THE IMPACT OF RISING KAZAKH NATIONALISM ON MINORITIES IN THE
POST-SOVIET NATION-BUILDING

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ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF RISING KAZAKH NATIONALISM ON MINORITIES IN THE

POST-SOVIET NATION-BUILDING

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This study examines process of nation-building in Kazakhstan with concentrating on the nature of majority-minority relations regarding the rising nationalism in Kazakhstan. To gain a better perspective on Kazakhstan's nation-building policies, the thesis examines the post-Soviet nation-building experiences and the legacy of the Russian Empire and Soviet nationality policies particularly in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the state's nation-building policies attempt to construct Kazakh nation after independence are put forth and these nation-building policies of Kazakhstan are evaluated regarding both ethnic and civic conception of nationalism. It further argues the role of the governance in nation-building policies and relations with some particular minority groups and the main rights of minorities.

Keywords: Nation-Building, Ethnic and Civic Nation-Building Policies, Minorities

ÖZ

SOVYET SONRASI ULUS İNŞASINDA YÜKSELEN KAZAK MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİNİN AZINLIKLAR ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

BİNİCİ, Duygu

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Bu çalışma, Kazakistan'da yükselen milliyetçilik bağlamında çoğunluk-azınlık ilişkilerine odaklanarak Kazakistan'daki ulus inşa sürecini incelemektedir. Kazakistan'ın ulus inşası politikalarına daha iyi bir bakış açısı kazandırmak için tez, öncelikle Sovyet sonrası ulus inşası deneyimlerini incelemekle birlikte Kazakistan'daki Rus İmparatorluğu ve Sovyet milletler politikalarının mirasına özellikle odaklanmaktadır. Ayrıca bu çalışmada devletin, bağımsızlık sonrası Kazak ulusunu inşa etmeye yönelik politikaları ortaya konacak ve Kazakistan'ın bu ulus inşa politikaları hem etnik hem de sivil milliyetçilik anlayışı açısından değerlendirilecektir. Diğer taraftan, ülke yönetiminin ulus inşa politikalarındaki rolü ve belirli azınlık grupları ile olan ilişkiler ile azınlık gruplarının temel haklarından bahsedilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ulus İnşası, Etnik ve Sivil Ulus İnşası Politikaları, Azınlıklar

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ASSR	Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
CoE	Council of Europe
EU	European Union
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
UN	United Nations
UNDRM	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The discussions about building nations and states have been more popular after collapsed of Soviet Union. When Soviet Union collapsed and 15 new states emerges, many of former post-Soviet states have struggled to form new political nations out of the legacy of communist regime. As one of those post-soviet states, Kazakhstan reluctantly declared its independence in December 1991 and was the last country that broke up from the Soviet Union. Unique among the other post-soviet states, Kazakhstan's titular nationality did not constitute a majority which made nation-building policies more challenging duty for newly independent government in the shadow of potential ethnic tensions and economic difficulties. Kazakhstan has been at the center of mass migrations since Russian Empire times, as a result, Kazakhstan inherited a diverse society that consist of several ethnic, linguistic, regional, and religious characteristics.

There are different approaches on how to study nation-building making emphasis on religion, race, class and lineage. It has been stated that nations are formed by standardizing economic, cultural and political processes and connecting them with an upper culture protected by the central authority (Leca, 1998: 11-14). Anderson defined the nation as an imagined political community because the imagination of each other's sum exists in the minds of individuals who do not know anything about each other (Anderson, 1983: 20). While some scholars consider national consciousness,

nationalism, national will or spiritual forces to create the nation, others emphasize that the nation is a component of social reality with a historical origin. In this framework, the origin of the modern nation is adopted as the basic reality (Hroch, 2011: 22). Whether the nation is accepted as a natural and self-renewing phenomenon or as a product of the modern age, it would not be wrong to say that it affects and shapes the political, economic and cultural structures of societies. At the same time, nationalism which can be called the ideological device of this process, is still an important factor affecting the political and social structure today. In the near future, contrary to the predictions that nationalism will lose its power, its existence as a social reality also directs the studies carried out in this direction. Nationalism is a term that works with many different concepts and should be evaluated together. This feature of nationalism causes it to evolve by adapting to the dynamics of the society it lives in and makes it difficult to make clear definitions. Sander stated that it is difficult to define that brings together all the elements of nationalism. However, to give a definition; according to Sander, nationalism can be defined as the right of any geographical group that wants to have an administrative unit to establish a single independent state. For this reason, he emphasized that a nation has a non-economic definition, unlike classes, hence the geographical group in question has a sense of solidarity. He explained that the emergence of this sense of solidarity might depend on interests or dangers as well as elements such as a common language, past, and culture, but this sense of solidarity is the basis of the existence of the nation (Sander, 2011:189). However, in general, two main types of nationalism concepts are mentioned in the literature. These two main types, which can be called civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism, are considered completely independent and different concepts from each other (Lecours, 2000: 153). This distinction contains some problematics and there have been studies emphasizing

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that the effect of this strict distinction has decreased recently. According to this distinction, ethnic nationalism is bad nationalism that emphasizes culturally and historically, defined national identity and ethnicity. It has an understanding that defines the nation as organic and unique and excludes minorities in particular. There is an authoritarian feature in ethnic nationalism that gives importance to the unity of language and culture. In addition, it can show fanatical and aggressive features. On the other hand, civic nationalism is defined as good and emphasizes citizenship on the basis of territory. This type of nationalism seems to be conceptualized as more humanistic and civilized. In this genre, it is underlined that it tolerates other nationalisms (Gökalp, 2007: 285). Based on these concepts, it is clear that nation and nationalism is a social phenomenon that includes economic, cultural and political factors. In this direction, it is possible to say that nation-building is also a strategic process shaped by these factors. According to Panov, nation-building is the desire to legitimize and explain why the people living in the state are united as one. For this reason, in the nation-building process; appropriate concepts, narratives and myths have been provided to the people who are desired to be one. Therefore, a significant part of the nation-building process is discursive (Panov, 2010:87).

On the other hand, it was possible to see the nation-building processes in Europe in the 19th century. However, nation-building was not a development that was encountered just in 19th century Europe. Notable examples in the 20th century were Germany under the Nazis, the Soviet Union under Stalin, and Spain under Franco regime. There were efforts to "Russify" and make a large population loyal for regional stability and nation-building in the Soviet Union. In the 1940s, the deportation of ethnic groups, including Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans and Chechens to Siberia and

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Central Asia, their removal from the list of Soviet Peoples, and the change of the original names of settlements were some of the indicators of this.

Other important concepts for the thesis are the political history of Kazakhs and the Soviet Legacy in Kazakhstan. These concepts will be discussed in general terms and will form the basis for achieving the primary purpose of the thesis. It will also be helpful in describing the transition process of theoretical discussions into practice.

In this thesis I will focus on the process of nation-building in Kazakhstan and while concentrating on the nature of majority-minority relations with reference to the rising nationalism in Kazakhstan. With an estimated population of 19 million, Kazakhstan consists of several minority groups (Statistical Yearbook, 2021: 5); while the Kazakh share of the population constitutes 68.9 percent, the largest of these groups are Russians with 19 percent, Uzbeks with 3.2 percent, Ukrainians with 1.4 percent, Uyghurs with 1.4 percent, Germans with 0.9 percent and Koreans with 0.5 percent and the other nationalities constitute 4.4. percent of the total population (Bohr et al, 2019: 112). Within such a heterogenous society, uniting different groups under a common national identity has been one of Kazakhstan's greatest challenges following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since independence, Kazakhstan has been struggling to build a nation and to create a common national identity. As with many post-Soviet countries, Kazakhstan concerns regarding its territorial integrity and internal stability have played an important role in both the construction of the Kazakhstan's national identity as well as in government decisions regarding minority policy. To do this, government uses different nation-building policies such as ethnic return migration policy and language policy which contain ethnic and civic dimensions. That is to say, there are uncertainties as to whether Kazakhstan should choose the civic model based on citizenship or the ethnic model based on ethnicity. In the current situation, it is

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understood that although the civic model is mainly encouraged, the ethnic model practices keep continuing (Sharipova, 2020). Ethnic and civic content of nation-building policies have been mostly shaped by regional developments which include especially Russia's attitude towards its co-ethnics living abroad and such shifts often coincided with the fears of policymakers over potential separatist movements from minority groups, especially Russian minority group densely living Northern parts of the country close to the Russian border. On the other hand, it is clear that it is important to analyze the relationship between the nation-building process and minority rights in particular. It should be evaluated whether the nation-building efforts of the majority create injustices for minorities or minority rights protected against injustices that may arise (Kymlicka, 2000: 187).

In this context, this study's main aim is to investigate rising Kazakh nationalism within the nation-building process and its effects on ethnic minorities. To this end, the state's nation-building policies attempt to construct Kazakh nation after independence will be evaluated. The thesis try to put forward how the Kazakh population consist of many different groups within historical context and Soviet nationality policies will be examined which deeply change Kazakh society and try to analyze post-Soviet nation-building experience of Kazakhstan. The nation-building policies of Kazakhstan are evaluated regarding both ethnic and civic conception of nationalism in this study. The thesis is based on the review of the secondary sources, mainly the existing literature on the topic.

The second chapter is the theoretical framework where nationalism and nation building were discussed with specific reference to ethnic and civic nationalism and their implications. The third chapter examines post-Soviet states' nation-building experiences. The legacy of Soviet nationality policies, which is a significant dimension

of the post-Soviet nation-building policies, is argued and how states' nation-building policies' differentiated from each other is examined. Furthermore, relations with minority groups are argued and the ethnic and civic nature of nation-building policies of these states are evaluated.

Multiethnic society of Kazakhstan has its unique character associated with its history of formation. These ethnic minorities have been formed by migration flows and forced deportation of people. For these reasons, in the fourth chapter, Russian Empire and Soviet Union policies towards Kazakhstan is discussed. Especially, those, which let foreign people to migrate Kazakhstan land and other important events which changed the country's demographic structure.

In the fifth chapter, nation-building policies in the post-Soviet era put forward and their impact on the minorities is argued. Especially, state symbols, language, replacing capital city, ethnic return policy, minority relations, and reactions are investigated respectively. Furthermore, to analyze ethnic and civic patterns of nation-building policies, state governance and the role of the leader evaluated since independence. The thesis will also evaluate the continuum of Soviet nationalities policies in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Finally, the thesis concludes with an overview of the evolution of nationality policies in Kazakhstan along with the general assessment.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: NATION BUILDING AND ETHNIC AND CIVIC CONCEPTIONS

To be able to better understand the nation-building process of Kazakhstan, it is essential to be familiar with some particular concepts such as the nation, national identity, nation-state and nationalism. In order to understand nation-building, this chapter will provide the term of nation, nationalism, theories of nationalism and a civic and ethnic overview of nationalism particularly analyzed. Following this, I will mention about elements of nation-building and its instruments will be put forward.

2.1. Definition of Nation and Nationalism

The concept of "nation" is essential part of nationalism. The concepts of nation and nationalism are closely interrelated. The notion of "nation" has been explained by several scholars and philosophers. Connor defines the nation as an extended family of people of the same ancestry. However, common ancestry of the people is hardly proven and mythical (Connor, 1994: 92-94). Whereas, David Laitin identified nation as a group of people with a coherent beliefs about their shared culture and they claim ownership over a given territory for them by the help of that coordination (Laitin, 2007). Unlike this explanations, Anderson defines a nation as "imagined communities" which are attributed to the constructed nature of the nation. He identified the nation as an imagined community because it is impossible for people to get to know all members

of nations and so they theorizing communities in their mind. In this context, he identifies the nation by its shared history, which is believed to have exercised the collective right to sovereign control over a particular territory (Anderson, 1983: 3). Like Anderson, Hobsbawm also points out the constructed nature of nations with his book on "*invented traditions",* that the nations are born out of a set of practices that are perceived as traditional as these practices believed lays out long history however, in reality these practices are considerably recent and invented by certain historical actors (Hobsbawm and Ranger 2012: 1). The scholars who defend constructed nature of nations they believe that nations are modern inventions that date back to French Revolution. Adrian Hasting criticized these scholars because the birth of nations is longer than the French revolution that dates back to medieval times and he suggests that religion should be taken into account in the formation of nations (Hastings, 1997: 2).

In addition to these explanations, Antony Smith point out that nations are modern terms however ethnicity play crucial role in its formation and he defines nation in broader context:

> Nations are territorially bounded units of population and that they must have their own homelands; that their members share a common mass culture and common historical myths and memories; that members have reciprocal legal rights and duties under a common legal system; and that nations possess a common division of labour and system of production with mobility across the territory for members (Smith, 1991: 14).

Nationalism refers to ideology and politics that are used for the legitimation of certain goals to promote a certain nation (Malchanova, 2000: 263). Geller identified nationalism, as "essentially a political dimension which connect the political and the national elements should be coherent." He focuses on the role of industrialization in the emergence and spread of nationalism (Geller, 2006: 1). Greenfeld, define

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nationalism as an "overarching concept" which contains other related notions such as nations, national identity and ideology. That is the reason for, there is not a definite theoretical explanation of nationalism (Greenfeld, 1992: 3).

The book called "Nationalizing state" was published in 1995 by Brubaker and this book should be mentioned to understand nationalism. "Nationalizing" nationalisms of newly formed states identify the promotion of titular nation or nationality based on ethno cultural elements in this book. The titular nation is assumed as natural owner of the state. Despite having namely attached states, titular nation believed that they are in culturally and economically weaker position. State, made action in order to compensate this weak position and this perception about their position seen as a legacy for discrimination of other groups. (Brubaker, 1995: 5) Elites of states promoted the titular nation's language, history, and culture through privileges at the expense of neglecting minority groups. The nationalizing state stands for ethno national endeavor which leads us to the theoretical divide between "civic" and "ethnic" nationalism.

2.2. Ethnic and Civic Nationalism

Ethnic nationalism sets objective criteria for national identity through descent and language. National identity is gained with birth not with the free will of individuals. Therefore, ethnic nationalism believe that nation is a natural and organic social system. Ethnic nationalism supports culturally homogenous states while alienating multi-cultural and multilingual states (Lecours, 2000: 153). On the other hand, civic nationalism related to a subjective criteria based on free will of citizens without cultural markers. Nation consists of territorial and legal narratives. Civic form of nationalism puts citizenship on its center and based on well defined territories that

belong to people. Therefore, the civic states gained their legitimacy from active participation of its citizens (Smith, 1991: 11). Common civic culture and ideology are two main narratives of civic nationalism. Civic nationalism supports multiculturalism and regulations over legal system which ensures to protect minority rights (Blackburn, 2021: 4).

