my forthcoming article, entitled "*Linguistic Policy Of Independent Kazakhstan: National Imagination?*". However It Would Be Worth Mentioning To Emphasize Some Details Concerning Post-Soviet language policy of Kazakhstan: The publicization of Kazakh language has been one of the key priorities of Nazarbaev since Soviet times, When the 1989 language law granted Kazakh language as a state language by providing it's usage at all educational levels. See Renata Matuszkiewicz, "The Language Issue in Kazakhstan-Institutionalizing New Ethnic Relations after Independence," *Economic and Environmental Studies* 10, no. 2 (2010): 215. In addition, according to the 1992 Degree On Education, Kazakh was confirmed as the state language and in 1993 The First Kazakhstani Constitution defined Kazakh as the *State Language* demoting the status of Russian as the *Language Of Interethnic Communication*. Another essential official policy of Kazakhstan Regarding Dissemination of Titular Language Is The 1996 decision of state committee for nationalities to change alphabet from cyrillic to latin. See, Jacob M. Landau, and Barbara Kellner-Heinkele, *Politics of Language in The Ex-Soviet Muslim States: Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan*, (London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 2001), 140.

types of ethnic tension between urban and rural Kazakhs: Kazakhs living in urban areas assimilated to Russians and have an ethnic identity and national language crisis, while Kazakhs living in rural areas maintained continuity of their cultural, identity and language.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Kazakhstan's government could not guarantee the creation of a new urban population by encouraging the emigration of illiterate peasants from villages to Astana. The urban population cannot be created demographically in a short period of time as it should go through key cultural disciplines like literature, film, theater and education. The building of Astana produced a gap between the city and countryside. The gap was defined by the cultural and behavioral differences of the city and the countryside: the culture of the city is open, modern and secular but the culture of countryside is closed, religious and traditional.¹⁹

The distinction between the Kazakh rural and urban populations is considered a key indicator of identical alteration. The dichotomy of traditional and modern societies is expressed in a clear language differences. In this regard it is enough to look into a discourse on *mankurtism*.²⁰ Kazakh speaking ethnic Kazakhs living in rural areas of Kazakhstan consider Russian speaking Kazakhs as *mankurts* so as they lose their ethnic and linguistic affiliations. To understand the identical aspect of the phenomenon it would be quite appropriate to discuss the latter within a context of post-Colonial theory, which will allow making comparison between Central Asian *mankurtism* and African *blackness* in terms of deracination of negativity from their identities. Fanon, in his work "*Black Skin and White Masks*"²¹ as a follower of A. Ce'saire and J. P. Sartre, states that colonizers can overcome colonial impediments only by producing counter narratives. On the other hand, under the light of the post-colonial idea²² the negative notion of *mankurtism* can be transformed into a positive source of national identity formation: if an ethnic Kazakh wants to be a pure Kazakh, he or she should cope with the situation by learning the Kazakh language and returning to the national culture and traditions. The period of Russian conquest

¹⁸ Neil J. Melvin, "Russia And The Ethno-Politics Of Kazakhstan", *The World Today* 49, no. 11(1993): 209.

¹⁹ Samuel Huntington, *Political Order In Changing Societies*, (New Haven And London: Yale Univ. Press, 2006), 72.

²⁰ The phrase of '*mankurtism*' firstly used by Kyrgyz writer *Chingiz Aitmatov* in his novel '*The Day Lasts More Than A Hundred Years*' to denote the ignorance of one's history, linguistic and cultural identity. See Chingiz Aitmatov, *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

²¹ Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin And White Masks*, trans. Markmann C. L. (London: Pluto Press, 1986).

²² Ce'saire in his book "*Discourse on colonialism*" goes on to say that blacks can create new identity for themselves through the deconstruction of the negative Eurocentric term *ne'gre*. See Aimé Ce'saire, *Discourse On Colonialism*, trans. J. Pinkham. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000).

of Kazakhstan has been accompanied by the incorporation of Russian values in Kazakh society. The imperial civilizing mission of Tsarist and Soviet Russia to bring civilization to the backward hordes questioned Kazakhs' intellectual and 'cultural' development. To understand the reasons of Russia's modernization one should examine it through the prism of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, where he argues that all empires frame their colonial aims as being civilizing missions.²³ Additionally, Ashish Nandy in his book *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* discusses two kinds of colonization: one is a physical conquest, and another is 'soft' colonization, which tends to "colonize minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once for all".²⁴

