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**HISTORY OF CULTURE OF SOVIET PERIOD KAZAKHSTAN IN
FOREIGN HISTORIOGRAPHY: SECOND HALF OF THE XX – EARLY
XXI CENTURIES**

ANNOTATION

**Dissertation for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in
Specialty 8D02202 – History**

Relevance of the topic. Culture has always been an integral part of the national identity and self-awareness of any people. In this context, the study of cultural processes in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period acquires particular significance. Over the years of joint modernization, which entered history over ten years as "cultural construction," the infrastructure of the cultural sphere was formed, and the Kazakh people were introduced to modern forms of culture. Today, the cultural landscape of Kazakhstan is characterized not only by traditional cultural institutions formed during the Soviet period, such as theaters, cinemas, museums, and philharmonics, but also by the revival and popularization of national holidays and customs, such as Nauryz Meyrami, Dombra Days, and National Clothing Days. These processes emphasize the necessity not only to preserve but also to develop and popularize national culture and its elements in everyday life. It seems important to analyze how these issues were reflected in foreign historiography of the Soviet period, whether the processes of reviving national traditions were analyzed, and the role of culture in strengthening the identity and self-awareness of the Kazakh people.

Modern cultural policy in Kazakhstan is aimed at preserving and developing the national culture of all ethnic groups residing in the Republic, highlighting the importance of a thorough study of how these processes were reflected in foreign studies during the Soviet period. In this context, the analysis of foreign historiography not only helps identify gaps in existing research but also contributes to the formation of new approaches to studying Kazakhstan's cultural heritage. The study of cultural processes in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period within the context of foreign historiography gains special significance in contemporary conditions of globalization and increasing interest in the diversity of cultural traditions. The second half of the 20th century was marked by the widespread dissemination of methodological approaches of cultural history in Western historiography, leading to a new perspective on the study of cultural phenomena and processes. Cultural history, as an interdisciplinary field, allowed for a rethinking of issues related to identity, national self-awareness, the interaction between power and culture, as well as the influence of ideological orientations on cultural practices.

Today, a trend can be observed in foreign historiography towards revising traditional approaches to studying Soviet culture, including cultural processes in the republics of the former Soviet Union, such as Kazakhstan. Despite this, the number of works dedicated to Soviet culture in Kazakhstan remains comparatively small,

creating a need for comprehensive analysis of existing studies and the identification of aspects that have not yet received adequate attention.

Our research becomes particularly relevant in light of the growing interest of foreign scholars in the history of Kazakhstan. In recent years, there has been an increase in publications dedicated to various aspects of our country's history and culture. These works make a significant contribution to understanding the cultural processes that took place in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period; however, many of them require scientific analysis and critical reflection. Given the annual increase in the number of new studies, the relevance of this work becomes evident: it contributes to an in-depth study of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage, as well as the identification of shortcomings and gaps in existing historiographical works.

As the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, emphasized: "National culture is the mirror of the people's life, a manifestation of its being, and the spiritual development of the country is directly related to the development of national self-awareness" [1]. These words underline the importance of preserving and studying cultural heritage as a key element in the formation of modern national and cultural identity.

Modern historical science and historiography are experiencing an intensive period of changing traditional approaches and revising established stereotypes, formed within European intellectual culture since the Enlightenment and subsequent periods. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, alongside new approaches to the study of history, the notion has emerged that the past is not monolithic and unequivocal; on the contrary, it has multiple interpretations, each conditioned by cultural context and research methodology. In this sense, any historical discourse allows for the identification not only of the strengths and weaknesses of existing concepts and schools but also of the multi-layered nature of historical knowledge and its dependence on cultural, social, and political factors.

As the renowned Russian historian L.P. Repin notes, contemporary approaches to the study of history enable the "desacralization of the scientific picture of the historical past" [2], which ultimately leads to the liberation of consciousness from illusions and misconceptions, the search for and interpretation of new meanings, resulting in the theoretical renewal of historical science itself. This expands our knowledge of the studied reality, allowing for a better understanding of the processes that occurred in the past and their influence on the present.

The knowledge gained through the study of foreign historiography allows for the actualization of previously studied material, the comparison of different authors' viewpoints, the identification of under-researched and untouched research problems, as well as familiarization with the techniques and methodologies of historical research. In this context, the analysis of works dedicated to cultural processes in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period becomes particularly important. It allows for assessing how objectively and comprehensively foreign researchers reflected the specifics of cultural development under the Soviet system, which aspects they emphasized, and what methodological approaches they employed.