The civic nationalism associated with liberal and democratic values whereas ethnic nationalism associated with authoritarian and intolerance (Fozdar and Low, 2015: 525). Opposition between ethnic and civic nationalism, laid back to long tradition. Starting from eighteenth and nineteenth century, these conceptions of nationalism distinct as "French" and the "German" understandings. The French Revolution's ideals as national and social contract and the German Romanticism about the nation "*the Volk*" had lead the distinction logic between civic and ethnic notions of the nationalism. According to French understanding, the nation consists of shared political will based on set of institutions and values with emphasizing the legitimacy of political power and self-determination right (Zubrzycki, 2002: 277). German conception of nation elaborated with the romantic philosophy which emphasis spirit of people. According to German understanding, the nation consists of a community with shared race, language, past and culture. They emphasis the primordial character of the nation which can not be formed because it supposed to be given. The French conception represents civic character of nation while the German conception represents ethnic character of the nationalism. (Zubrzycki, 2002: 278).

The discourses about ethnic and civic nationalism has lead two approaches which are primordialist and modernist. The approach of modernist scholars is to evaluate nations and nationalism as they are outcome of the last centuries; they born with French Revolution and were evolved by the processes of industrial revolution,

capitalism, urbanization and secularism (Ozkirimli, 2010: 72). The modernist claim that national identity should based on territorial, secular and civic identity. On the other hand, the attitude of primordialist is to support ethnic citizenship because they assume that a person must have a nation like having flesh and bone. They claim that nation is the sole reason for sovereignty of a state. To find a starting point of ethnic origin, they assume contemporary nations as an outcome of "big family or a kind of kinship" (Ozkirimli, 2010: 50-55).

The initial criticism about civic and ethnic nationalism is about their solid character. As ethnic and civic nationalism represent two extremes lines, scholars argue that nationalist movements are not solely belong one side (Lecours, 2000: 155). In reality, there is not sole model of states, as inclusive states have both have civic and ethnic elements, the important thing is balance between these elements. Kuzio also put that, the traditional division of civic West against ethnic East should be reconsidered. The balance between these concepts changes upon the time. For example, western liberal states are not completely civic that they still have ethno cultural dimensions among their society (Kuzio, 2001: 146).

Besides that, history proves that even civic nations like Germany, France, England, Italy and Spain followed the path of cultural ethnic nationalism in the period of their nation-building. Linguistic homogenization is the most prominent process of nation-building along with the social and political process that vanished local identities and united them into one nation (Tamir, 2019: 429).

Therefore, civic nations based on collective identity which put forward one linguistic and symbolic features that dissociate them from the "others" (Tamir, 2019: 431). Defining "others" is important in order to promote the national conciseness and sense of solidary for an inclusive social integration. Liberal democracies and market

economies also require sense of national belonging in order to sustain the system. National integration gather peoples, ethnic groups and regions into a one community with a shared culture which is dominant than family and clan ties (Kuzio, 2001: 147).

There are also political implications of this debate, ethnic and civic form of nationalism have affect on two types of rights of individuals and groups. As civic conception assume that community consist of like minded individuals and it glorified diversity and individual rights whereas ethnic one give no place for free choice of individuals because their identity are given at birth. This contention laid on liberalism and communitarianism. Liberal western democracies stands for civic national identity so for individual rights as society is consist of individuals. Whereas, the communitarian tradition supports group and collective identity (Bereketeab, 2014: 304). As ethno nationalism evoked authoritarianism, ethno nationalist elites promoted the titular nation's language, history, and culture through privileges at the expense of neglecting minority groups. The protection of minorities, in general, is presently argued in relation to the role of multiculturalism within the context of liberal societies and civic nationalism. In this framework, while this thesis focuses on nation-building in the multiethnic society of Kazakhstan, it is also valuable to mention minority rights and their formation.

2.3.   Minority Rights

Especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, it is seen that national and ethnic societies which have a different language, history and tradition seek recognition in more countries and support their cultural identities. These demands cause debates and even conflicts between the "minority" and the "majority" over topics such as mother tongue, regional autonomy, political representation, curriculum and national

symbol. Demanding group rights (political power, status or privilege) beyond general citizenship rights which are at the base of these discussions is an important and problematic point in terms of minorities. Moreover, it is seen that these demands have reached the dimensions of regional autonomy and self-management. Such demands are based on the belief that minority communities can preserve their identity and culture only through these rights (Yaldız, 2012: 132).

Historically much has been done to systematize a set of principles for the preservation of minorities. Problems related to the rights of minorities are governed by the rules of international law formulated by international institutions e.g. United Nations, The Council of Europe (CoE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the European Union.

Initially, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by United Nations in 1966, is one of the primary roots of minority rights. This is the initial tangible outcome of the UN's duty on minorities, setting out clear and legally binding provisions on the rights of minorities in the member states. The covenant prohibits discrimination on the grounds of color, race, sex, religion or language and requires. States parties to subject periodic reports (OHCHR, 1966b). While these UN Covenants provide a legal basis for founding the rights of certain minorities in relation to eliminating discrimination, the initial international record which was accepted by the UN in 1992, is imposing a law on the rights of minorities in the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UNDRM, n.d.). UNDRM ensures that the unique characteristics of minorities and the seamless implementation of their both public and private traditions are preserved. It also affirms the minority's rights to form and manage their own associations (Article 1). The manifesto opened a new foundation for the rights of minorities due to the fact

that it directly embodied minorities and established a diversified number of rights such as linguistic, cultural, and religious (Article 2). Nevertheless, as this is a statement and not a consensus, it is not legally binding on the signatory (United Nations, n.d.).

It can also be thought that the EU's inattention to the issue of "minorities", which emerged due to the changing borders in Europe after the Second World War, stemmed from the intention to protect the new political structure in Europe and the fear of supporting the separatist movements of ethnic groups. After 1990, the EU was started to indirectly involved with minority rights (Yaldız, 2012: 135). The EU Minority Mechanism is based on the CoE and OSCE. The Council of Europe established the Copenhagen Criteria for 'respect for and protection of minorities as a prerequisite for EU membership in 1993. These standards form the basic context for the rights of minorities. Even though it involves 'protection of minorities' as a precondition for membership, the lack of a clear EU standard on the rights of minorities and important differences between EU minority policies are among the primary shortcomings of the policy on EU minority rights (Oz, 2020: 30).

The Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is an important international instrument that legally regulates minority rights. Besides, it can be said that this is a direct outcome of alterations in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989. The Convention was established in 1995 and came into force on February 1st of 1998. Many rights of minorities like political involvement, non-assimilation and the use of mother tongue are not covered by other fundamental human rights treaties. (The Council of Europe, n.d.). Consequently, the Convention is usually considered to be the main standard in international law about minority rights.

Founded in the early 1970s as a forum for East-West dialogue, the OSCE focuses on minority rights in the context of international security. The OSCE currently

consists of 53 Member States. The OSCE Copenhagen Document (1990) was one of the most important landmarks in the preservation of minorities accompanied by the EU Copenhagen Criteria on Accession to the European Union (1993) and the CoE's FCNM (1995). The OSCE supports its participating countries in order to found democratic institutions; make authentic and transparent elections; assure respect for human rights, freedom of the media, rights of individuals being a part of national minorities and order of law; and encourage tolerance and nondiscrimination. A major accomplishment for OSCE countries has been the foundation of a significant framework for monitoring the execution of OSCE commitments by participating countries. If a participating country does not comply with the OSCE standards, the High Commissioner aids through presenting examinations and guidance (OSCE, n.d.).

The major international conventions on the rights of minorities usually proclaim the rights of all people and their human rights to be immune to discrimination. Adoption of these policies is a precondition for newly independent countries to join the Euro-Atlantic institutions, which obliges countries to adopt a more embracive and civic policy on the rights of minorities.

2.4. Nation-Building

Nation-building refers the establishment of modern nation states which is apart from the traditional form of states such as feudal, dynastic, religious and empires (Kolsto, 1999: 44). In a wider sense, the purpose of nation-building is to consolidate people among the institutional structure of state, with stability (Dinnen, 2007: 2). In modern nation states, state-building and nation-building processes are coherent with each other, although they express different processes. Without common identity, it is difficult to build functioning and sustainable state system.

Shared identity and national consciousness are crucial sources of successful nation-building process. Nation-building is a continuing process that all contemporary states going through and citizenship is a crucial element of common political society (Dinnen, 2007: 1).

According to Hippler, nation-building process has three basic elements which are social integration, functioning state system and a convincing and uniting ideology. This ideology may be inclusive or exclusive, in other words, it may contain more ethnic elements or more civic elements. Therefore, an ideology cannot be expected to choose one side entirely. The success of the ideology can be defined as sense of being a nation from all sub ethnic identities (Hippler, 2004: 8).

Social integration between sub national groups are vital for nation states. Therefore, states interaction between sub national groups are significant for social integration. Mass media is a useful tool for the integration process. Economy and the infrastructure are also important for social integration (Hippler 2004: 8). This investments are concrete steps of the state politics in order to show the people their neutrality for each group of the society.

The last element of nation-building is functioning state system which can ultimately control its territory. State is political organization to help society to live with integration. Thus, state-building is an important element for effective nation-building process. State-building should be based on functioning economic system, security organizations and law system and administrative organization. In order to legitimate their sovereign position in their territory, states must represent the monopoly of force (Hippler 2004: 9).

2.4.1. Dimensions of Nation Building

There are several dimensions that need to be addressed to explain components of nation-building process. Territory, demography, history, state symbols and language can be counted as significant among these dimensions.

Myths and symbols are linked to collective perception which is a crucial factor for national identity. These elements are directly connected with the territory and make territory as homeland. For Smith, territory is an indispensable feature of national communities and so significance dimension of nation-building. Territory is vital for keeping continuity of nations and defining "we" and the others. Territorial boundaries became more important for modern states since they determine clear cut boundaries (Ozer, 2011: 12).

States claiming historical rights over same territory which they try to prove for having the land before the other states. According to Penrose, homeland concept attributes the sense of belonging to a historical territory that the ancestors had lived and descendants will live continuously. He emphasis the sense of belonging and feeling secure and peace (Penrose, 2002, 281).

Demography is also an important feature of nation-building. It is assumed that majority have the right to claim, being hegemon in a given territory. Therefore, minorities is a troubled matter for the nation builders. Minorities are obstacle for nationalizing policies that aim to promote core nation. In the best scenario, they can claim minority rights. Minorities can claim several demands such as linguistic rights, religious practice, political representation or territorial autonomy or at the worse case, they can claim secession from the states they are living in (Conversi, 2000: 425).

History of nations are not just based on written documents or oral stories, they can be rewritten several times to modify for politics, time and place. In the nation-

building process, it is widely used to based a nation's history on ancient times. It intensified people's belonging to a nation and mobilize masses around this legend. In order to legitimize their being, nations use myths which dates back unknown and ancient times. This is closely linked to claiming to be the first owner of a particular territory. Golden ages rhetoric is used to describe the glorious times of a nation. National saints and heroes lived in that era and culture of a nation formed. Golden ages myth usually ended by external forces. In order to gain this prosperous times, nations should turn back those years (Smith, 1988: 191).

Symbols are figures that have meanings for certain group of people. These symbols arises from history, myths, traditions or territory and mostly invented by states in order to consolidate national feelings among the society. National anthem, national flag, national emblem are mostly common used symbols and they signs of being sovereign and independent state (Ozer, 2006: 20).

National symbols are figures they lead the same meaning for certain group of people. This creates sense of belonging among people and this harmony leads people to act together around common goals.

Beside these dimensions, the official language policy is a crucial component of the nation-building process of nation-building process in all states. It also determines whether nation-building process civic or not. Policies over citizenship, education, compulsory military service are also important components of nation-building process. As a first step education engrain shared values and goals among society and it creates national consciousness among young member of society with its ethnic or civic forms. Compulsory military service perceived as patriotic way of being a member of a nation. Attitude of ruling elites towards immigrants are also related with the ethnic or civic nature of nation-building process. Moreover, myths about saints and wars;

national symbols and national holidays; renaming streets, towns, cities, buildings; mass media; supporting of sports in international arena strengthen national consciousness (Norman 2006: 46-47).

The nation-building elements that are explained above are helping us to understand how nation-building policies are formed and how these policies can be elaborated within the content of civic or ethnic nationalism. Moreover, understanding concepts of nation, nationalism and nation-building is fundamental in order to evaluate nation-building experiences of post-Soviet states. Theoretical explanations that are mentioned in this chapter will be the basis for interpreting the implementations in the later parts.

CHAPTER 3

NATION-BUILDING IN POST-SOVIET SPACE

In the last quarter of the twentieth century, the transition of countries from one type of economic and political system to another one started to draw the attention of political scientists after the democratization period in Southern Europe in the mid-1970s, South America from the late 1970s until the late 1980s, East and South Asia during the mid-1980s, Eastern Europe in the late 1980s, and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Carothers, 2002: 5).

The discussions about building nations and states have been widely discussed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In these years, nation-building refers to policies that newly emerged states applied to succeed in the transition from the old system to become a modern state. Along with that, it also means to constructing a national consciousness among the community by using educational and cultural policies of states, which are mostly mass media, curriculum, national ceremonies, mass spectaculars of states and the iconography (Dinnen, 2007: 1).

3.1. The Soviet Legacy And Post-Soviet Nation-Building

Post-Soviet states have a diverse population in terms of religion, region, and ethnicities as a legacy of the Soviet Union. Thereby, nation-building process's main aim is to compensate the Soviet period and restore the population's faith and loyalty to the newly established state. Therefore, to understand the post-Soviet nation-building

process, we should look back at Soviet times nation-building policies along with the new policies that post-Soviet states applied for compensations.

In Soviet federal system, central government holds the ultimate sovereignty and the nation-building policies were implied directly by the center for each republic and all over the union. Following the years of its formation, Soviet Union's main drive of "national question" was to increase the working class mobilization against Russian Empire (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 6). Started from the 1927, Soviets implied "*korenizatsiya*" policy (indigenization), to promote political and cultural aspects of the titular nations of each of the autonomous republic. The *korenizatsiya* refers to institutionalisation of nationalities that were chosen by the central government to promote socialist goals through local nationalism. By providing equal rights to all nations, the Soviet regime promoted local elites and supported linguistic developments of each nationality by providing titular language schools, printed books and newspapers in native languages (Scherbak, 2019: 1629). The essential point of this policy was to consolidate non-Russian nations around the Union's common ideology, as described by Joseph Stalin as "*national in form, socialist in content"*. The main achievements of this *korenizatsiya* policy was that the rapid increase in literacy rate and educational success all over the Union (Melish-Adibayeva, 2013: 268).

Another aspect of the *korenizatsiya* policy was to make it challenging for people to identify themselves with their clan, religion or locality. Rather being attached themselves with this dimensions, the non-Russian peoples should match themselves with the officially recognized ethnic nations which were shaped by the official ideology. Thereby, *korenizatsiya* served official institutionalized ideology to manage the opposition movements. After 1932, Soviet Union institutionalized ethnicities of individuals with recording ethnic origins of people in their passports, which had major

effects on choosing education and job (Smith, 2019: 977). However, the *korenizatsiya* policy ended at the end of the 1930s. Communist party officials changed their national policies with putting Russian identity on its center. Russians accepted as titular nationality and their traditional way of life were used to form Soviet identity (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 7). Soviet identity accepted as "first among equals" which refers Russian superiority over the other nations (Melish-Adibayeva, 2013: 269). According to Soviet decision makers, nations are not equal in development, size, economic situation and their civilization level are different as well. Thereby, the main drive of the nationality policies of the USSR was for the elimination of the economic, political, and cultural backwardness of nationalities and to develop them to reach the level that central Russia represented (Slezkine, 1994: 416, 423).