Kazakhstan has experienced both kinds of colonization practices described by Nandy, but the alteration of cultural and language priorities in favor of colonizers is the best indicator of marginalized Kazakh identity. The idea of civilizing mission of Russia is considered as a part of ethnic Russian's discourse on the role of Soviet policies. Bhavna Dave in his "*Kazakhstan: ethnicity, language and power*" by referring to the marginalized status of Kazakh identity and Russians' reactions to Kazakh's complaints, presents the conversation with an ethnic Russian:

Who built these buildings, streets, schools and hospitals? Who developed this city (Almaty)? Of course we did! It was called Vernyi then – a pure Russian name. There were no Kazakhs here when we came. They only roamed in the steppe and lived in the *yurts*.²⁵

The Russification of Kazakhstan has historically been an essential part of the political agenda of Russia. Taking into consideration the civilizing mission of Russia and high proportion of ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan, some of Russian academics started to consider the discourse of incorporation of northern Kazakhstan into Russia as a part of Russian ethnic nationalism. Among these academic the distinguishable one was Soviet dissident writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, who in his essay "Rebuilding Russia" published in one of Moscow leading newspapers *Komsomolskaya pravda*, offered to create "Greater Russia" by incorporating eastern and northern parts of Kazakhstan into Russia.²⁶ Thus, the construction of Astana with its architectural symbolic power is comprehended as a counter narrative text towards overcoming Russian 'colonial' obstacle to the creation of national self-consciousness and Kazakh speaking urban population in Kazakhstan. Along with the creation of Astana it is necessary to take into account also other spaces of

²³ Edward Said, *Orientalis* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 142.

²⁴ Ashish Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss And Recovery Of Self Under Colonialism* (Deli: Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), 11.

²⁵ Bhavna Dave, *Kazakhstan: Ethnicity, Language and Power*, (London, New York: Routledge, 2007), 18.

²⁶ Alexander I. Solzhenitsyn, "Rebuilding Russia", (Komsomolskaya Pravda, 1990).

ideological and symbolic influence through which not only national but also civic ideologies have been disseminated. In the multinational society of Kazakhstan, the titular nation can legitimize its existence by referring to past archetypes. In order to overcome demographic disproportion, Kazakhs as a titular nation have to prove that they are indigenous population deeply-rooted in early local history and prehistory.²⁷ In this context, the ethno- symbolic approach encourages the processes of ethno-genesis, in which myths, memories, symbolism and especially language as mechanism of socio-cultural survival play fundamental role in analyzing formations of national identity.²⁸ With respect to Kazakhstan, it can be argued that content analysis of state symbols provides important information about state's nationality policies.

In order to understand the meaning and functions of symbols it is necessary to investigate the latter through the prism of code-language theory of semiotics. The fathers of modern semiotic theory, Charles Peirce introduced three types of signs: index, icon, symbol for deciphering and analyzing certain texts.²⁹ Using the framework of Piercian icon-index-symbol typology, another leading semiotician Thomas A. Sebeok in his *Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics* developed six categories of signs: signal, symptom, icon, index, symbol and name to analyze non-linguistic communications.³⁰ Steven Knowlton by applying the typology of signs of T. Sebeok tries to conduct discussion on the study of flags as a non-verbal communication, in which he analyzes flags as signals, icons, indexes and symbols.³¹ Furthermore, he describes the flag of Kazakhstan as an indexical sign representing the signified through revelation of some facts of cultural geography such as the incorporation of national ornaments into the content of the flag.³² The principles of Sebeok's semiotic analysis is also applicable to the analysis of other national symbols, like national emblem, anthem etc.

Another important component of semiotics, which is music is examined as a semiotic system or in other word system of signs. Among semiotic theories which examine musical meaning the theory of Wilson Coker should be emphasized. Coker in his *"Music and Meaning"* developed the concept of musical gesture, which tends to do more than signs, in terms of doing something rather than saying something

²⁷ Victor A. Shnirelman, "Politics of Ethnogenesis in the USSR and After", *Bulletin Of The National Museum Of Ethnology* 30, no.1 (2005):114.

²⁸ Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism*, 46.

²⁹ Charles S. Peirce, *Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, (New York: Courier Dover Publications, 2012),101-105.