An important aspect of the topic's relevance is that the culture of the Kazakh people has rich origins and unique traditions, vividly manifested in national clothing,

customs, rituals, music, and the creativity of akyns (traditional Kazakh poets). These elements of national culture have played a significant role over centuries in the formation of national self-awareness and identity of the Kazakh people. As the Head of State Kassym-Jomart Tokayev noted: "The origins of the unique culture of the Kazakh people are rooted in traditions and customs, music, and the creativity of akyns. The distinctiveness of our culture is vividly embodied in national clothing" [3]. These words emphasize the importance of studying how the national culture of Kazakhstan during the Soviet period was reflected in foreign research and which aspects of this rich cultural heritage garnered the attention of foreign scholars.

Moreover, in contemporary conditions, it is important to examine the extent to which foreign authors considered the influence of Soviet ideology and politics on the development of culture in Kazakhstan. The Soviet system exerted a significant influence on all aspects of life, including culture, and understanding how this influence was reflected in the works of foreign researchers allows for a deeper comprehension of the complex processes occurring in Kazakh culture during that period. It is crucial to analyze how foreign authors evaluated the processes of Russification and assimilation, the preservation of national traditions under Soviet reality, and how these processes influenced the development of Kazakh culture.

Objective of the Study. The objective of this work is to study the history of culture in Soviet Kazakhstan within foreign historiography of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries. The research aims to provide a detailed understanding of how Kazakh culture, as an integral part of its history, was portrayed, interpreted, and understood in the foreign academic sphere.

Research Tasks.

1. Examine the evolution of institutional approaches to studying the culture of Soviet Kazakhstan in foreign historiography of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

2. Investigate the evolution of approaches in foreign historiography to studying the culture of Soviet Kazakhstan, considering the influence of ideological factors and the geopolitical context of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

3. Analyze and systematize the views of foreign historians of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries on the transformation of Kazakh culture in the context of Russian-Soviet influence.

4. Characterize the interpretation by foreign researchers of the role of Islam in preserving the cultural identity of the Kazakh people under the Soviet regime during the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries.

5. Analyze foreign researchers' interpretations of Soviet language policy in Kazakhstan, including the literacy campaign, alphabet reform, Russification of the Kazakh language, and bilingual policy, as well as their influence on the formation of the national identity of the Kazakh people.

6. Conduct an analysis of foreign researchers' interpretations of cultural processes in Kazakhstan from Sovietization to independence in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, paying special attention to the transformation of national identity, the role of cultural elites, and the re-evaluation of Soviet heritage.

7. Attempt to reveal the evolution of perceptions and assessments of Kazakh Soviet-era cinematography in foreign historiography of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Object of the Study. The works of foreign authors from the second half of the 20th to the early 21st centuries dedicated to the history of Soviet culture in Kazakhstan.

Subject of the Study. The interpretation of the history of culture in Soviet Kazakhstan in foreign historiographical studies from the second half of the 20th to the early 21st centuries.

Scientific Novelty. The scientific novelty of this dissertation lies in the fact that currently, there are no specialized works in Kazakh historiography analyzing the works of foreign researchers dedicated to the history of culture in Soviet Kazakhstan. This constitutes the scientific novelty of this dissertation. The scientific novelty of this dissertation is also determined by the fact that it is the first to conduct a comparative examination of Western authors' views on the cultural development of Kazakhstan during the Soviet period. Such research allows for the identification not only of differences in approaches to analyzing cultural processes but also a deeper understanding of the influence of external and internal factors on the formation of cultural identity under Soviet rule. The use of a comparative approach helps create a comprehensive picture of historical development, which opens new horizons for the understanding of Kazakhstan's cultural history.

The study relies on a historical-philosophical approach, which allows for the examination of cultural processes in Kazakhstan through the lens of historiophilosophical studies by Western authors. This approach contributes to constructing an organized and structured historical reality, where disparate facts come together to form a unified picture of the region's cultural development. It overcomes a narrowly ethnic and isolated approach to history, emphasizing the significance of universal human values and the unity of the historical process.

The analysis of Western historiography presented in this work aims to liberate historical consciousness from stereotypes and ideological constructs formed during the Soviet period. This research contributes to the rethinking of historical past, facilitating liberation from rhetoric that continues to influence the perception of history, albeit in a new form of ethnocentrism and religious radicalism. The application of Western methodological approaches allows for greater accuracy and comprehensiveness in analyzing cultural processes.

Thus, this study offers a new perspective on the cultural development of Kazakhstan during the Soviet period, moving beyond the traditional national narrative and opening new prospects for understanding the unity of history and the present. This approach contributes to creating a more objective and comprehensive perception of cultural processes, making the research a significant contribution to the development of historical science.