Each of fifteen Soviet Union Republics ran by local party mechanism and they had an only small scale of political decision-making capacity and national self-determination was not one of them. Therefore, nationalism was not on the local parties' political agendas, and a small scale of locality was tolerated by the center. The main focus of local parties' native members was the economic interests and needs of their republics but these politics were not undermined by the central government and these policies already were permitted by the center (Smith et al, 1998: 4).

The nationality policy of the Soviet Union is challenging for the titular groups as well as for the ethnic minorities. Soviet republics had several rights on paper however, in reality they were strictly under control by central government. Moscow did not allow the rise of nationalism in the republics. The components of nationalism in the union were parallel with the socialist ideology.

Post-Soviet states inherited most of their nationality problems related to Soviet policies. The demise of the USSR leaded new issues with each of the successor states

faced with their difficulties between cultural identity to political power. The Soviet Union divided from a single multinational state into a separate fifteen different states and minority problems in most republics have worsened after independence. Demise of Soviet Union, raised fears among minorities because instead of familiar Soviet authority, the new cultural hegemony of newly emerged "nations" now recently dominates their resident countries (Beissinger, 2011: 38).

Many successor states of Soviet Union have several minority groups from several ethnicities with considerable numbers. The Soviet Union was established in a geography where ethnic diversity was high. However, it is not the only reason for minority problems in post-Soviet states. National minorities were formed by the Soviet policies. Soviet Socialist Republics territories were drawn by Soviet Central Government, while implying that decision, ethnic factors disregarded by them. Thus, each post-soviet states have minority groups as a legacy of Soviet Union. Some of them created on purpose to use as leverage in relations and to promote Soviet central government role as a mediator. Besides that, migration was an usual phenomenon in the Soviet Union. Economic and political situations were reasons for migration waves of particular groups along with the mass exiles that applied by Center government to punish certain groups (Ozer, 2006: 16). As a result, these immigrant communities formed minority groups in the countries where they migrated. These minority groups' rights caused problems in post-Soviet states and they became even more problematic when their neighbor had kin nationality in their territory that could give legitimate interference in domestic affairs of states (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 2).

This multinational character of the USSR led the "*stateness*" problem in almost all post-Soviet states. (Linz and Stephan, 1996:26). The *stateness* is a problem that is associated with gaining or maintaining the allegiance of diverse populations in

multinational societies, it arises when a significant number of people do not accept the boundaries of their residence state (Gill, 2006: 616). The size of the minority group determine the potential of being a problem for each republic. In 1989, each fifteen republic have titular nationality shares as follows: With 93 percent, Armenia had the biggest percentage, Russia and Azerbaijan had 82 percent, Lithuania 80 percent, Belarus 79 percent, Ukraine and Turkmenistan 73 percent, Uzbekistan 71 percent, Georgia 70 percent, Moldova 64 percent, Estonia 62 percent, Tajikistan 62 percent, Kyrgyzstan 54 percent, Latvia 52 percent, and Kazakhstan had the lowest percentage with 43 (Gill, 2006: 618). Those countries whose titular nationality did not compromise majority had the severe *stateness* problem whereas those with the highest would be the less exposed to *stateness* problems. However, it is not what we expect from the logical perspective. The larger, the minority groups share in the total population increase, the more it would lead to stateness problem. Those states who have severe *stateness* problem, faced with large public mobilization and armed conflagration. Georgia and Moldova had conflict within their territory with ethnic minority groups while Armenia and Azerbaijan, fell out with each other over Nagorno-Karabakh after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Gill, 2006: 618).

Some scholars described the post-Soviet nation-building process as an institutionalist-statist endeavor that post-Soviet elites tried to reveal tradition and attribute the cultural, political, socio-economic elements of titular nationality to fulfill the legitimacy of the independent state (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 7). From this perspective, these newly emerged states are more prone to adopt ethnic nationalism. This is also put forth by the most of the transition literature on post-Soviet states. In other words, these states are 'nationalizing states' states. As Rogers Brubaker points out that almost all post-Soviet states are "nationalizing states" that have pursued to

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accomplish the cultural hegemony of their titular nations in order to gain legitimacy (Brubaker, 1996: 5).

Even though the Soviet Union promoted the Russian language among people, it did not openly identify itself as a Russian state. Russians were seen as the "big brother" of the multinational Soviet state. During the Soviet era, the Russian SFSR was the only state that did not have republican institutions and it never declared itself as a homeland for its titular nationality. That is because the Soviet identity and the Russian identity were blurred and the entire Soviet Union was the "homeland" for Russians. (Kuzio, 2002: 242). As for as, Soviet policies were promoting non-Russian identities, Russians were accepted as titular nationality and their culture and language promoted all over the Union as a part of Soviet campaign for building *Sovetskii Narod* (Soviet People) (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 7). In the same manner, the key legacy of the Soviet Union to post-Soviet states was that their official tendency to represent one ethnic group and promote one specific language and culture over the others. Even though, post-Soviet states officially claim themselves as multiethnic nations, they promote particular language and culture over the other ones and proclaim nationalist elements rather than international values for their legitimacy (Beissinger, 2011: 40). As these countries do not follow international values, the rights of minority groups rights can be neglected and minority groups can be exposed to discrimination against their culture, language and religion.

Baltic states Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia were followed a civic form of nationalism in order to fulfill European membership requirements. They were empowered to follow the civic form of nationalism and international values and rejected being periphery of Russia after their independence because of their historical ties between European states long before the Soviet Union (Bremmer, 2006: 144).

Between 1990s and 2000s, the Russian government policy towards nationalities was more tolerant. However, after 2000, general authoritarian trend of Russian government made more restricted policies on minorities. Ethnic and religious political parties are banned and linguistic and cultural rights got restricted (Shcherbak, 2019: 1641). Russia's attitude towards their co-ethnics living abroad affect the content of the nationality politics of post-Soviet states. Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Central Asian states' nation-building process started with ethno nationalist and exclusivist after gaining their independence. However, nation-building policies changed over time and turn to more inclusive and civic form (except Russia itself) to build good relationship with Russia. Russian minorities in other countries except Armenia, were perceived as a potential threat to these countries as they could demand independence. Beside that, Russian economic and political influence on the post-Soviet states, shape the character of nation-building policies (Bremmer, 2006: 159). Annexation of Crimea in 2014 was a radical point for Russian nationalities policy. Russian government supported the separatist Russian minorities in Ukraine in the name of "protecting Russians" (Shcherbak, 2019: 1641). Debates about ethnic and civic nationalism of post-Soviet states heightened after the Russian annexing of Crimea. Analysts argued that this is the shift for ethnic nationalism by Russia (Blackburn, 2021: 11) and so for neighboring states that feared Russian intervention.

In the post-soviet nation-building process, the inherited Soviet identities can not disappear easily, it is rather an ongoing process that post-soviet states are going through. The policies were implemented during the Soviet era, as a legacy for post-soviet states and designed by the speed and content of the nation-building process of these states. Some of them (Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan) exposed more Russification processes than others. Therefore, cultural identities are naturally

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contested and blurred. As a result, it can be said that nation-building process is an uneasy task for those who underwent with Russification process compared to those who did not. Moreover, the theme of the "nation" is not clear in many successor Soviet states and, the sovereignty of these states is inquirable and insecure.

Settlement of Russian populations to the non-Russian states is a concrete indicator of this Russification process that implemented by Soviets. Massive numbers of Russian in-migrated to Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Moldova, Estonia and, Latvia. Among those, Kazakhstan draw the biggest Russian in migration to its territory and its titular nation's share of population drew below fifty percent while Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan went through a more intense Russification process and it deeply influenced people of these three countries (Kuzio, 2002: 250).   Apart from Kazakhstan, Ukrainians and Belorussians are those who were exposed to Russification and de-nationalization process most because they were not seen as separate nations by Soviet authorities, they were accepted as sub-national groups of Russians in their regions.

Large number of Russian population also migrated to the Central Asian countries however, they were not coherent with local communities, they were incapable of speaking local languages and intermarriages between them were rare as also. Russian migrants are loyal to their cultures and they identified themselves with the Soviet Union rather than the country they were living in. Thereby, ethnic dilemma is higher and national consolidation in danger where the Russian population is high (Kuzio, 2002: 257).

All states are more or less biased in defining their cultural hegemony such as official language, state symbols and, history. Except Russia, the other Soviet states were defined by Soviet authorities as the ethnic homeland of a particular titular nation.

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Additionally, the language of this titular nation should be dominant (Kuzio, 2002: 249). As a successor of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation had more easy processes than the other post-Soviet states, it used Soviet time national myths that provide legitimacy for the state. Therefore, except Russian Federation, post-Soviet states were in contradiction while defining the political community, national historiography, language policies and state symbols (national anthem, flag, place names). These contradictions were about the use of Soviet legacy in their newly built states such as rewriting their history, replacing visual signs, and changing national symbols that were created in Soviet times.

As being the strong element of nation-building, history is used by the Soviets to keep to gather all people's of the Union. Soviet historiography served for the Communist party regime in order to unify the non-Russian elements of the Union. For this purpose, new myths and legends were created and the Russian imperial scheme of history was adopted by the regime. It briefly propagated Russians as a natural leader and superior, brotherhood of nationalities both in the past and now, non-Russians were joined to the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union with unions and unions are beneficial for all peoples, strong centralization was good for development (Kuzio, 2002: 245).

Soviets told to non-Russian nations that unity with Russians are good for them and they had never wanted to get independent. Using the independent days as history by autonomous republics, was perceived as treason for unity with the Russians. After being imposed by their former ruler that they were not incapable of running their own relations without the help of the big brother, post-colonial elites of the Soviet Union sought to gain self-confidence through the removal of oppression and discrimination by the former ruler (Kuzio, 2002: 247). For achieving these goals, historians are appointed by the ruling elites in order to legitimate themselves by claiming the rights

of the indigenous people a separate history. Without pointing out their national history they would be passive actors of history whose stance would easily be molded. Therefore, elites tried to reconstruct new memory and history that were coherent with their political agenda (Isaach and Polose, 2016: 7).

To legitimize their unpleased situation, post-Soviet nations use history and myths which date back to unknown and ancient times. Golden ages myth is used to describe these glorious times of a nation. In order to gain these prosperous times, nations should turn back those years (Smith, 1988: 191). During those years, post-Soviet states were using the rhetoric of the golden age in the same manner. They are searching for glorious times that can give a base for them to legitimize their independent states before Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. This is more significant than it seems where the territorial integrity of these states is contested. Post-soviet states are putting much more emphasis on pre-imperial times as the basis for their national history (Ozer: 2006: 18).

Elites and populations of post-Soviet states, are divided by culture, religion, region, class and, language, some of them are supporting titular nations culture, language and they want to depart themselves from the Soviet colonial past and periphery of Russians while the others are fine with the dominant culture of Russian that was imposed by colonial power and they also are supporting an alliance with Russia. These two sides are called "*nativist*" and "*assimilados*" (Kuzio, 2002: 248). *Nativists* were supporting native aspects of the newly independent states and doing so, they wanted to dissolute their past from the colonial Soviet Union and they evaluate the Soviet era as a negative perspective while the *assimilados* mostly support Soviet policies and see the colonial past as positive terms. These divided titular nations are

more visible in Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus where the Russification process was strong (Kuzio, 2002: 250).

In Central Asian states, nation-building processes are undergoing a consensus between the supporter of local cultural elites and former communist party elites, they support core nations and undermine sub-ethnic groups and they gained loyalties from regional clans. They supported historical myths and golden age rhetoric which emphasis the pre-Russian times and they also have great proudly cultural roots. As a parallel, constitutions of these states ensure the titular ethnic nations' culture and homeland should be protected (Kuzio, 2002: 257). As an exception, Russia remains strong in Kazakhstan because of its two-sided elites and titular nations like in Ukraine and Belarus.

These states legitimized themselves with new state symbols and myths that attached them to pre-Russian interaction times. Traditional values of titular nations are introduced as a new state ideology. Heroes from golden the ages are introduced to a community that claims glorious times of them Imperial Russian rule was negatively redefined and today Russia is no longer "elder brother" or leading nation (Kuzio, 2002: 257).

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many post- Soviet states struggled to form new political nations out of the legacy of the communist regime. The nation-building policies of the post-Soviet states were influenced by the policies they were exposed to during the Soviet period. Most of those states are biased in defining their cultural hegemony such as official language, state symbols and, history as these aspects were recreated or disrupted by the Soviet regime.

More or less, many post-Soviet countries have multinational societies with different ethnic origins. The presence of these minorities makes forming a new

national identity around their titular nationality challenging. Especially minority group's size is causing problems for their territorial integrity and internal stability. To enhance obtained state sovereignty, post-Soviet states implement nation-building policies that contain ethnic and civic dimensions. Ethnic and civic content of nation-building policies has been mostly shaped by Russia's attitude towards its co-ethnics living abroad which affect the content of the nationality politics of post-Soviet states.

CHAPTER 4

A BRIEF POLITICAL HISTORY OF KAZAKHS AND SOVIET LEGACY IN KAZAKHSTAN

The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview historical background to evaluate post-Soviet Kazakhstan. To do so, it will focus on Kazakh's political history and the main migration trends which shaped the demographic structure of Kazakhstan, during the times of the Russian Empire and Soviet rule. For this respect, with a historical perspective, important events that shift Kazakhstan's demographic structure will be examined.

This chapter firstly enraptures the pre-colonial times of Kazakhs to understand the origins and culture of the Kazakhs. Then, it will examine the main decisions taken by the colonial government from the annexation of the steppe, Stolpin reforms, the formation of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic to the collectivization period, and the Virgin Lands program.

Migration waves that shape a country's ethnic composition particularly will be put forward with a linear time timetable. This chapter will also study important events that make sociological division among Kazakhs as well during Russian Empire and Soviet time.

4.1. Pre-Colonial Era

By the sixth century, the land of Kazakhstan became Turkic and several Turkic khanates were set up and collapsed on the territory of Kazakhstan. By the early years of the 13th century, Kazakhstan was faced with Mongol conquest (Kort 2004: 25). By the 15th century, Kazakhs emerged as different ethnic groups and they distinguished themselves from other Turkic tribes (Karagannis, 2010: 28).

Kazakhs were nomadic people who were living in rounded tents under tribes and they were seeking pasture for their animals. During the 16th century, the Kazakhs under Kasym Khan (ruled 1509-1518), were able to consolidated the steppes of Central Asia which were east of the Caspian Sea to the north of the Aral Sea and southeastern Kazakhstan to the Ural Mountains. After Kasym Khan's reign, Kazakhstan was ruled by his three sons however, after their reign the country disintegrated into three groups. In the 17th century, Kazakhs were divided into 3 groups known as hordes (Roy, 2000: 27). Great Horde was located along with the southern part of the steppe, middle horde was located east part of the Aral Sea and middle of the steppe and lesser horde was located western area, overlapping contemporary territory of Kazakhstan. However, this territorial and administrable division of Kazakhstan did not disrupt people's belonging to Kazakh identity. They shared quite the same language and culture. These hordes also represented the unity of the Kazakh nation and according to the legend, the first rulers of hordes were sons of the legendary founder of Kazakhs, Alash (Kesici, 2011: 37). The horde system helped Kazakh people to differentiate themselves from other people. Even if the horde system was abolished, it has been still a strong marker of Kazakh identity. Even today, Kazakh people identified themselves with hordes where their ancestries lived (Kesici, 2011: 38).