³⁰ Thomas A. Sebeok, *Signs: An Introduction To Semiotics*, 2nd Edition (Toronto: University Of Toronto Press, 2001).

³¹ Steven A. Knowlton, "Applying Sebeok's Typology of Signs to the Study of Flags," *Raven: A Journal of Vexillology* 19, (nov. 2012): 59-67.

³² *Ibid.*, 72.

about something.³³ Coker's theory is based on the notion of action and reaction, in which emotions evoked within hearers, play a role of musical signs. Similarly Osmond-Smith goes on to say that evocation of emotions is an iconic process backed up by the system of musical signs.³⁴ The encouraging example of an emotional musical sign is a national anthem which refers to the distinctiveness of certain nation. Another musicologist-semiologist is Eero Tarasti, who examines music as a semiotic system and argues that national anthem as a marked signs constitute as sign of social continuum.³⁵ As will be seen later, in the semantics of national anthem of Kazakhstan the idea of the rebirth of the native language is perceived as a necessity or "warning sign" for the future Kazakh generations to save their national identity and ethnicity.

3. Astana: A Model of National Innovation

After the demise of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan paid special attention to the emergence of pan-Kazakh identity. For this, the newly established independent Kazakhstan started to use not only political, economic and social innovative tools but also cultural and traditional archetypes of the Kazakh nation. As a case in point, one should focus on the urbanization policies of Kazakhstan. However, the urbanization should not be considered as a mere representation of post-Soviet modernization; rather, it should be seen as a crucial aspect of nation building. Nazarbaev states that the idea of the replacement of the capital is associated with the state ideology and the concepts of patriotism and statehood.³⁶

The relocation of Astana city was a transitional phenomenon in Kazakh reality. The former city Almaty was the capital of Soviet Kazakhstan. Almaty's cultural heritage is a mixture of Soviet historical and cultural landscapes, which could have influence on people's ideological preferences. The project of Astana tended to be transformed into a new post-Soviet center for the emergence of national and civic identities. The latter would provide a wide range of opportunities for citizens of the city to exclude themselves from Soviet or colonial imagination and enter into a post-Soviet era. National urban surfaces, symbols and artifacts being identity-forming factors constitute inseparable parts of Astana's architecture, which will outline the processes of nation building. The ideological coherence of Astana's architecture inclines to keep balance between civic and ethnic identity construction. The project of Astana, being conceptualized as national innovative project, contains legitimization and justification elements for Nazarbaev's ethno politics. Nazarbaev's

³³ Wilson Coker, *Music and Meaning* (New York: Free Press, 1972), 18-19.

³⁴ David Osmond-Smith, "The iconic process in musical communication," *Versus* 3 (1972): 40.

³⁵ Eero Tarasti, *Signs of Music: A Guide to Musical Semiotics; Approaches to Applied Semiotics* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 6.

³⁶ Nazarbaev, *The Kazakhstan*, 318.

urbanization policies are quite essential for Kazakhs in terms of transition from traditional to modern. On the other hand, it can be argued that Astana's modernistic architecture is mixed with the notions of traditional and modernity, which constitutes a part of urban environment of the city. Urban environment is a space of cultural production, which is intermediated by national ideologies. The urban environment of the newly established capital with architectural design is considered itself as social utopian place for national identity through which people's identity is stamped in time and space.

The idea of social utopia is not a mere contemporary product backed by the policies of Nazarbaev regime; rather it has been stamped on Kazakh culture by XV century Kazakh philosopher and politician Asan Kaygy, who introduced the ideas of social utopia in searching "promised land" for societal coexistence.³⁷ It is interesting to note that such ideas are used for identity construction and delivered by the state through popular culture also. As a case in point, one can focus on one of the state sponsored films of Kazakhstan, called *Жерұйық* (Promised Land). The film starts with the words of the founder of Kazakh literature Abai Kunanbayev (1845-1904); "*Love all people of the world as if they were your brothers*".³⁸ The film emphasizes the humanistic attitude of the Kazakhs towards forcibly deported people. At the end of the film a voice of an older Korean man could be heard, who pronounce the following sentences: "We are thankful to the Kazakh nation, which despite its difficulties carried out the highest mission of the savior. And this ancient Kazakh land for us has become a truly promised land - *Жерұйық*".³⁹ The final fragment of the film is followed by the scenes of modern buildings of Astana, which tends connect the ideas of "promised land" and the newly established capital.