Provisions Presented for Defense

1. The institutional development of foreign studies on the culture of Soviet-period Kazakhstan in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries is characterized by a transition from ideologically driven interpretations within the

framework of Sovietology to a more comprehensive and interdisciplinary analysis. This process reflects not only the evolution of scientific approaches but also changes in the global geopolitical landscape. The study identifies three key stages in the development of foreign historiography on Kazakh culture:

1) 1950-1970s: Formation of foundational concepts in the context of the Cold War and analysis of the USSR's national policy.

2) 1980s - early 1990s: Expansion of research topics, inclusion of issues related to ethnic identity and the Islamic factor, development of regional schools of Central Asian studies.

3) Since the mid-1990s: Reorientation of studies towards processes of cultural revival and state-building in independent Kazakhstan, integration of various national schools and approaches.

The analysis shows that despite their initial politicization, foreign studies on the culture of Soviet-period Kazakhstan have evolved towards a more objective and nuanced understanding of cultural, social, and economic processes, contributing to the formation of a more comprehensive view of Kazakhstan's cultural heritage and development in global historiography.

2. Foreign historiography on the culture of Soviet-period Kazakhstan in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries has undergone a complex transformation, driven by changes in the geopolitical situation and the overcoming of ideological constraints. The evolution of research approaches is characterized by a shift from the dominance of the totalitarian model inherent in early Sovietology during the Cold War, based on concepts of colonialism and modernization, to more comprehensive and interdisciplinary methods of analysis in the post-Soviet period. This process was accompanied by gradual depoliticization of studies, expansion of the source base, and development of new perspectives in the study of cultural processes in Kazakhstan.

Contemporary foreign studies on the culture of Soviet-period Kazakhstan are marked by a striving for a more objective and nuanced understanding of historical processes, taking into account both the influence of the Soviet system and the local peculiarities of Kazakh societal development. This is reflected in increased attention to issues of identity, nation-building, and cultural transformation, as well as in a deeper analysis of the interaction between traditional and modernization elements in the culture of Soviet-period Kazakhstan.

Overcoming the limitations of early Sovietological paradigms has opened new opportunities for studying cultural processes in Kazakhstan, contributing to the formation of a more balanced view of the Soviet legacy and its role in the contemporary development of Kazakh culture.

3. Foreign historiography of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries views the transformation of Kazakh culture during the Soviet period as a complex and contradictory process, characterized by the profound influence of Russian-Soviet culture while simultaneously preserving elements of national identity. In the works of foreign historians, this process is interpreted through the prism of several key aspects:

1) Implementation of the "Soviet man" concept: On one hand, it aimed to create a unified identity, while on the other hand, it faced resistance and a desire to preserve national distinctiveness.

2) Transformation of literary tradition: Transition from oral epic to written socialist realism literature, which led to both the enrichment and partial loss of traditional cultural heritage.

3) Demographic changes: Described as the "Yellowness" of the Soviet population, which created new socio-political challenges and influenced interethnic relations.

4) Contradictions between Soviet modernization and the preservation of national identity: Manifested in various spheres of public life and culture.

5) Evolution of official interpretation of historical events: Specifically, the assessment of the Russian conquest of Central Asia, reflecting changes in Soviet national policy.

Foreign historians interpret these processes as key factors that determined the long-term consequences of Russian-Soviet influence on Kazakh culture, shaping a unique cultural landscape that combines elements of Soviet modernization and traditional values. This synthesis, according to foreign researchers, continues to play an important role in the formation of the post-Soviet identity of the Kazakh people and defines contemporary cultural and socio-political processes in Kazakhstan.

4. Foreign historiography of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries, in studying the phenomenon of "Soviet Islam" in Kazakhstan, has identified a unique mechanism of cultural resistance and adaptation that allowed the Kazakh people to preserve their religious and national identity under the Soviet atheist regime. Western researchers emphasize that, despite the official anti-religious policy and repression, Islam in Kazakhstan transformed into a multifunctional socio-cultural institution that went beyond the purely religious sphere. It became a tool for preserving national traditions, countering Russification and Sovietization, and a factor in the formation of a "parallel" civil society. The flexibility and adaptability of Kazakh Islam, its syncretic nature combining elements of traditional beliefs with Islamic dogma, allowed it to survive under the Soviet regime and maintain its influence on society. Foreign historians note that this experience of cultural resistance and compromise not only ensured the continuity of the Islamic tradition in Kazakhstan but also laid the foundation for the revival of religious life in the post-Soviet period, which is significant for understanding contemporary processes in the field of religion and culture in independent Kazakhstan.