During the 17th and 18th centuries, they were all confronted with attacks from nomads of Mongolia. Therefore they started to seek Russian protection against these attackers in the year of 1731. First, the middle horde made deal with Russians, and then the lesser horde followed them and finally, the great horde shared the path with the others (Roy, 2000: 27). By the mid-nineteenth century,   the Russian Empire controlled Kazakh territories and the Kazakh Khanate completely disappeared into history (Otarbaeva, 1998: 426).

4.2.   Russian Empire Era

Throughout history, several states and empires enforced masses to move through encouragement or exile in order to dominate the influence of their state in the newly seized territories. In the 19th century, after the defeat of the Crimean war, Russian Empire turned its face to eastern borders. They put more concentration on Central Asian territory and new policies started to run by Russians, aimed to control the lands and to be more permanent on these lands. One of these policies was the migration of Russian peasants. After that moment, there were several Russian migration waves occurred to the land of Kazakhstan.

Russians were having touch with Kazakhstan through traders long before the conquest of Kazakhstan. During the 18th century, Russians and Kazakhs made deals over the protection of Kazakhs from Kalmyks. Russians made deals with Kazakh hordes one by one and their marching over the steppe happened gradually. Russians faced several revolts when they were marching over the steppe. The most predominant one was broke out between the years of 1838-1845. The leader of that rebellion was Kenisary Qasimov who was a strong figure and belonged to a royal family in Middle Horde. Under his control, the Kazakh people united and fought against the Russians.

Even though he did not succeed in his objectives, he is considered the first Kazakh nationalist (Kort 2004: 34). Once it was called Russian protection over Kazakh lands became Russian control in time. By the end of 1864, Russians were fully seized all of the territories of Kazakhstan (Levi, 2002: 29).

By 1868, to control Kazakhs steppes more systematically and also operate the further conquest over Central Asia, the Russian Empire formed the Governorate-General of the Kazakh Steppe with Orenburg as its capital. As forming this administrational unit of Kazakh steppes, the Russian Empire did not provide citizenship rights for Kazakh people, their status was called "inorodtsi" which was mean the non-native subject of Tsar (Roy, 2001: 60).

To avoid these riots and control them easily, Russians sent peasants to these newly taken lands. Beginning from the 1870s, the Russian Empire started to encourage people to migrate to Kazakhstan. And those people built farms and formed villages and towns in Kazakhstan (Christian, 2018: 274). Due to the severe climate conditions in Russia, between the years of 1890-1891 thousands of people migrated to Kazakhstan without government permission. After establishment of the Resettlement Administration in 1896, Russian Empire organized and supported migration more actively for agriculture. Thus, more systematic migration took place under the control of the state after 1900 (Christian, 2018: 274).

Kazakhstan territory was seen by Russians as a solution for scarce land problems among peasants (Kort, 2004: 39). Thus, the Russian Empire launched the Stolypin Agrarian Reform (1906-1912) which allows Russian peasants to own land, and with this reform, 40 million acres of Kazakhstan's territory was open to agriculture usage (Pavlovic, 2003: 44). With the help of this reform and new railroads, half a

million farms were built by Russian and Ukrainian peasants in the northern and eastern parts of Kazakhstan between 1906 and 1912 (Kort, 2004: 39).

Another important event that impacted the country's demography was the broke of the First World War that happened in Russian Empire Era. War brought several new taxes and military duties for Kazakh men who were not in charge before that date. These burdens paved the way for rebellions in Kazakhstan and then it spread across Central Asia. Unrest was suppressed severely by the Russian Empire and almost 300.000 Kazakh and Kyrgyz nomads were mobilized from their lands and almost 250.000 people ran away to neighboring countries or struggled with hunger (Kort, 2004: 42). By that time, there were approximately 3 million foreign settlers, which constitute 41.6 of the total population of Kazakhstan (Dave, 2007: 38).

Russian rule in economy and administration ended the political sovereignty of Kazakhs and during Russian Empire Era, Kazakhstan territory welcomed thousands of Russians and Ukrainians. Most of these immigrants were peasants. These people formed villages and towns, which are turned to be cities in time. Kazakhs were living their nomadic way of life during Russian Empire Era. The colonial power was not interested in people's way of life and Kazakhs could sustain their own living style in that period.

4.3. Kazakhstan under Soviet Union

In February 1917, the political disorder in Russian Empire concluded with the revolution which is called the Bolsheviks. In these period, Kazakhs sought to form an independent government for themselves. A short-lived secular and nationalist Alash Orda government was formed between 1917 and 1920 (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007: 114). The Alash Orda Government demanded autonomy rather than secession from

Russian Empire. Alash Orda consisted of well-educated Kazakhs who were to seek to reposition of Kazakh ethnic group which would have equal rights like the Russian colonizers. Furthermore, they were claiming the returning of the lands of the Kazakhs that were occupied by the Russian Empire, sending Russians back to their lands, turning the education language from Russian to Kazakh, and neutrality of Kazakhs against First World War. They encouraged Kazakh people to embrace their "Kazakh" identity, language, history, traditions and history without pointing out superiority from any other nations (Kendirbaeva, 1999: 22).

Between the years of 1919–1920, the Bolsheviks' (Red Army) defeated White Russians (Empire forces) and controlled Kazakhstan. They formed the Autonomous Kyrgyz Republic on August 26, 1920. Bolsheviks renamed Kyrgyz ASSR to Kazakh ASSR in 1925 (Abazov, 2007: 2). Soviet nation-building policy, institutionalism of ethnicities, has left a remarkable impact on the post-Soviet nation-building policies of Kazakhstan. Following the establishment of the Soviet Union, decision-makers believed that all people who had been living in the borders of the Soviet Union, should go through an equalization process for the integration and solidarity among peoples of the socialist union (Kesici, 2011: 37).

According to the Soviet categorizing of groups, Kazakhs fulfilled the criteria of being a "nation" (*natsiya*), which is supposed to have common history, language, culture, and territory. In 1936, Soviets delineated territories of all Socialist republics with namely attached titular nations. Thereby, on 5 December 1936, the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic was announced as one the republics of Soviet Socialist Republics (Abazov, 2007: 2).

From 1927, Soviets implied *korenizatsiya* policy (indigenization), to promote political and cultural aspects of the titular nations of each of the autonomous republics.

Thereby, the Communist party created Kazakh cadres and the promoted Kazakh language to separate the titular Kazakh nation from the minorities (Kesici, 2011: 37). However, the *korenizatsiya* policy ended by the end of the 1930s. The Communist party changed its discourse over nationalities and they put Russian identity at its center. From 1937, the Russians were declared as a culturally superior nations, assisting the other underdeveloped nations. Gains of *korenizatsiya* policy erupted with Russification policy, many Kazakh institutions were closed and requirements of Kazakh language were removed (Dave, 2007, p. 65).

Along with the nation-building policies, the Soviets initiated development program for the problems of the rural parts of the Union in 1929. Afterward following Moscow's decisions, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan announced a degree on settlement of nomads (Olcott, 1987: 180).

The main purpose of the collectivization period was uniting small-scale farms into collective farms. Authorities asked people to give their lands to collective farms and people were forced to settle under these farms. Tragic events happened in this period, Kazakh nomads choose to destroy their animals rather than giving them to collective farms and almost 80% of livestock animals were confiscated (Kort, 2004: 54). By the time 1929, most of the Kazakh remained nomads and only 7.4 percent of the Kazakhs were settled, collectivization period managed to settle Kazakhs under collective farms and 95 percent of Kazakh remained to settle in 1933 (Dave, 2007: 55). According to Soviet census data, the Kazakh population was 3,637,612 in 1926 and fall to 2,181,520 by 1939 (Cummings, 2005: 15). During this period, almost one and half million Kazakhs were starving to death or migrated neighboring countries. During collectivization period, Kazakhstan economy underwent a speed transformation process. It changed from agrarian to agro-industrial, and industrial-

agrarian between the years of 1930-1938. Industrialization was rapid and Kazakhstan became one of the diverse economies in the Union with its large-scale industry and farming (Tokhtarbayev, 2001: 25).

While the Kazakh population was faced tragic events in this period, Soviet authorities decided to invite new settlers to Kazakhstan. Between 1928 and 1930, almost 65 thousand family migrated to Kazakhstan to work under collective farms. In 1946, additional 24 thousand volunteer families migrated from Russia and Ukraine (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007: 159).

Stalin's administration also exiled many different nationalities (such as Koreans, Poles, Germans, Ukrainians, Chuvash, and Chechens) to the lands of Kazakhstan. (Cummings, 2005: 15). In 1937, 110 thousand Koreans settled from the Far East in Kazakhstan. Between 1937 and 1938, 2,400 Iranian, Kurdish, Azerbaijani, Armenian families were migrated from Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan. In addition, some families from Belorussia, Poland, Ukraine were brought by the regime to Kazakhstan and some families from Kazakhstan and Baltic countries were replaced with each other. (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007: 159). On the eve of the Second World War, Kazakhstan was exposed to complex migration waves from several kinds of nationalities and other Soviet Republics and all these migration waves let Kazakh share of population decrease. According to the 1939 census, Kazakhs constituted 40 percent of the population whereas Russians were constituted 38.4, Ukrainians were constituted 10.5, Uzbeks were constituted 2.0 and the other nationalities were constituted 8.7 (Tolts, 2006: 146).

Second World War time made migration waves more dense and complicated for Kazakhs. Several thousands of people flew to Kazakhstan lands by the hands of the Soviet regime. Between 1944-1945, Germans, Chechens, Ingushs, Balkars,

Karachays, Crimean Tatars were forced to migrate to Kazakhstan, and thus one year later, there were 890.698 special immigrants living in Kazakhstan. In the middle of the 1950s, these people started to migrate to their home countries however there was considerable number remaining to stay in Kazakhstan (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007: 159).

By the year 1954, President of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev initiated the Virgin Land program, which aimed to increase agricultural production in Kazakhstan. This program brought over a million people especially from Ukraine and Russia. Newcomers were settled especially in northern and eastern parts of the country and Kazakhs were again displaced. This new migration wave put the Kazakh population as a minority in their lands. By the year 1959, Kazakhs constituted 30 percent of the total population and Russian-speaking nationalities increased 60 percent (Cummings 2005: 17). The program succeeded and Kazakhstan was able to produce one-third of the grain until the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kort, 2004: 58).

During the 1950s, a space center named the Baikounur Cosmodrome was set up by Soviet authorities in the East part of Kazakhstan. By that time, nuclear testing started to perform near Semipalatinsk and new industrial sites were created as well. To provide a skilled workforce for these new industries, a new wave of Russians immigrated to Kazakhstan. (Toktarbayev, 2001: 28).

Kazakh population started to increase at 3.5 percent during 1960s and 2.5 percent during 1970s. At that time, there was an outflow of Russians due to the labor shortage in Russia. In 1975, it was the first time Kazakhstan faced with a negative balance of migration (Dave, 2007: 78).

Between 1970 and 1989 European nationalities' population decreased. According to the last census of the Soviet Union in 1989, the Kazakhs share of the

total population increased to 40 percent. The main reasons for this outcome were out-migration of Europeans and increasing Kazakh birth rates (Dave, 2007: 78).

During the Soviet era, Kazakhstan was the main destination of migration policies of Moscow. These policies made the country's titular group a minority beside Kazakhs culture and language was far from being dominant in their land when the Soviet Union dispersed in 1991 (Kuscu, 2013: 179).

Language reforms under the Soviet Regime and the promotion of the Russian language had deeply influenced on Kazakhstan than any other Soviet Socialist Republics. Before Soviet Rule, Kazakhs were using the Arabic alphabet until the late 1920s and it changed to Latin and alphabet was changed to Cyrillic by 1940. Most Kazakh parents preferred Russian as an education language to get better career opportunities for their children. Especially higher education was entirely in Russian. Kazakh language lose its place within Soviet education system and the daily life of urban Kazakhs (Dave, 2007: 65).

In this multiethnic society structure, Russian became the communication language among these groups. And the number of people who spoke Russian was more than Kazakh. The Kazakh language was only spoken between Kazakhs and other Turkic minorities (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2007: 172).

It is not wrong to say that Russian became the lingua-franca of Kazakhstan in the Soviet period. And most political and administrative leaders were not Kazakhs, they were appointed by Moscow (Cummings, 2005: 17). After becoming a full republic within the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was ruled by several Soviet First Secretaries, the majority of whom were not Kazakh nationals. Secretaries' turnover was high until ethnic Kazakh Dinmukhammad Kunaev's arrival. After serving 22 years, the Kazakh Communist Party First Secretary Dinmukhammad Kunaev was

released his chair and replaced with a Russian politician Gennadi Kolbin on 16 December 1986. The next day of the replacement, protests started. Clashes broke out between police and protesters. According to official records, during the protests almost 2 thousand people were injured, nearly 9 thousand people were arrested and 4 Kazakhs and one Russian were killed during the incident (Özer, 2006: 67). Even though Kazakhstan has not got popular fronts like the other Soviet Socialist Republics, the potential of public mobilization became evident with 1986 revolts (Kesici, 2011:39). Gennadi Kolbin left his position to native Kazakh Nursultan Nazarbayev. The incident has taken place as an important memory and symbol among pro-Kazakh nationals. The demonstrations took place in Almaty, for some this was a sparkle of riots in the Soviet Union which paved the for Gorbachev's failure and the demise of the Soviet Union (Olcott, 1997: 547).

Even if, Kazakh way of life was changed with Soviet policies, a primary sense of ethnicity became visible with korenitsiya policies, and the Kazakh state, in which Kazakh did not even constitute a majority, was established as the homeland for the Kazakhs. The modern way of the Kazakh state was created with the help of the Soviets who disrupted and helped them at the same time. This two-sided perspective made Kazakh identity have insecure sentiments such as the ongoing dominance of the Russian language.

CHAPTER 5

NATION-BUILDING POLICIES OF KAZAKHTAN AND ITS EFFECT ON MINIROTIES

After the demise of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan declared its independence. Kazakhstan remained the last country that broke up from Soviet Union and declared its independence in 1991. As the former chapter pointed before, Kazakhstan inherited a multiethnic society structure from the colonial Russian Empire and Soviet times. Moreover, Kazakhstan was the only country in which the titular group share of the population with fourth percent did not form a majority in 1991 (Dave, 2007: 118). Soviet Regime did not just change the country's demography, it also deeply influenced the daily life of people through settlement of nomads. The most prominent ones were settlement of Kazakh people, resettlement of foreigners, and Russian language dominance in every sphere of life.