The ideological landscape of the city supports the development of ethnic identity by referring to the past archetypes. In particular, the monuments dedicated to historical figures, a great poet, educator and founder of Kazakh written literature Abai Kunanbaev (1845-1904) and to the khans Kerey and Zhanibek are supposed to be the articulation of national narrative. Kerey and Zhanibek and Abai Kunanbaev are considered key cultural and political actors of Kazakh nation. The emergence of Kazakh nationality was ascribed to the period of Kazakh Khanate in 15th century, when Kerey and Zhanibek engaged in a successful struggle for separating Kazakhs Kypchak tribes from Uzbek Khanate by consolidating them on their ethnic

³⁷ Abdumalik Nysanbayev, *Kazakhstan: Cultural Inheritance and Social Transformation*, (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2004), 30.

³⁸ Slambek Tauekel. (Director). (2010). *Zheruik* (The Promised Land): Drama, History, 00:25. Kazakhstan. Available At: [Http://Kinopod. Ru/Video. Html?id=19871](http://Kinopod. Ru/Video. Html?id=19871) [Accessed: 18 January 2012].

³⁹ Ibid., 01:47.

territory.⁴⁰ The idea of a monument to Kazakh khans as a symbol of national struggle derives from the literary works of Soviet Kazakh writer Ilyas Yessenberlin (1915-1983), who in his historic-literary *Koshpendiler (Nomad)* trilogy, in the first book entitled *Alams Kylysh* (1971) describes the founders of Kazakh Khanate as national positive hero-symbols.⁴¹ Similarly, parallels could be drawn between the symbolic influence of Abai monument and excellent epic novel of Soviet writer Mukhar Auezov (1897-1961) (*Abai's Way*) about the life of Abai, in which he discusses freedom-loving soul of the Kazakh people, his imagined future and national character of nomadic Kazakhs in the second half of the 19th century.

3.1 Key architectural buildings

The idea of the national imagination, development and statehood of Kazakhstan are stamped in the architectural and sculptural design of various monumental buildings. Among these architectural buildings "Kazakh Eli" monumental complex should be emphasized. The monument is represented as a mix of nomadic, inter-ethnic and national ornaments. The Kazakh mythical sacred bird Samruk situated on the peak of the tower, symbolizes the idea of Kazakhstan's further development. The symbolic meaning of Samruk is applied to the architectural context of the Kazakh Eli monumental complex to prioritize national and traditional ideas in strengthening the process of rebirth and development of the Kazakh nation. The central symbol of statehood like the bronze statue of President Nazarbaev is situated in one of the niches of the monument to emphasize the role of the president's leadership in the nation building process.⁴² In addition, it is noticeable that there is also a Museum of the First President of Kazakhstan with the shape of Kazakh nomadic yurt dedicated to Nazarbaev, in Astana.⁴³ Besides buildings, the symbol of Nazarbaev's leadership is

⁴⁰ Karl Baipakov and Bulat E. Kumekov, "The Kazakhs", in *History Of Civilizations Of Central Asia, Vol. V, Development In Contrast: From The Sixteenth To The Mid-Nineteenth Century*, eds., Chahryaradlehabib, I., Baipakov, K. M., (Paris: UNESCO publishing, 2003). 90-91. Andijapar Abdakimov, *Istoria Kazakhstana; S Drevneishikhvremen Do Nashikh Dnei*, (History Of Kazakhstan: From Ancient Times To The Present Days) (Almati: RIK,1994), 51-53. Ingvar Svanberg, "Kazakhstan and The Kazakhs", In *The Nationalities Question In The Post-Soviet States*, ed., Graham Smith (London And New York: Longman, 1996). 318-319.

⁴¹ Diana T. Kudaibergenova, "Imagining Community" in Soviet Kazakhstan, 845.

⁴² Alex Ulko, *Architecture as a Mirror of the Age. Part III: Pasts Condensed, Present Constructed*, (Neweurasia.Net, 2013) [database on-line]; available at <http://www.neweurasia.net/cross-regional-and-blogsphere/architecture-as-a-mirror-of-the-age-part-iii-pasts-condensed-presents-constructed/>.