5. Foreign historiography of the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries views Soviet language policy in Kazakhstan as a comprehensive tool of socio-cultural transformation aimed at creating a new Soviet identity. Western researchers interpret the literacy campaign, alphabet reform, Russification of the Kazakh language, and bilingual policy not only as educational and linguistic measures but also as key elements of the Soviet strategy for integrating Kazakhstan into a unified Soviet cultural space. At the same time, foreign historians emphasize the contradictory nature of this policy, noting its impact on the transformation of traditional Kazakh culture and the formation of a new national identity balancing

between Soviet ideology and ethnic roots. This approach in foreign historiography allows for the disclosure of the complex dynamics of interaction between language policy, cultural changes, and processes of nation-building in Soviet Kazakhstan.

6. Foreign historiography of the late 20th and early 21st centuries views cultural processes in Soviet and post-Soviet Kazakhstan as a complex interaction between the Soviet legacy and the aspiration to create a unique national identity. Western researchers emphasize the key role of Soviet policy in institutionalizing Kazakh culture and literature, which laid the foundation for the contemporary understanding of Kazakh identity. At the same time, they note the contradictory nature of this process, which included both the development of national culture and the suppression of traditional forms of self-expression.

In the post-Soviet period, foreign historians observe an active rethinking of historical figures and events by Kazakh cultural elites, the creation of new national symbols and narratives. Particular attention is paid to the transformation of gender relations and the role of women in preserving and developing national culture. Debates about the applicability of postcolonial theory to the Soviet experience in Kazakhstan reflect the complexity and ambiguity of cultural processes in the region.

Foreign researchers emphasize the uniqueness of the Kazakh experience of cultural transformation, which combines elements of the Soviet modernization project with post-Soviet attempts to form an independent national identity. This experience is considered an important case for understanding broader processes of cultural transformation and nation-building in the post-Soviet space.

7. The perception of Kazakh Soviet-era cinematography in foreign historiography has undergone significant evolution: from a marginal phenomenon within the context of Soviet cinema to a recognized phenomenon of world cinema. This process reflects not only the development of Kazakh cinematography itself but also the changing Western approach to studying the cultures of the former USSR. Foreign researchers identify several key stages in the development of Kazakh cinema: from the early steps of Vostokkino in the 1920s to the emergence of the "Kazakh New Wave" in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Special attention is given to the period of the 1970s-1980s, characterized by a paradoxical combination of the flourishing of national cinema and the growing gap between the cinematic community and the local audience. The phenomenon of the "Kazakh New Wave" is viewed as the culmination of the development of Kazakh Soviet-era cinematography and simultaneously as a transition to a new era of independence. Western historians emphasize that studying Kazakh cinema allows for a deeper understanding of the processes of forming national identity under the Soviet system and the post-Soviet transition, as well as the mechanisms of interaction between national cultures and the centralized system of art management in the USSR.

Scientific and Practical Significance

The scientific and practical significance of this dissertation lies in its multifaceted application in both academic and political spheres.

In the academic context, the study enriches the examination of Soviet history in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, offering a comprehensive analysis of cultural processes during the Soviet era. The research results can be used for further studies

on the formation and preservation of national identity in the republic, as well as for analyzing the interaction between state-building, the academic community, and the cultural public. This opens up opportunities for the development of new interdisciplinary courses and curricula in universities dedicated to foreign historiography, the history of Kazakh culture in the 20th century, and the role of language and education in modernization and the preservation of national identity.

In the political sphere, the dissertation's results can serve as a valuable reference for post-Soviet states facing the challenges of forming and strengthening national identity. The research helps understand the complexity and potential tensions associated with this process and can guide policymakers in developing strategies aimed at supporting cultural diversity and social cohesion. Conclusions about the impact of language policy and educational reforms on national identity can be useful for educators and curriculum developers, contributing to the creation of more inclusive and effective educational systems.

Additionally, the detailed source base and methodologies used in the study can serve as a foundation for other scientific works in similar fields or regions, facilitating future research. The materials and findings obtained during the preparation of the dissertation are recommended for use in developing courses related to the study of Kazakh cultural history, historiography, and issues of national identity.

Structure of the Work

The work is structured according to a problem-chronological principle and consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of used sources, and a bibliography.

Keywords: Foreign historiography, Kazakh culture, Soviet period, cultural historiography, cultural transformation, national identity, Soviet modernization, Russian-Soviet influence, Islamic factor, language policy, Kazakh cinematography, post-Soviet studies, interdisciplinary approach, cultural history, Sovietology.