When the new Kazakh government took incumbent in 1991, only 41 per cent of total population was Kazakh, 37.8 percent was Russian, 5.1 was Germans, 5.3 was Ukrainians, 2.0 was Uzbeks, 2.0 was Tatars and others constituted 6.8 percent of the population (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000: 167). In 2019 population census, the Kazakh share of the population increased to 68.98 percent. Russian's share of the population decreased to 19.32 where as Uzbeks was 3.21 percent, Ukrainians 1.47 percent, Uyghurs 1.47 percent, Tatars 1.10 percent, Germans 0.97 percent, Koreans 0.59

percent and the other nationalities constitute 4.48 percent of the total population (Bohr et al, 2019: 112).

The new Kazakh government, founded under the leadership of former communist party leader Nursultan Nazarbayev, took some actions to correct this unpleased demographic situation for Kazakhs and one of the most effective policy was ethnic return migration policy. Thus, the newly formed government started to promote titular nationality in order to consolidate the obtained state sovereignty and decompose themselves from colonial Russian and Soviet past. Therefore, Kazakhstan adopted a new nation-building process which main objective was promoting Kazakhs (Dukayev 2017: 3).

This chapter will dwell upon nation-building policies of Kazakhstan after independence and tries to figure out the effect of these policies on ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan. In this respect, this chapter is presented in three main sub titles. The first section will put forward the state's significant policies over nation-building which are state symbols, language, relocating capital, Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, and ethnic return migration policy. The second part will be discussing whether nation-building policies are civic or ethnic and the role of the president. In addition, the final section will analyze the impact of the nation-building policies over large minority groups and evaluate the reaction from them.

5.1. Nation-Building Policies

After the independence of Kazakhstan, scholars have been interested in Kazakhstan's nature of nation-building process since 1991. The relation between ethnic groups and state policies over nation-building and its effect on these relations remains still popular. Following independence, Svanberg (1994) wrote about the

ethnic form of Nazarbayev policies to highlight Kazakh identity. Brubaker (1996) claimed that the Kazakh state could be categorized as a "nationalizing state" with its ethno nationalist policies. However, Sarsembayev (1999) argued about the demise of Kazakh nationalism because of Russian minorities' reluctance over these Kazakh-centered ethnic policies, while Fierman (2000) claimed that ethnic Kazakh nationalism would rise with the migration of rural groups into urban areas (Beachin and Kehlivan, 2013 :5).

Cummings (2006), argued that territory which belongs to the Kazakh people is the essential dimension of the Kazakh government's nation-building policy. The reason for this is to promote ethnic Kazakh culture and language as the main elements of post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Independence led a period of "Kazakh nationalism"- including changing names of streets, having new state symbols, displacing monuments, history, and language policies that mainly centered on Kazakh native motifs (Beachin and Kehlivan, 2013 :5). But there are another discourses which suggest that Kazakhstan are supporting civic form of nation-building because of the fear of separatist movements of ethnic groups. (Alpeissova, Burkhanov and Sharipova 2017: 209). Due to the multiethnic character of the Kazakh society, Kazakhstan has concerned about the potential of secessionist demands from Russians living in the Northern parts of the county and fears secessionist demands that could be supported by the Russian Federation. Therefore, Kazakhstan elites have been following balanced and cautious policies that could possibly discomfort Russians.

Micheal Billig's term of "banal nationalism' explained how symbols, myths, and routines of social life, let people reproduce their nations with their banal habits (Billig, 1995: 175). Therefore, state symbols, myths, and traditions are invented to

construct a shared identity with emotional ties and a sense of belonging of peoples to such symbols.

Renaming cities, streets and changing national symbols represents ethnic nationalization of Kazakhstan which main objective is to raise collective identity among Kazakhs though symbols (Tsyrempilov, Bigozhin and Zhumabayev, 2021: 1). As Kazakhs were not formed the majority of the population when the independence was declared, the newly born Kazakh state wanted to use the Kazakh nationalism to perverse their existence. Therefore, nation-building policies of the state were conducted around promoting ethnic Kazakh culture especially in the first years of independence. To do so, the process of nation-building should lean on the formation of new symbols, myths and rituals. Since independence, ancient figures of Kazakh tribes have been used in national symbols of the country and even the architecture of cities symbolize the Kazakh legacy to distinguish the new state from Russian Empire and the Soviet Union past (Kudaibergenova, 2014: 160).

The status of Soviet leaders vanished over time and only a few remained symbolically. Kazakh ancient heroes (the Golden Man), rulers and leaders (Abylai Khan) and modern images and events (for instance, President Nazarbayev and the December 1986 events) have taken place on the streets of the country (Kudaibergenova, 2014: 163). Ancient figures' names and faces are used on currency, "*the tenge*," and streets are renamed as well. In this juncture, many cities are renamed, such as *"Ermak"* into *"Aksu"*, *"Gurev"* into *"Altyrau"* and some city names are harmonized to Kazakh language such as *"Alma-Ata"* into *"Almaty"*, *"Semipalatinks"* into *"Semey"*, *"Uralsk"* into *"Oral"* and *"Altyubinks"* into *"Aktobe"* (Peyrouse, 2008: 114).

For supporting the ethnic territorialization of Kazakhstan, Kazakh government implemented "*the Rouhani Zhangyru*" program and within these program, the Sacred Geography of Kazakhstan project launched in 2017. The project's main aim is raising the sense of belonging of citizens related to landscapes which are significant for the historical memory Kazakhstan (Tsyrempilov, Bigozhin and Zhumabayev, 2021: 1).

The flag, emblem and national anthem, which are important indicators of a sovereign state, were changed after independence. For this reason, Kazakhstan changed its flag that contains the signs of ancient Kazakh legacy. The new flag was designed by Shaken Niyazbekov and it was adopted officially in 1992. The new flag has blue color along with the sun in its center and an eagle with open wings. There is a vertical line on the left side of the flag, which entails traditional Kazakh ornaments. All these images in the flag are in golden color. The blue color of the flag refers to the sky where ancient nomadic people lived under it and the sky was believed as a God by them. The sun in the center represents wealth and life. With this symbol, Kazakhstan also accepts the universal principles and is open to world for cooperation. The symbol of the golden eagle with open wings represents power, sovereignty and independence of the state and the eagle in flight, associated with freedom by the nomads. The ornaments on the left side of the flag have traditional Kazakh motifs and are interpreted as a harmony of several dimensions which represent the inner world of a human (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

The national emblem of Kazakhstan has a rounded form and symbolizes the figure of a "*shanyrak*" (upper arch of a yurt) on a blue background, from which "*uyks*" are divided like sunlight. There is a mythical winged horse on two-part of "s*hanyrak*". On the upper side of the emblem, there is a five-pointed star, and "*Qazaksthan*" is written in the lower part of the emblem. Like the flag of the country, the emblem also

refers to ancient Kazakh legacy with the symbols of yurt, mythical winged horse and blue and golden color (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

The national anthem of Kazakhstan was adopted two times. The first version of the anthem kept the melody of the previous anthem of the Kazakh SSR but the lyrics of the anthem changed. In 2006, the national anthem changed with the patriotic song "*My Kazakhstan*" written in 1956. Nursultan Nazarbayev modified the song and the final version of the song was approved as a national anthem of Kazakhstan in 2006 (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

Kazakhstan has three national holidays which have mass spectacle: Day of the Republic (25 October), Independence Day (16 December) and "*Nauryz"* (22 March). Day of Republic and "*Nauryz"* have more cultural and folkloric content in the favor of Kazakhs, while Independence Day is celebrated on more civic nationhood elements (Adams and Rustemova, 2009: 1257). These days are important for Kazakh society as they are signs of being a unified and coherent nation. These spectacles allow people to mobilize without political reasons.

Traditional Spring celebration "*Nauryz"* which belongs to the culture of Kazakhs is officially celebrated on the 22nd of March. It has been celebrated as a new year by the ancient traditions for welcoming spring. Kazakhstan parliament announced a bill that approved the Muslim's Eid Festival and Orthodox Christmas' holy days as public holidays (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2021). Beside these holidays, Kazakhstan still recognize the holidays from Soviet time as official holidays, The New Year's Day, 8th of March International Women's Day, 1st of May Labors' Day (Ametbek, 2017:75).

Codification of native language as the state language is a symbolic way of being a sovereign state and a nation. As for Kazakhstan, language has also been a

crucial sign of being a sovereign state after independence. Language policy in the country has never been an easy task for independent Kazakhstan. Several ethnic groups are living in the country and Russian has been spoken by the people of Kazakhstan as an inter-ethnic communication language.

By the time of the Soviets, Kazakhstan had been exposed to Sovietization policies whose main aim was to create ideal Soviet men and women. For this purpose, Russian was the prior language in each state and all over the Union. Russian was the inter-ethnic language between the peoples of the Union. Hence, non-Russian speakers became bilingual all over the Union and also in Kazakhstan. Most of native Kazakhs could speak in Russian while the other nationalities living in the country especially Russians could not speak the Kazakh language. According to the 2009 census, 74 percent of the population can speak Kazakh whereas 98.3 percent can speak Russian (Analytical Report, 2011: 22). There have been many regulations including the constitution, several language laws, education and mass media over language policies after independence to promote the Kazakh language.

Therefore, Kazakhstan's nation-building process has a challenging task due to the large Russian-speaking community and so seeking co-existence with that problem. There are large Russian-speaking nationalities, including urban Kazakhs who speak Russian. At this juncture, it is not logical to make rigid politics over de-Sovitezation which could lead to social tension among the country (Abashin, 2014 : 89).

Promotion of the Kazakh language after independence can be perceived as compensation for the Kazakh language for being taken underestimated during the time of the Soviets. The promotion of titular language as the state language instead of colonial language, have been a common tendency of post-colonial states of Asia and Africa. The elites who are educated in colonial lingua franca and limited facility in

their own language, wanted to gain public support and legitimacy by promoting the national language (Dave, 2007: 98).

In 1989, a language law was adopted by Kazakh SSR announced Kazakh as a state language and Russian was declared as the inter-ethnic communication language in the country. Rather than being sole action, these law amendments were regulated in response to union-wide trends. In the 1980s with the help of popular support, several Soviet Socialist Republics declared laws on language, which accepted the indigenous language as an official language of their state.   However, similar regulations could not go beyond being just a symbolic way of sovereignty in Kazakhstan where urban Kazakhs also spoke Russian like other ethnic groups (Dave, 2007: 99). Therefore, the questions over language became a matter of being sovereignty of state and survival of Kazakhs as a nation.

According to Article 7 of the Constitution that was adopted in 1995 by referendum, Kazakh was announced as the only state language. Russian also could be used officially in state and local administrative units together with the Kazakh language. State also ensured to promote all languages of the people of Kazakhstan (Article 7). Even if, Russian is recognized officially by the state, there are some obstacles for non-Kazakh speakers in the administrative level. According to Article 42 of the 1995 Constitution, to become the president of the country, one must speak the Kazakh language fluently. Article 58 of the same constitution also made it compulsory to speak Kazakh for heads of the Chambers of the Parliament (Kazakhstan's Constitution, n.d.).

The most significant regulation over language was made in 1997 with the language law of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The law determined the government's responsibilities over the implementation of policies for all languages in Kazakhstan.

The law also recommended to each citizen be master in the state language (Beachin and Kehlivan, 2013: 7).

Along with this, in 1999 Kazakh language announced as mandatory for mass media, television and radio channels and should also give equal time for the other languages of the Republics which was hard to apply. In 2013, it was reconsidered that each channel should broadcast at least 35 per cent in Kazakh and the number raised to 50 per cent in 2015 (Laruelle, 2015: 325). In reality, the programs in Russian broadcast in "prime time" when the audiences reach the highest numbers and people access Russian channels with free satellites ignoring Kazakh programs (Aksholakova and Ismailova, 2013: 1583).

During the first years of independence, the Kazakhstan government's focus was to promote the Kazakh language while the alphabet of the county remains Cyrillic, which is a concrete proof of Soviet legacy. Kazakhstan used Arab script until the 1920s. In order to avoid the pan-Islamic movement, Soviet authorities changed the script of the Muslim people as well as Kazakhs. In 1929, Latin script was adopted in Kazakhstan all over the Union. However, soon after for the purpose of Russification policies, the Cyrillic alphabet was adopted in the Union as also in Kazakhstan (Dave, 2007: 65). After the demise of the Soviet Union, changing the alphabet to Latin was the primary issue of some former republics (Neighboring Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan). But the situation in Kazakhstan was different where several ethnic groups lived in the country and Russian was more dominant in the public sphere than in the Kazakh language. There have been several attempts by the government to change the country's alphabet to Latin. In 2007, a feasibility study was carried out by the Ministry of Education for the transition to the Latin alphabet over a 12-15 year period. (Beachin and Kehlivan, 2011 :5) In 2017, Nazarbayev issued a decree over

changing script to 32 letter, Latin alphabet until 2025 however, the government changed new alphabet draft and canceled it until 2035 (Putz, 2020).

The latest law on Education was adopted in 2007, like the other legal regulations, this law also supported the Kazakh language. Russian also had a privileged position and other languages promoted with that law (Article 9) (Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2017).   Even though the state supported Kazakh education in schools, there was still a large demand for Russian schools. Although Kazakh was a compulsory course, it did not go beyond being an appearance in these schools. Russians and other ethnic minorities chose Russian-educated schools.   For higher education, students could choose Kazakh, Russian and English.

Kazakh knowledge is a requirement for some sort of public jobs such as security, defense, and law enforcement agencies (Aksholakova and Ismailova, 2013: 1583). To do so, KAZTEST (Kazakh Language Knowledge Level Assessment System) was established in 2006 to test the Kazakh language proficiency of citizens and foreigners who are operating in Kazakhstan. KAZTEST was created according to international standards and it has operated as the main indicator of Kazakh language proficiency. According to the decree of the state (Decree No.808 dated December 7 of 2018), KAZTEST is considered as a state order. KAZTEST is obligatory for those who want to apply some certain government jobs and international scholarships (KAZTEST, n.d.)

With the help of these law and government decrees, Russians who were in charge of administrative, economic and government consciously decreased political arenas (Cummings 2005: 86). These policies of government also accelerated the immigration of Russians, who now feel as a minority in Kazakhstan. These actions are also instruments of government's nationalist purpose.

After independence, government supported for promoting the Kazakh language with legal regulations did not go beyond being symbolic because of the multi-ethnic structure of the community. In order to avoid social tension, lawmakers gave the Russian language a legal status. Along with Russian, the other languages were supported by the government. Excluding high-level bureaucracy, the lack of Kazakh knowledge did not cause any obstacles for employment opportunities except government jobs. For overall assessment, even though language regulations after independence provided privileges for the Kazakh language, this process went through civic form rather than being ethnic concept.

The assembly of the people of Kazakhstan is another and the most concrete component of civic sided nation-building policies of Kazakhstan. Assembly of the people of Kazakhstan (Assembleia Narodov Kazakhstana), was established on March 1st, 1995 with the personal initiative of Nursultan Nazarbayev. In order to control ethnic minorities with loyal ethnic leaders is an ethnic strategy of Nazarbayev's administration. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan established these entities of ethnic representation along with the suggestions of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) (Dave, 2007: 131). The Assembly became an element of the Kazakh political system as it represents all ethnic groups' interests in parliament. Assembly of the peoples of Kazakhstan is a symbol of harmony and it is assisting the stability of interethnic relations since its establishment.