⁴³ Official site of the Museum of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, [database on-line]; available at www.prezidentsmuseum.kz/index.php?lang=eng&uin=1166779416.

highlighted also through public holidays: the anniversary of the capital Astana or Astana Day, is celebrating on the same date as Nazarbaev's birthday.⁴⁴

However, in order to understand the semiotic mobility of every city, it is necessary to conduct communication among architectural buildings situated in opposite and central sites of a city. In this regard, to read the textuality of Astana one should analyze the symbolic meaning of Baiterek Tower situated in the center of the city. The tower, which is the articulation of the Kazakh's national myth, highlights the pivotal importance of Kazakh national values in the newly established state. The pillar, on the apex of which the golden ball symbolizing the egg of sacred bird Samruk is located, represents the idea of ancient tree of life. Kazakh culture has been highly influenced by national myths and nomadic traditions. Consequently, the myth of the sacred bird called Samruk has quite a special place in the Kazakh culture. The golden egg of Samruk represents one of the cultural symbols of the Kazakh nation which, according to the legend, every year is eaten by a snake but Samruk returns and lays another egg next year.

The innovative representation of Astana is seen as return to national imagination. The symbol of tower sets up relations between the cultural past and the future of Kazakhstan. The idea of mythical egg of Samruk as a symbol of rebirth outlines development tendencies of Kazakhstan. The 'breath' of Nazarbaev is evident in this architectural monument too: inside the golden ball of the tower one can find a 2kg triangular golden handprint of President Nazarbaev⁴⁵ and when people place their own hands in the imprint they can make a wish, while at the same time the national flag of Kazakhstan appear and anthem begins to play. In this case the capital Astana is not the only example in the country. Likewise, one can find such phenomenon in the Republic Square of the former capital Almaty too, in which the handprint of Nazarbaev has been used in the same logic by the Kazakhs, who want to fulfill their dreams.⁴⁶ Thus, mythical archetype was used by Nazarbaev regime as a tool to encourage the legitimacy of its charismatic leadership. Such manifestations seem to be intended to attract people's attention and remind them again and again about the role of the 'first president or leader of nation' in nation and state building processes.

⁴⁴ Laura L. Adams and Assel Rustemova, "Mass Spectacle and Styles of Governmentality In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan," in *Symbolism and Power In Central Asia: Politics of The Spectacular*, ed., Sally N. Cummings (New York: Routledge, 2013), 186

⁴⁵ John Lancaster, "Tomorrow Land; Astana, The New Capital Of Kazakhstan, Is Brash And Grandiose—And Wildly Attractive To Young Strivers Seeking Success", *National Geographic*, 2012.

⁴⁶ Donnacha Ó Beacháin and Rob Kevlihan, "State-Building, Identity and Nationalism in Kazakhstan: Some Preliminary Thoughts," Centre For International Studies, Dublin City University, Working Papers in *International Studies*, no. 1. (2011):13.

A considerable emphasis has been placed on the incorporation of the symbols of nomadic lifestyle into the architectural content of the city, to strengthen the role of ethnicity. In this regard, the huge entertainment center called Khan Shatyr is distinguished by its luxury. However, the latter is not a product of national architectural mind; instead it is designed by British architect Norman Foster.⁴⁷ The design of the Khan Shatyr resembles a traditional Kazakh yurt. The building's purpose is not constrained to its entertainments function, but it also provides ideological space for imagining their communities at least in the Andersonian sense.⁴⁸ The idea of yurt has outstanding meaning in the Kazakh culture as a symbol of unity and family. Khan Shatyr is supposed to be represented as a model of the immobile Kazakh yurt in supporting the notion of sticking to their homeland among ethnic Kazakhs. The fact that Kyan Shatyr is visible from various sites of the city empowers the notion of *Kazakhness*.

Another astonishing symbolic building of Astana is the Palace of Peace and Concord or, as it is more commonly called, the Pyramid. It includes the Opera theatre, the University of Civilizations and the Museum of Culture. This building has been designed by British architect Norman Foster in 2006. The Palace of Peace and Concord has become a symbol of religious dialogue and harmony. Important nation-building implications of this building are to emphasize Kazakhstan's path to modernity and to draw the world's attention to the fact that Kazakhstan differs from other "intolerant Muslim" states.⁴⁹ The Congress of leaders of international and traditional religions was held in the Palace of Peace and Concord in 2006.⁵⁰ President Nazarbaev argues that the Palace of Peace and Concord expresses the spirit of Kazakhstan, where the bearers of various cultures, religions and nationalities coexist in harmony and accord.⁵¹ According to Plato's concept, the geometrical structure of pyramid as a symbol of proportional equality characterizes the harmonic unity of unequals.⁵² The apex of the pyramid is designed with yellow (sun) and blue stained glasses, resembling the colors of the Kazakhs flag. Kazakhstan is itself represented as a guarantor of inter-societal harmony and peace. Thus, the

⁴⁷ Foster + Partners, Projects/Khan Shatyr Entertainment Centre Astana, Kazakhstan 2006-2010, [database on-line], available at www.fosterandpartners.com/projects/khan-shatyr-entertainment-centre/.