The assembly assigned for strengthening socio-political stability and increasing the cooperation between civil society and state, in the realm of interethnic affairs. The Assembly is headed by the President of the county, which is an important sign of its special status. The Assembly's status regulated by special laws, which are

"About the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan," and "Regulations of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan" (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

The decisions taken by the Assembly are binding for state authorities and civil society organizations. There are 300 representatives of several ethnic groups at the center and there are several branches at the regional level. The several ethnic centers nominate delegates to the Assembly and the President nominates other delegates, who are writers, journalists, artists, academics of several ethnic groups (Dave, 2007: 131). The Assembly elects nine deputies for Parliament to represent all sets of interests of all ethnic minorities. (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

There are several sub councils, centers and clubs under Assembly structure such as Scientific-Expert Council, Club of journalists, Center of language training which is operating 88 schools all over the country. In 108 schools, 22 languages spoken by ethnic groups of Kazakhstan are taught as well. Furthermore, there are 195 linguistic centers where people of all ages can learn 30 different languages (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

For supporting ethno cultural relations with information and communication channels Government supports the largest 6 ethnic newspapers. Newspaper and magazines are in 11 different languages, radio programs broadcasting 8 languages whereas TV Channels are in 7 languages. Besides the visual and written media, along with the Kazakh and Russian, there are theaters that perform in Uzbek, Uighur, Korean and German (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, n.d.).

As Kazakhstan uses legislative procedures to control ethnic-driven organizations, it is difficult to form a political organization for minority groups in the country. Due to the fact that current legislation of the country does not allow political parties based on ethnicity and religion, the legislation framework allows representation

of ethnic minorities in central government and regional councils through the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.

Another important aspect of nation-building process is relocating the capital city. Relocating capital cities has a historical importance with uniting and legitimating power of the states. It has been a trend throughout history that many countries choose to make especially after the formation of a new political entity or post-colonial experience. Turkey, Germany, Brazil, Finland and Norway are the countries that moved their capitals (Arslan, 2014: 100).

The large population of Russians along with the Russian border and their sense of belonging to Russia made the Kazakh government take action. In 1994, the Kazakhstan government decided to transfer the capital city from Almaty to Aqmola (later it was renamed as Astana) and they implemented this decision in 1998 (Dave 2007: 123). There are several reasons behind that decision such as Almaty's geographical landscape, air pollution, its distance from center of the country and industrial parts of the country, which are located in the Northern parts of Kazakhstan. On March 23, 2019, the capital city Astana was renamed again as Nursultan by the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for the honor of Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev's who left his position in 2019 (Yergaliyeva, 2019).

The most prominent reason behind relocating capital is security because there is a large Russian population living in the northern parts of the country who would claim to join the motherland across the border. A potential secessionist demand from Russian group and the support from the Russian government, lead to the change of the capital city as to obtain Kazakh dominance in the northern parts of the country. Therefore, this decision was seen as a preventive move in order to avoid separatist claims of the Russian community from the northern part of the country. With

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relocating capital, the government intended to dominate the region and support Kazakh identity as well.

Another important aspect of the nation-building process is the ethnic return migration policy. Thousands of Kazakhs were migrated from Kazakhstan involuntarily because of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union policies. Between the years 1918-1920 civil war, the collectivization period during the late 1920s and the hunger during 1933, led the way for Kazakhs to migrate to their homeland involuntarily. When the Soviet Union dispersed and Kazakhstan became an independent state, Kazakhs as a titular nationality did not constitute the majority in their name attached country. Thus, the political elites of Kazakhstan started to seek ways to support titular nationality. As they could not maintain the majority in their country, Kazakh society was culturally and linguistically Russified as well.

In 1992, to overcome this unpleased situation, the Kazakhstan government implemented a new law which invited native Kazakhs who lived outside of Kazakhstan like Germany and Israel did (Bonnenfant 2012: 31). This ethnic return migration policy's only criteria was being Kazakh. Regardless of people's background, Kazakhstan opened its doors for ethnic Kazakhs. These people were called "*oralmandar*" and immigration law guaranteed special status for them in the country. As contrary to the other countries that implemented ethnic return migration policy, Kazakhstan also sought a revival for Kazakh culture and language with their co-ethnics who were not a target of the Russification process (Oka, 2013: 1).

The 1993 Constitution of Kazakhstan, "recalled citizens who are forced to leave Kazakhstan and Kazakhs living outside of the republic" to entitle citizenship of Kazakhstan with maintaining their current citizenship of other countries (Article 4). The 1995 Constitution changed the situation of dual citizenship. The law on

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"*oralmandar*" had been revised several times, the most prominent one was adopted within 2002. That law defined *oralmandar* as "*ethnic Kazakhs who permanently resided in another country after Kazakhstan gained its independence and arrived in Kazakhstan to reside permanently."* In 2011 in addition to this definition "... *and to gain oralman status one must fulfill the procedures indicated by law*" (Oka, 2013: 4).

Although the central government provides some funding to support "*oralmans*", migration law gives the responsibility to local governments. These are defined as assisting with employment, vocational training, learning the official language of the state including Russian, and material support such as housing and providing land for farming (Bonnenfant, 2012: 37). Although there are no restrictions for preventing the migration of "*oralmans*" to the country, the quota system has been implemented in order to limit the number of migrants who receive government support. The quota system was set up by law for the first time in 1993. The president indicates the annual quota for each year considering the economic and demographic situation (Bonnenfant, 2012: 38).

Return migrants raised public discourses about the integration of these people to the community, housing, employment, language (Kuşcu, 2013: 179). Local citizens complained about the unfair distribution of public wealth. The Government provided many privileges to return migrants that were not available for locals who were paying taxes (Oka, 2013: 10). Besides economic-related issues, locals also complained about social harmony with return migrants because they were coming from several countries with different cultural backgrounds and lack of Russian knowledge.

Since it was first implemented, the ethnic return migration policy has departed almost one million ethnic Kazakhs (Oralmandar) migrated from Uzbekistan, China,

Mongolia, Turkmenistan and Russia and they constitute 10 percent of the Kazakh population today (Dukayev, 2017: 1).

In a multi-ethnic society, giving privilege to one ethnic group through some policies created public debates. Thus, ethnic return migration policy raised public discourse about the characteristic of nation-building process whether it is civic or ethnic. While the proponents of the policy view the ethnic return migration as a solution for the cultural and language revival of the Kazakh nation. The opponents of the policy argue that while most citizens of the country are struggling with economic difficulties, the country's scarce resources are being wasted on immigrants. Therefore, the government should first support decent living standards for local people (Kuscu, 2013: 191). Opponents of this policy mostly belong to non-titular ethnic groups however there are ethnic Kazakhs who are against for ethnic return migration policy.

Ukraine crisis in 2014, sparks the fear of potential disloyal citizens in northern parts of the country, Kazakh government introduced new aggravated law against secessionism and encourage Kazakhs migration to northern parts of the country in order to obtain demographic superiority of Kazakhs against Russians. For doing so, especially *"oralmandars"* resettled in northern Kazakhstan and government financially guaranteed social benefits for those who resettled in northern oblasts (Dukayev, 2017: 6).

The ethnic return migration policy, which is based on blood relations, represents an ethnic form of nation-building process in Kazakhstan. Through this policy, the government intends to increase the population of ethnic Kazakh people as well as revive the Kazakh culture and language.

5.2. Civic or Ethnic Nationalism

There have been ongoing discussions whether Kazakhstan's nation-building process should take an ethnic or civic form of nationalism. These two concepts are supported by the two main national identities, Kazakh and Russian. Ethno-nationalism is supported by the Kazakhs to promote Kazakh culture whereas the civic form of nationalism is supported by Russians and other ethnic minorities to preserve the Russian language and Russian-Soviet symbols. Hence, there are two national identities that emerged as Kazakh and Kazakhstani nations on the behalf of these arguments (Aitymbetov, Toktarov, Ormakhanova, 2015: 5).

"Kazakh" refers to ethnic dimension whereas Kazakhstani refers to territorial, administrative and political implication. Kazakhs do not want to consider themselves as Kazakhstani and they define themselves as Kazakhs, while Russians and other ethnic minorities identify themselves as Kazakhstani. Supporters of ethnic nationalism based on "Kazakhstan is a state where all ethnic minorities live" while, supporters of civic nationalism based on "Kazakhstan is a state where all citizens live regardless of their ethnicities" (Aitymbetov, Toktarov, Ormakhanova, 2015: 8).

In this vein, there have been discussions about the name of the country. "The Republic of Kazakhstan" was taken after the independence of the country. Since then, there has been an argument about renaming the country's name as "Kazakh Republic". In order to do this, an initial draft was proposed about renaming the country's name in 1995. However, this proposal was denied by the policy makers and the minority groups living in Kazakhstan. After all, in the final form of the Constitution the country's name was renamed as "The Republic of Kazakhstan" (Aitymbetov, Toktarov, Ormakhanova, 2015: 9).

Nazarbayev suggested the idea of re-naming the country as "*Kazakh Eli"* (Land of Kazakhs) in February 2014, with the reason of distinguishing the county from other *–stans of* Central Asia. This intent of dropping suffix –stan, shows the Eurasian identity would be less Turkic and Islamic oriented and more prone to Russian legacy and Asia pacific region. Since then the public debate about renaming country is heightened while Kazakh nationalists suggest the idea of *"Kazakh Orda"*, minorities are fine with the present name Kazakhstan (Laruelle, 2018: 404).

As a significant tool of national mobilization, media channels occupy an important place in nation-building process of Kazakhstan. The division between the supporters of the ethnonational and civic national forms can be seen in concrete strata in the media. Kazakh promote an ethnic form of nationalism while Russian media promote a civic form of nationalism (Aitymbetov, Toktarov, Ormakhanova, 2015, 7).

If we look at nation-building policies in the shadow of these debates, nation-building policies that were implemented after independence have both ethnic and civic components. State symbols are mostly concentrated on ethnic Kazakh elements. However, when it comes to language, the government has taken its policies with careful steps. Kazakh language is highlighted with constitution and law meanwhile Russian also keeps its status. The government also wanted to change the script Cyrillic to Latin however, Russian domination does not give a way for this change. Liberal policies over language are concrete elements of the civic form of nation-building polices.

The current constitution maintains both ethnic and civic dimensions. On the one hand, Article 14 restrains discrimination against any person on the basis of "ethnicity, sex, faith, race, language, religion or any other feature". On the other hand,

Article 41, makes it compulsory for the president to speak in the Kazakh language (Beachain and Kevlihan, 2013: 7).

The 1995 constitution gave citizenship to everyone living in the country after gaining independence. This is a concrete example of the civic form of policy taken by the government. However, ethnic return migration policy which is based on blood relations and giving them exclusive rights represents an ethnic form of action.

Although, constitution of the country providing equal rights for all citizens regardless of their ethnic origin, Kazakhstan still recording ethnic origin of its citizens in identity documents and official statistics (Burkhanov, 2019: 30). which proves that common national identity is controversial for Kazakhstan. Especially, ethnic minorities wanted to maintain their ethnicities in public documentations while ethnic Kazakhs support the removal of ethnic identities in public documents. They believe that integration of all ethnic minorities under the umbrella of overarching Kazakhstani identity. On the contrary, Russians and other ethnic groups consider such move would be assimilation. (Jumageldinov, 2014: 413).

There are policies that indirectly restrict the rights of other ethnic minorities. The law on political parties is one of them. A new law on political parties adopted in 2002, bans political parties which are promoting racial, ethnical and religious-based of membership of citizens (Article 5/8). Existing political parties are also obligated by this law. This new law makes it harder to form political parties. The 1996 law on political parties obligated them with having 3 thousand members from representation at least half of all oblast (Article 10/4). However, the new one obligated political parties to have at least 50 thousand members and branches with 700 members each from all 14 oblasts, to be registered (Oka, 2006, 367). This law, makes it more difficult to form a political organization for minority groups in the country. Particularly, the

obligation of representation of all oblast, emphasizes the restrictions for minority groups because they are not living homogenously in the country. For instance, Russians mostly live in the northern parts, Uyghurs are living in the southeastern part, Uzbeks are living in the south part of the country. This law showed the exclusive attitude of the Kazakh government over minority groups indirectly.

Besides political parties, Kazakhstan use also legislature procedures in order to control ethnic-driven organizations. In order to do so, the government applied the law on public associations and related legislature. These associations should be permitted by the Ministry of Justice and their meetings and public demonstrations should be allowed also from the Ministry. Without the permission of the government, any activities of these associations are restricted (Oka, 2009: 10).

After ethnic Kazakhs constitute the majority of the population in 1999, with this confidence Kazakh government initiated, a more civic form of identity policies with constitutional reforms in 2007. The Doctrine of National Unity *(Doktrina natsional'nogo edinstva)* was advised by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan advanced by the President of the country (Rees, Williams and Diener, 2020: 4). The National Unity Doctrine claims 'one state- one destiny', 'different ethnics- equal rights', 'development of national spirit'. The doctrine points out national solidarity. For consolidation of society, each ethnic group should keep its language and maintain its culture, customs and traditions while belonging organically to Kazakhstani nation (Rustembekova and Amandykova, 2013: 292). The doctrine highlighted the civic form of Kazakhstan's national identity. The doctrine supported by a program which was called as *"Patriotic Act- Mangilik El"* adopted in 2014 by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. This program, emphasis on the unified nation and civic identity of Kazakhstani identity (Rees, Williams and Diener, 2020: 28). The civic nation-building

approach "Kazakhstani Nation" resemble with policy of "the Soviet people" (Burkhanov, 2017: 13).

All these policies were implemented without any considerable ethnic conflict, ethnic mobilization or social crisis. The government's attitude towards implementing these policies had an impact on this peaceful environment. Government's inclusive approach over the diversity of society, emphasizes that all of the people, who are living in Kazakhstan, are victims of the Soviet era (Adams and Rusmetova, 2009: 1262).

5.3.   State Governance and Role of Leader

With the gradual concentration of power in the presidency and without any political competition, Kazakhstan's constitutional history turned to a transition from one-party system to a one-man party (Nurumovand and Vashchanka, 2016: 143). Pluralism is not allowed in the Media and political activities are strictly controlled by the government. The legislature and constitution serve for the consolidation of president power rather than democratic acts. (Nurumovand and Vashchanka, 2016: 170).

Nursultan Nazarbayev who was the ex-member of the communist regime, was elected as the first President of Kazakhstan in 1991. Like the other central Asian countries, the lack of political culture, civil society and democratic institutions paved the way for the old communist leaders. Nazarbayev was unopposed in his first elections after independence (Beachain and Kevlihan, 2015: 499) and he naturally became the first president of the newly independent country.

Freedom House statistics classified Kazakhstan as "party free" following the independence year of 1991 to 1993, but since 1994, Kazakhstan has been rated as "not free" in terms of political rights and civil rights. Also, The Organization for Security

and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) have never observe free and fair elections in Kazakhstan (Bohr et al, 2019: 41). Afterward of independence, unlike other Central Asian counterparts, Nazarbayev was seen as a reformist leader who welcomed several opinions and debates in parliament and mass media (Oka, 2009: 5). Eventually, the optimistic consideration about Nazarbayev's incumbent, changed after the concentration of power in his chair. The 1995 Constitution announced Kazakhstan as a Presidential country, empowering Nazarbayev with larger authority. The new parliament was elected without any considerable opposition in 1995 and Nazarbayev's discourses over democratization were not reflecting the reality (Ibadildin and Pisareva, 2020: 105).

In 2000, a new constitutional law was announced over the first president, which was providing ultimate rights and privileges for the first president Nazarbayev, even after his retirements. The law provided a lifetime seat in the constitution and security council and chairmanship of the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan. Even if, the constitution of the country restricted the term of the presidency more than two times (Article 41). However, this limitation was not valid for the first presidency of the country (Oka, 2009: 6).

During his incumbent, Nazarbayev often called for early election to sustain his chair from so-called opposition. Overall all elections in Kazakhstan have been held with high turnout but without any alternative opponent presented. Nazarbayev's party, "*Otan*" was held one third of the all seats (25 out of 77) in the 1999 election. "*Otan*" raised its seat from 25 to 44 in the 2004 elections. In 2006, the party changed its name to "*Nur Otan*" by incorporating "*Asar*" and Civic and Agrarian parties and Nazarbayev took the party leadership again (Oka, 2009: 12). Therefore, no surprisingly Nazarbayev managed to increase his votes from 81% in 1999 to 95.5% in

2011 (Beachain and Kevlihan, 2015: 498). Ethnic Kazakh, Nazarbayev managed to control ethno-nationalist tendencies successfully with the help of economic growth and his personal cult. He was also successfully managed the process of integrating regional groups (called hordes) into the state system with the help of local elites (Beachain and Kevlihan, 2015: 504).

Kazakhstan Soviet Socialist Republic was economically dependent on the central authority like the other Soviet states during the Soviet era, initial priorities of newly born government were on economy afterward of independence (Beachain and Kevlihan, 2011: 9). After the late 1990s economic crisis effected Kazakhstan as well and the government introduced a neoliberal economic program "Kazakhstan-2030" which offered economic prosperity for individuals and reduced the role of the state in the economy and friendship of people (Adams and Rustemova, 2009: 1257). Nazarbayev's success mostly laid on countries' economic development and stability. However, successful transition for the market economy does not relate to political freedom. Democracy is seen as a threat to the system by the state. Kazakhstan still could not leave behind the authoritarian characteristic of the old Soviet system (Adams and Rustemova, 2009: 1256).

Nazarbayev's personal charisma, state instruments and logical politics, let him stay in power for 30 years. Kazakhs perceive him as the founding father of the state and national hero. He left his chair in March 2019 and left his place to Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. In 2019 July, Tokayev elected with 71 percent of total votes (Bohr et al, 2019: 41). Even though Nazarvayev left his position, he remained the final authority on policy decisions as an *Elbasy* of the country (Rees, Williams and Diener, 2020: 5). In his speech, Nazarbayev stated that:

As you know, our laws give me the status of the First President - Elbasy (Leader of the Nation). I remain the Chairman of the Security Council, which is vested with serious powers. I remain the Chairman of the Nur Otan party, a member of the Constitutional Council. That is to say, I am staying with you. The concerns of the country and the people remain my concerns (Nazarbayev, 2019).

In his speech Nazarbayev emphasis multi-ethic characteristic of Kazakhstan as follows:

We managed to build a successful Kazakhstan state with a modern market economy on the ruins of the Soviet Union, created peace and stability within a multi-ethnic and multi-religious Kazakhstan. For the first time in our centuries-old history, international legal recognition of the Republic of Kazakhstan has been secured. Kazakhstan has been put on the world map, where it did not exist as a state. We have our own flag, anthem, coat of arms (Nazarbayev, 2019).

Under his presidency, Kazakh became the state language, Kazakh history was re-written, state symbols were recreated with more ethnic Kazakh elements. Besides politics, his ability to speak the Kazakh language distinguished him from other Russified political elites of the Soviet time (Özer, 2006: 85). Other ethnic groups also supported him because he is the successor of the Communist Party and his governance was known by the people. Therefore, the majority of minority groups preferred stability and so preferred the incumbent president instead of a new one whose attitude toward ethnic minorities is unpredictable. Even though, the new president, Tokayev has promised to continue all existing policies of government, public discourses about identity politics increased with Tokayev's arrival (Bohr et al, 2019: 60).

5.4. Migration trends and Demographic Situation

The demographic situation in the country in 1991 was in favor of Slavic-originated groups. 41 percent of the total population was Kazakh, 37.8 percent was Russian, 5,1 was Germans, 5.3 was Ukrainians, 2,0 was Uzbek, 2.0 was Tatars and

others constitutes 6,8 percent of the populations (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2000: 167). Along with the other regulation that was supporting nation-building in favor of ethnic Kazaks. Kazakhstan's government started to implement its own immigration policy after the dispersed of the Soviet Union. As a first step, the government abolished dual citizenship (Russian and Kazakh) options. People were obligated to prefer one of these countries. With the help of this policies and limited job options, led Russians to emigrate from Kazakhstan (Pavlovic, 2003: 49). Between 1989 and 1999, almost one and half million Russians departed from Russia and their percentage of the population, decreased from 40 percent to 30 percent (Peyrause, 2008: 107).

The out-migration of Russians and other Russian-speaking minorities was not only a reason but also an outcome of these nationalization policies. There was a mutual relationship with each other (Brubaker, 2011: 1794). After all, between 1989 and 1999, the percentage of the European population decreased almost 40 percent in these ten years period (Dave, 2007: 127).

When we look at the population distribution between nationalities in 1999, Kazakhs were 53.4 percent, Russians were 29.9 percent, Ukrainians were 3.7 percent, German 2.4 percent, Tatar 1.7 percent, Uyghurs 1.4 percent, Koreans 0.7 percent and the other nationalities constitute 6.8 percent of total population (Dave, 2007: 60).

As mentioned, thousands of Kazakhs were migrated from Kazakhstan because of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union policies. Thus in 1992, the Kazakhstan government implemented new law which invited native Kazakhs (Bonnenfant, 2012: 31). Since it was first implemented, the ethnic return migration policy has departed almost one million ethnic Kazakhs (*Oralmandar*) migrated from Uzbekistan, China, Mongolia, Turkmenistan and Russia and they constitute 10 percent of the Kazakh population today (Dukayev 2017: 1). This policy is the main indicator that is

supporting the increase of the Kazakh share of population along with increasing birth rates and emigration of other nationalities.

Government policies over nationalizing Kazakhstan seemed successful when we look at the 2009 census, Kazakh share of population increased to 63,1 percent (Brubaker 2011: 1790). Kazakh share of population has jumped over 50 percent since 1991. Russians share of the population decreased to 23.7, whereas Uzbeks 2.9 percent, Ukrainians 2.1 percent, Uyghurs 1.4 percent, Tatars 1.3 percent, German 1.1 percent, Koreans 0.6 percent and the other nationalities constitute 3,8 percent of the total population (Analytical Report, 2011: 20).

Furthermore, 2019 census, Kazakh share of population increased to 68.98 percent. Russians share of the population decreased to 19.32 per cent, whereas Uzbeks 3.21 percent, Ukrainians 1.47 percent, Uyghurs 1.47 percent, Tatars 1.10 percent, German 0.97 percent, Koreans 0.59 percent and the other nationalities constitute 4.48 percent of the total population (Bohr et al, 2019: 112).

According to the 2021 National Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, increasing over the years, Kazakhstan's population approached nearly 19 million in 2020. According to the migration statistics of the country, the number of emigrants from the country is higher than the number of immigrants to the country. The majority of these emigrants are Russians and minorities of European origin, while Kazakhs continue to immigrate to their country (Statistical Yearbook, 2021: 198-199).

Ethnic composition of Kazakhstan differs when we look the geography of the country. Northern and the north-eastern parts of the country populated by Russians and Russified ethnic minorities while the southern parts of the country populated by ethnic Kazakhs (Jašina-Schäfer, 2019: 39). However, after independence, the North of the country became more demography heterogonous as the number of Kazakhs

increased over the years. Russians emigration from Kazakhstan and high birth rate of Kazakhs and internal migration of ethnic Kazakhs are main reasons behind the change of demographic balance in favor of Kazakhs (Burkhanov, 2017: 8).

Table 1: Migration of population by ethnic groups

	Arrivals			Departures			Net migration		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Kazakhs	900931	1122507	856570	930052	1155477	874288	4881	4860	4220
Russians	69630	79053	62208	97012	109181	79871	-27382	-30128	-17663
Uzbeks	29475	21764	18361	29329	21720	18001	146	44	360
Uyghurs	5791	8874	7876	5790	8884	7867	1	-10	9
Germans	5452	6676	5621	8325	9634	7897	-2873	-2958	-2276
Ukrainians	8630	9612	8569	11016	12352	10432	-2386	-2740	-1863
Tatars	5452	6676	5621	8325	9634	7897	-2873	-2958	-2276
Other Ethnicities	24347	32895	32608	25025	34019	32469	-678	-1124	139
Total	900931	1122507	856570	930052	1155477	874288	-29121	-32970	-17718

Source: Statistical Yearbook, 2021: 198-199

Government policies to increase the Kazakh population in order to obtain state sovereignty seems successful. In 2019, Kazakh constituted almost seventy percent of the total population (Bohr et al, 2019: 112). These policies are still effective as we can

see from the data presented in Table 1, the current migration movements on the territory of Kazakhstan are characterized by the outflow of European groups and inflow of Asian groups and Kazakh people. The cumulative positive balance of migration of Kazakhs and emigration of European minority groups from Kazakhstan support the demographic superiority of the Kazakh population in the country.

5.5.   Minority Relations

The nation-building policies of Kazakhstan did not cause collective ethnic-based political movement from minority groups. The Kazakh government has been following coercion and cooption policies over the minority groups, and managing the potential ethnic movements under control with these policies (Oka, 2006: 362).

There are resemblance between Soviet national policies and Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan re-identified sub-ethnic groups that are speaking Russian in order to dissociate them from Russians. At this juncture, the Kazakh government supported ethnic and linguistic differentials between Russian-speaking sup groups, through "re-identification of these groups (Dave, 2007: 139). Among these groups (Ukrainians, Poles, Belarusians and Russians), there was not a sharp difference and these nationalities were called Russophobe (Brubaker, 2011: 1794). Besides these policies, the 1995 Constitution ensured equality to all minority groups and the state assured cultural and national revival of all ethnic groups but exclusive rights were reserved for Kazakhs in their respective countries.

The varied nature of different large minority groups like Russians, Uzbeks, Uyghurs, Germans and Koreans relations with the government and their attitude towards the nation-building policies will be argued below.

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Russians were the most crowded ethnic minority after the Kazakhs due to the Russian Empire and Soviet Union legacy. Beyond the number of the Russians, as an imperial legacy their existence, language, culture, relation with Russia affects the nation-building process in Kazakhstan.

Russians started to immigrate to Kazakh lands in the 19th century. They populated mostly Northern parts of the country. These people formed villages and towns which were turned into cities. The Russian population in Kazakhstan was mostly occupied with skilled jobs which required technical ability (industry and service sector) and their socio-economic situation was higher than the Kazakh population. During Soviet times, political cadres and leading positions were also Russified. Russians enjoyed a privileged position during Russian Empire and Soviet Union times in Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan has concerns about secessionist demands from Russians living in the Northern parts of the country and they fear secessionist demands that could be supported by Russian Federation. Therefore, Kazakhstan elites have been carried out cautious policies for instance they have been cautious about linguistic policy otherwise, it could lead Russians to feel excluded from the society.

Unlike the other Russian minority groups living in the other Central Asian countries, Russians in Kazakhstan formed political parties with secessionist claims in the mid-1990s. Lad and Russkaya Obshchina were established in 1992. During that time, several Cossack groups were formed and supported by Russian groups as well. Lad was the sole political party that defended the rights of Russians. In the first years of independence, Lad achieved popular support from northern regions parts of the country which were prone to secessionist demands. Lad located itself as an opposition party and against president Nazarbayev but it did not endure its presence on the

political stage and disappeared in the late 1990s. Their leader left for Russia one after another (Oka, 2006: 366). Since, Kazakh government abolish dual citizenship, The Russian political organizations demand for the dual citizenship as it is the primary dissatisfaction among Russians residing in Kazakhstan (Burkhanov, 2017: 7).

Today it continues as a Russian cultural association and publishes a monthly journal, Lad. The other political movement, Russkaya Obshchina, collaborated with government and became a member of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan in 2015 (Laruelle, 2016: 8).

The government of Kazakhstan abolished dual citizenship (Russian and Kazakh) options. People were obligated to prefer one of these countries. With the help of this, policy and limited job options led to Russian emigration from Kazakhstan (Pavlovic 2003: 49).

Between 1989 and 1999, almost one and half million Russians departed from Russia and their percentage of the population decreased from 40 percent to 30 percent (Peyrause 2008: 107). In the 1999 census, Russian constituted 29.9 of the population whereas in the 2009 census, the Russian share of population decreased to 23,7 percent. The percentage of Russian population declined by 15.3 percent. Outflow of the Russian population was the major reason behind that decline also (Analytical Report, 2011: 20).

These same demographic and cultural evolutions are recurring today. First, ethnic Russians currently comprise 19.8 per cent in 2018. Russians constitute minority in every oblast (region) of the country, including the northern oblasts that have traditionally been dominated by ethnic Russians (Bohr et al., 2019: 72).

Today, socio-economic and the political situation is rather different in the country. As numbers show, the Russian minority lost a remarkable part of its

population. There has been a large amount of Russian out-flow from Kazakhstan to Russia nearly 2 million, those who are residing accepting the status quo in Kazakhstan and enjoy stability and economic growth in the 2000s (Peyrouse, 2008: 105). Considering the migration statistics of Kazakhstan as Table 1 shows, Russians are still consistently emigrating from the country. Kazakh language requirements for public sector jobs, policy changes over the secondary education system with three languages and potential accusation for being infiltrator as happened in Ukraine motivated Russians emigration from Kazakhstan (Bohr et al., 2019: 88).

Kazakhstan has always feared about possible secessionist demands of Russian groups and back support from Russia. After the dissolution of the USSR, Russia did not support the territorial autonomy of the Russian minority in Kazakhstan. Russia and Kazakhstan have close economic and good relations as neighboring states. However, after the Russian annexation of Crimea from Ukraine and Vladimir Putin's statement about protecting the rights of Russian-speaking groups all over the world, raised concerns of the Kazakhstan government.

The second most populated minority group in the country is Uzbeks and their population is mostly concentrated in the south of Kazakhstan along with the Uzbekistan border. They consider themselves as indigenous people of their lands and they find themselves as a minority group due to the administrative borders drawn by the Soviets Authorities (Oka, 2011: 2).