⁴⁸ Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections On The Origin And Spread Of Nationalism*, (London: Verso Press, 2006).

⁴⁹ Leon Yacher, "Astana, Kazakhstan: Megadream, Megacity, Megadestiny," in *Engineering Earth: The Impacts Of Megaengineering Projects, Vol 1, ed.*, Stanley D. Brunn (London, New York: Springer, 2011), 1011.

⁵⁰ Nazarbaev, *The Kazakhstan*, 315.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 315.

⁵² Dominic J. O'Meara, *Platonopolis: Platonic Political Philosophy In Late Antiquity*, (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), 103.

concept of 'Kazaks first among equals' is reflected in the architectural design of Palace of Peace and Harmony.

4. The Power of State Symbols

State symbols like the national flag, anthem and emblem have great influence on nation building processes and potential to provide solidarity among people. However, in multiethnic societies state symbols can cause tensions among various ethnicities, because they are important in characterizing certain national group.

4.1. National Flag

In Kazakhstan, the content of national flag, deprived from Kazakh cultural and historical past, attempts to feed not only nation-building but also consolidation processes. The state Flag of Kazakhstan was designed by S. Niyazbekov and officially adopted in 1992.⁵³ As for Smith, state symbols are rooted in the cultural past and are especially essential in establishing communal bonds and a sense of national identity.⁵⁴ The state flag of Kazakhstan has a sky blue background, in the center of which there is a sun with thirty two rays, with a soaring steppe eagle underneath and with a golden national ornament on the left. According to official version, a blue-sky color with its ancient Turkic symbolic meaning symbolizes fidelity, honesty and integrity. In addition, the blue color of the flag symbolizes pure sky and represents the idea of peace, prosperity and unity of Kazakhstan.⁵⁵ A flag is considered as an inseparable component of public culture (state and national ceremonies etc.) and of the ideological apparatus of the state. Furthermore, the role of the flag in the promotion of national identity can be understood through the prism of Althusserian process of identification, through which individuals become "concrete subjects".⁵⁶ To Althusser, 'Ideological State Apparatus' produces ideologies, which are supposed to transform individuals into the consumers of ruling ideologies. The ideological content of Kazakhstan's national flag is a consequence of elite-led nation-building processes. Obviously, the flag's national symbols and ornaments provide a non-verbal dialogue between the citizens and state-led ideologies.

4.2. National Anthem

⁵³ *The Flag of the Republic of Kazakhstan* [database on-line]; available at http://www.akorda.kz/en/category/kazakhstan_flag, in Official site of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Accessed: 18 October 2013).

⁵⁴ Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism*, 25.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*,

⁵⁶ Louis Althusser, *Ideology And Ideological State Apparatuses, Lenin And Philosophy, And Other Essays*, trans., Ben Brewster. (London: New Left Books, 1971).

The state anthem is another key state symbol of the Republic of Kazakhstan. National anthems provide valuable information about the state's nation-building processes. The state anthem as an official song functions as a driving force for the creation of national identity, national consciousness and sense of belonging with a state. State symbols and especially national anthems set up identity boundaries in establishing distinction in a society; the representatives of a titular nation are distinguished from non-titular nations. On the other hand, it has to be kept in mind that any anthem has a purpose to unite individuals by creating general feeling of belonging to a certain state. In addition Tarasti states that national anthem as a musical sign can serve as a symbol of an ethnic and social group.⁵⁷ Likewise, one of the most important tenants of Kazakh nation-building is the anthem, which reflects the ethnic structure of the state. It emphasizes the ethnic and civic belonging of ethnic Kazakh people, but at the same time it maintains the bonds of non-ethnic groups, who are entitled to Kazakh citizenship, to the Kazakh state.⁵⁸

The Anthem of independent Kazakhstan was adopted twice; first in 1992, then in 2006. The state anthem of Kazakhstan was adopted in 1992; however the melody remained the same, as that which was performed during the Kazakh SSR.⁵⁹ The lyrics of the anthem of independent Kazakhstan were created by Kazakhstan's famous poets M. Alimbaev, K., Myrzaliyev, T., Moldagaliyev and Z. Daribayeva⁶⁰ that seems to be a post-colonial text and special attention should be paid to the third verse of the lyrics:

We have overcome the hardships
Let the past serve bitter lesson
But ahead we face a radiant future.
We bequeath our sacred legacy implying our mother tongue.⁶¹

In this sense, the anthem as a national symbol bases the project of collective identity by resisting the historical and cultural difficulties experienced by Kazakhstan's past. In this context Kazakhs' resistance identity is constructed through the negative experiences of Kazakh identity (marginalized language, lower economic status), and

⁵⁷ Tarasti, *Signs*, 6.

⁵⁸ Özgecan Kesici, "The Dilemma In The Nation-Building Process: The Kazakh Or Kazakhstanian Nation?", *Journal On Ethnopolitics And Minority Issues In Europe* 10, no.1 (2011): 48-49.

⁵⁹ Mukan Tulebayev, Yevgeny Brusilovsky And Latif Khamidi Have Become The Authors Of The First Anthem.

⁶⁰ *The State Anthem of the Republic of Kazakhstan*. [database on-line]; available at http://www.akorda.kz/en/category/kazakhstan_gimn, Official site of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Accessed: 18 October 2013).

⁶¹ Kazakhstan Discovery, *Kazakhstan National Anthem – 1992-2006*, [database on-line]; available at http://www.kazakhstan-discovery.com/kazakhstan-national-anthem.html#Uxkiyai_S9a (Accessed: 17 October 2013).

the reference to the mother tongue of Kazakhs is to incite a reassessment of Kazakh language, from a prior mark of national inferiority to cultural superiority. The idea of mother tongue has unique place in Kazakhstan's culture, which is comprehended by the Kazakhs as a medium of patriotism.⁶²

So, one should state that the native language of the Kazakhs is represented as a defensive tool for the future generations to think in a national language. Thus, the vision of radiant future, being shaped by the legacy of positive experience of Kazakhs' identity like mother tongue, will provide opportunities for the proliferation of Kazakhs language and culture throughout the society. Nevertheless, the expression "Kazakh mother tongue" was excluded from the new version of State Anthem, adopted in 2006, which is based on the song of Zhumeken Nazhimedenov (My Kazakhstan) 1956, the lyrics of which were modified by President Nazarbaev.⁶³ This revision of the lyrics of the anthem represents the policy direction of Nazarbaev's regime regarding interethnic harmony. Kazakhstan has a multi-ethnic society which requires a national anthem through which citizens can relate to and identify themselves with the state and nation. In this context, the phrases "My native land – My Kazakhstan!⁶⁴" in the chorus part of the national Anthem are supposed to bring together all ethnic groups who were born in Kazakhstan and consider Kazakhstan to be homeland.⁶⁵

4.3. National Emblem

According to Eric Hobsbawm the national emblem is a key symbol through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty.⁶⁶ The national emblem of sovereign Kazakhstan has a shape of circle with a picture of *sharinak* which is the cupola of Kazakh traditional yurt. In this sense, the symbols of traditional nomad culture have been used here to define Kazakhs' cultural identities. The national emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan was created by famous Kazakh architects Zhandarbek Malibekov and Shot-AmanUalikhanov and was officially adopted in

⁶² Aisha Baigerim, *Funkcionirovaniya Nacionalnikh Yazikov V Respublike Kazakhstan, Pod Red. Auezkhan Kodar, Zamza Kodar, Kulturnie Konteksti Kazakhstana: Istoriya I Sovremennost*, (Aisha Baigern, "The Functioning Of National Languages In The Republic Of Kazakhstan," In *The Cultural Contexts Of Kazakhstan: History And Modernity*, eds., Auezkhan Kodar, Zamza Kodar) (Almati: Nisa, 1998), 267.

⁶³ *The State Anthem of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, [database on-line]; available at http://www.akorda.kz/en/category/kazakhstan_gimn, Official site of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Accessed: 18 October 2013).

⁶⁴ Ibid.,

⁶⁵ Kesici, *The Dilemma In*, 48.

⁶⁶ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Invention Of Tradition*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 11.

1992.⁶⁷ It speaks of the Kazakha identity, traditions, history, culture and more significantly the ideologies they give importance to. The shape of 'shanyrak' symbolizes life and eternity, welfare of family, peace and calmness.⁶⁸ The mythical winged horses, tulpars, are pictured on the left and right sides of *shanyrak* and are considered to be key heraldic elements of the state emblem.⁶⁹

The 'horse culture' is central to Kazakh national culture and symbolizes power, grace, freedom and nobility. In addition, horse-breeding has been highly important aspect of social, economic and cultural life of the peoples of Central Asia and became luxury and a status symbol.⁷⁰ Kazakh nomadic tribes used not only hides and meat of horses, but also they milked them and the product *kumyss*, the fermented mare's milk,⁷¹ was used for medical purposes. The sky-blue background of the emblem and golden sun rays symbolize peace, consent, harmony and prosperity, which are essential factors for multiethnic communities. Nevertheless, as Dave argues, the apparent reflection of Kazakhs' cultural symbols on state emblem provides emotional satisfaction and psychological appeasement to the titular nation, which, on the other hand questions the sense of equality among non-titular nations.⁷² The state symbols were formed in accordance with national archetypes but were also affected by Russian legacy. The latter is evident on the lower portion of the state emblem of Kazakhstan, in which there is an imprint Kazakhstan, *Қазақстан*, in the form of Cyrillic alphabet.⁷³

5. Conclusion

The dissemination of the concept of Kazakhness throughout the urban and symbolic power is a national but adequate response to the multidimensional challenges given by the post-Soviet transition. In this regard the article outlined the phenomenon of identity crisis as a result of marginalization of national cultural values by Russian colonization. Despite ethno-symbolic analysis of nation-building is quite descriptive, it helped to understand the ways through which Nazarbaev regime

⁶⁷ *The Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, [database on-line]; available at http://www.akorda.kz/en/category/kazakhstan_gerb, in Official site of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Accessed: 18 October 2013).

⁶⁸ Armedia, *Heru ev Mot Kazakhstan* (Far And Near Kazakhstan), (Yerevan: Nshanak Hratarakchutyun, 2010), 22.

⁶⁹ The Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan, *Ibid.*,

⁷⁰ Alibiy Mukhamejanov, "Natural Life and the Manmade Habitat in Central Asia", in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia 4*, no. 2, eds., Bosworth, C. E., Asimov, M. S. (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2003). 286-287.

⁷¹ Katherine Bliss Eaton, *Daily Life in the Soviet Union* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 50.

⁷² Bhavna Dave, *Kazakhstan: Ethnicity, Language and Power*, 166.

⁷³ The Emblem of The Republic of Kazakhstan, *ibid.*

empowered the creation of national identity even without strong intellectual and cultural base. Nevertheless, the symbolism of Kazakhstan showed that Nazarbaev's nation-building policies have referred also to the cultural values of the nation. The findings of the article showed that political elite or charismatic president became essential agents in establishing national identity. The paradigm of Kazakhstan's nation-building stands out as a unique model of innovative tendencies that inclined to emphasize not only the power of ethnicity but also of civic values. As mentioned in the article, innovative urbanization policies of post-Soviet Kazakhstan are based on both ethnic and civic nation-building approaches. The incorporation of the symbol of Kazakh's nomadic culture in the architectural design of the newly constructed capital Astana has become essential in increasing national self-consciousness among the ethnic Kazakhs.

The establishment of monuments dedicated to national heroes and traditional symbols has also been an essential way of converting people's soviet consciousness. The construction of Astana was accompanied not only by incorporation of national symbols and archetypes but also new social and demographic policies in favor of ethnic Kazakhs. The civic nation building implications of Astana's architectural design and state symbols are considered one of the inseparable policies towards the creation rules of harmonious coexistence in multicultural, multi-religious and multiethnic Kazakh society. Nevertheless, national symbols incorporated into the content of the national symbols could create some sort of burden for members of other ethnic nationalities of Kazakhstan to setup rational form of identification with the Kazakh nation. Additionally, one can strongly believe that the Turkic ideologies of Kazakhstan's symbolism do not fully reflect Kazakhstan's domestic and foreign politics; instead they have strong ethno-national tendencies to stress their ethnic belonging and legitimize regime's authority.

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