During the Soviet era, they did not feel uncomfortable with living in another country because they live very close to Uzbekistan Soviet Socialist Republic and within the sphere of socio-economic influence of Uzbekistan. Even Uzbek students pursue higher education in Uzbek SSR. During perestroika let by the Gorbachev government, Uzbek minority groups living other SSR's did not seek territorial

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independence so they did not demand territorial autonomy from Kazakhstan. Uzbeks did not have an intelligentsia group that could accelerate such kinds of political demands because those who have higher education remained to stay in Uzbek SSR (Oka, 2011: 3). As they do not have any secessionist demands from Kazakhstan. Uzbek elites seek to have more power in their region however, they are suppressed by the government. Uzbek elites became loyal clients of Kazakhstan.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union made Uzbeks be aware of that they were the minority for the first time. However, they did not consider migrating to Uzbekistan. Because, Kazakhstan provided higher a living standard to them and besides that, unlike Russian Federation, the Uzbekistan government did not pursue a welcoming policy for their co-ethnics (Oka, 2011: 4).

The Uzbeks in Kazakhstan share of the population was 2.5 according to the 1999 census and their share of the population increased to 2.9 in 2009 census and today they constituted the third largest ethnic group in the country after Kazakhs and Russians (Analytical Report, 2011: 20). In 2019 census shows that Uzbeks share of population increased to 3.21 (Bohr et al, 2019: 112).

Uzbek's knowledge of Russian is relatively low when we compare them with the other minority groups in Kazakhstan. Only 59.4 percent of Uzbeks speaks Russian whereas 80 percent of them speaks Kazakh (Dave, 2007: 113). The government of Kazakhstan has been supporting multiculturalism and within that context, it provides primary education and media outlets in the Uzbek language. There is 3 state-owned newspapers printed in Uzbek (Oka, 2011: 8).

As another Asian minority group, Uyghurs' history in Kazakhstan started with the expansion of the Russian Empire across Central Asia. Xinjiang region where was a historical homeland for Uyghurs had been a political and economic interest of the

Russian Empire. Uyghurs were trading community between China and Russian Empire. Xinjiang region functioned as a buffer zone between China and Russian Empire until it was fully controlled by the Chinese. Political tension in the region led China and Russian Empire to sign a treaty that was "the Treaty of St. Petersburg". This treaty led Uyghurs to migrate Russian Empire (Kazakhstan) in the late 19th century. During the 1950s and 1960s, some events in the Xinjiang region caused a migration of Uyghurs to Kazakhstan SSR (Stein, 2012: 5).

The Uyghur minority can be divided into three groups: The locals, "*yerliklar*" are residing in the country for several generations, 'the newcomers "*keganlar*"' immigrated to Kazakhstan during the 1950s and 1960s and the third group called as Chinese "*khtailiklar*" are those who came after the independence of Kazakhstan (Stein, 2012: 5).

The Uyghur minority does not have a kin-state. Their homeland Xinjiang region is an administrative unit under the People's Republic of China. China watches the Uyghur groups not only in China but also abroad countries as well. Chinese foreign policy put pressure on foreign countries not to support Uyghur activists to make anti-Chinese campaigns. Kazakhstan as a neighbor and strong economic partner of China does not allow Uyghur independence movements and categorically rejects asylum to Chinese citizens (Oka, 2006: 368).

After September 2000, The Uyghurs (and Central Asia) are associated with 'Islamic extremists' who wish to build an Islamic caliphate. Together with extremism, potential secessionist demands by Uyghurs fear the Kazakhstan government as well. *Yerliklar* (locals) group of Uyghurs has been living for generations in Semirech, the southeastern part of the country. These people have a strong sense of commitment to

the Semirech as their homelands. However, Uyghurs pointed out that they do not claim territorial autonomy from Kazakhstan (Oka, 2006: 370).

Uyghurs were predominantly speaking Russian. According to Kazakh Government statistics, 76.1 percent of the Uyghur population in Kazakhstan can spoke Russian and 80.3 percent of them spoke their own language and 80.5 percent of them spoke Kazakh as well (Dave, 2007: 113).

Uyghur minority mostly reside in the south-eastern parts of Kazakhstan, along with the Chinese border, in the Almaty Oblast. According to the census, the Uyghur population has been increasing. Uyghurs' share of the population was 0.6 in the 1959 census and their share of population increased to 1.4. in 1999 (Dave, 2007: 60). Although their numbers have increased, their share of the population has remained the same by 1.4 in the 2009 census (Analytical Report, 2011: 20). In 2019 census, Uyghur share of population remains almost same with 1.47 (Bohr et al, 2019: 112).

The history of German minority group in Kazakhstan traced back to the mid-19th century, small German groups who served as the military of the Russian Empire settled in Kazakhstan. At the same time, an educated group of Germans (doctors, teachers, small entrepreneurs) was in-migrated to Kazakhstan with voluntary and economic concerns. (Apendiyev, Abdukadyrov, Kubeyec, 2019: 130). In the early 20th century, Stolypin agrarian reform gave a new momentum for German migration. In 1907, the first imperial census was conducted which showed that 7,049 Germans were living in Kazakhstan.

Germans were subjected to Soviet deportation policy as well. In 1941, over a million Germans were forced to migrate by the Soviets with the concern of possible collaboration with Nazis. Three-quarters of this deportee, Germans were settled in the northern and central parts of Kazakhstan. During the 1980s, there were half a million

Germans living in Kazakhstan and they were ranked as the third largest minority group. In the mid-1980s, Germans emigration began and their number in the country diminished as a result of this emigration trend.

The Federal Republic of Germany that had free-market economy, prosperity and democracy, was a good place with socio-economic benefits for the Soviet Germans all over the Union. Since the Soviets did not allow emigration from the Union, Germans started to immigrate to Germany after the independence of Kazakhstan (Apendiyev, Abdukadyrov, Kubeyec, 2019: 132).

In 1991, Germany enforced a new law that allowed a person of German origin to gain citizenship. Thus three-fourths of Germans has left the country in order to settle Germany since 1991 (Pavlovic: 2003: 49). During 1989-1999, about 750,000 out of a million Germans left Kazakhstan. In the 1999 census, Germans constituted 2.4 of the population whereas in the 2009 census, the German share of the population decreased to 1.1 percent. In this ten-year period, the percentage of German population declined by 49.5 percent. Outflow of the German population was the major reason behind that decline (Analytical Report, 2011: 20). In 2019 census, German share of population decreased to 0.97 (Bohr et al, 2019: 112).

Germans were predominantly speaking Russian. According to Kazakh Government statistics, almost all Germans can speak Russian while only 21.8 percent of them speaks German and 15.4 percent of them speaks Kazakh (Dave, 2007: 113).

Since the late 1990s, the German government supported "*Aussiedler* "(German settlers from abroad), to stay where they were born instead of migrating Germany. As a kin state, Germany supported cultural institutions, language training and social welfare of them. The German government's material and cultural support with the option of emigration helped to depoliticized the German minority group (Dave, 2007:

132). Considering the migration statistics of Kazakhstan as table 1 shows, Germans remained consistently outflow from the country.

Koreans are also considered one of the minority groups in Kazakhstan. They were the first ethnic group that was subjected to total deportation by the Soviet Union. In 1937, over 167 thousand Koreans were living in the Far East territory of the USSR. Soviet authorities decided to resettle Koreans with political concerns. Almost all of them were deported from the Russian Far East and the majority of the Koreans (over 95 thousand) were settled mainly in cities and towns of Kazakhstan (Polian, 2004: 100).

Like Germans, relations with their kin state have brought socio-economic privilege to Koreans as well. However, the South Korean government did not pursue an immigration policy that provided special citizenship rights for their co-ethnics as Germany did. The South Korean government provided several kinds of assistance to Korean organizations such as mass media in their native language (Oka, 2006: 377). Increasing economic ties between Kazakhstan and South Korea have provided opportunities for the Korean minorities to get in touch with their co-ethnics from South Korea. Korean businesspersons used their ethnicity as a privileged position in developing business contacts with South Korea. Although South Korea supported the Korean minority economically, it was not an attractive place to live for Koreans. Thus, the Korean minorities sought more closer relations with the Kazakhstan government and they perceived Kazakhstan as their homeland (Dave, 2007: 146).

The Association of the Koreans of Kazakhstan (Assotsiatsiya Koreitsev Kazakhstana, AKK) was established by Korean elites in 1990 and became the leading organization of Koreans and officially recognized by Kazakhstan state. Today, thanks to its vast networking all over the country, it has been the most significant organization

defending Korean identity in Kazakhstan. AKK has also been a leading organization in the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK) since its establishment (Davanel-Yim, 2016: 52). The AKK represents also a good example in which a minority group has coherent with the Kazakhstani nation-building policies.

In the 1999 census, Koreans constituted 0.7 of the population whereas, in the 2009 census, the Korean share of the population decreased to 0.6 percent (Analytical Report, 2011: 20). In ten years period Koreans population change slightly to 0.59 in 2019 census (Bohr et al, 2019: 112). As with the other ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, Koreans also predominantly speak Russian. According to Kazakh Government statistics in 1999, 97 percent of Koreans can spoke Russian while only 25.4 percent of them spoke Korean and 28.8 percent of them spoke Kazakh (Dave, 2007: 113).

Thus, Koreans are more harmonious with nation-building process of Kazakhstan. Koreans are an ideal minority group in the eye of the Kazakhstan government. Kazakhstan's government has supported the Korean culture and Korean language.

The major international conventions are the OSCE's Copenhagen Document (1990), Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UNDRM) (1992), EU Copenhagen Criteria on Accession to the European Union (1993), the CoE's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) (1995) on rights of minorities usually proclaim the rights of all people and their human rights to immune to discrimination. Adoption of this policy is a precondition for newly independent countries to join the Euro-Atlantic institutions, which obliges countries to adopt a more embracive and civil policy on the rights of minorities. The agreements on the rights of minorities reflect

how Kazakhstan should channel its policy in this area to become integral partner in the international arena.

Kazakhstan became a member of the United Nations and OSCE in 1992. The conventions about minorities are critical for Kazakhstan. Since Kazakhstan has not started negations with European Union, the EU standards are not binding for Kazakhstan. The most prominent work of Kazakhstan on behalf of minority rights is the Assembly of People, established in 1995 by suggestions of the OSCE. In the general framework of those conventions, minority rights involve linguistic rights, territorial claim, freedom of choose and perform religion, freedom to choice and representation in legislation, equal education and employment opportunities.

The discussions about whether minority groups have right of territorial autonomy, it is important to mention about their historical background in Kazakhstan. As mentioned in fourth chapter multi-ethnic character of Kazakhstan society build by Russian Empire and Soviet Union policies. Most of these ethnic groups migrated to Kazakhstan territory while some of them claim that they are indigenous people of these lands like Uzbeks, Uyghurs and Russians. Minority groups are living all parts of the Kazakhstan with some localization like Uzbeks reside mostly southern parts of the country, Uyghurs reside Almaty region and Russians reside all parts of the country but mostly concentrated on northern parts of the country. As having unitary state system, Kazakhstan does not providing territorial autonomy for minority groups. On the contrary, Kazakh state applied pre-emptive policies to avoid potential autonomy or secessionist demands from Russian minority living in northern parts of the county.

There is no official on the status of minority groups in the country (Kadyraliyeva et al., 2019). The 1995 constitution of the country, gave citizenship to everyone living in the country after gaining independence. Constitution of the country

guarantee equal rights for all citizens regardless of ethnic origin. Like all citizens of Kazakhstan, representatives of all ethnic minorities have right to vote and elect. Since present legislation of the country did not allow political parties based on ethnicity and religion. Kazakh legislation framework allow representation of ethnic minorities in central government though Assembly of People. The Assembly elects 9 deputies for Parliament to represent all set of interest of all ethnic minorities. The assembly also elects deputies for city and regional councils.

In terms of language rights Kazakh, government did not pursue harsh policies like Estonia and Latvia did after independence. Kazakh language is the official language of Kazakhstan. Russian has interethnic communication language status though legislation. Official records are conducted in Kazakh and Russian languages.

Kazakh government providing equal opportunities in education, the constitutions of the country, providing free primary, secondary and higher education for all citizens of the country. Official curriculum is in Kazakh and Russian however, there are schools entirely teaching minority languages like Uzbeks, Uighur, and Ukrainian languages. However, for higher education ethnic minorities should choose Russian, Kazakh or English languages. The Assembly of People supporting 195 specialized linguistic centers, all citizens of Kazakhstan can learn different languages of 30 ethnic groups.

As for freedom of expression, government supports minority languages in media. It is mandatory for television and radio channels to broadcast equal time for the other languages of the Republics along with Kazakh. The Assembly of people supported several newspapers and magazines to publish different languages. Government also funding cultural centers and organizations of ethnic minorities.

Linguistic policies of Kazakhstan seems inclusive when we look education, media and other government supports for ethnic minority languages. However, for public sector jobs and elected offices, Kazakh language requirements have created obstacles for ethnic minorities. The legal system is in favor of ethnic Kazakhs and encouraging emigration of ethnic minorities. Other nation-building policies of government contain more exclusive character, national symbols of country, mostly stressed ethnic Kazakh motifs and changing name of places from Russian to Kazakh language also causing discomforment among Russian and other ethnic groups. The Kazakh nationalist visual signs in society, fuel the disappointment among ethnic minorities who feel alienated from the society. Besides that, ethnic return migration policy which is granting special privileges for ethnic Kazakhs, resolution of dual citizenship, relocating capital city in a region which dominantly populated by Russians, has been perceived as intension of authorities to control the area.

Since Kazakhstan does not have democratic government and institutions, Assembly of People can not independently draft documents related with ethnic issues and tensions in the country. However, ethnic minorities rely on the Nazarbayev regime as assurance of their safety and the government keep using the idea of unity in diversity for the sake of regime legitimation. Liberal language policies and Assembly of People are justifying this idea. Russia's presence is the one the main reason for bargaining strategy of Kazakh government over minorities as to guarantee its legitimation. The bargaining strategy of government seems working almost 30 years under highly personalized rule of Nazarbayev. Nazarbayev left his position in 2019 however he does not disappear in the political scene completely. The real test for country's interethnic relations will be tested after Nazarbayev. A poll in 2019 showed that, this bargaining strategy seems successful, Russians and other minority groups who preferred to stay

in Kazakhstan seems to likely support incumbent government more than ethnic Kazakhs (Daminov, 2020: 140). The uprising that happened in January 2022, started where ethnic Kazakh people densely populated can be the proof of this idea.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This thesis attempts to understand independent Kazakhstan's nation-building policies and their impact on minority groups. In search of the question, nationalism and nation building were discussed with specific reference to ethnic and civic nationalism and their implications were employed as theoretical framework of this thesis. The study firstly examines post-Soviet states' nation-building experiences. The legacy of Soviet nationality policies, which is a significant dimension of post-Soviet nation-building policies is argued and how states' nation-building policies' of post-Soviet states differentiated from each other examined. Furthermore, relations with minority groups are argued and the ethnic and civic nature of nation-building policies of these states is briefly evaluated.

Since the modern Kazakh national identity is grounded on nationality policies of the Soviet Union, to better understand contemporary Kazakhstan government nation-building policies and multi-ethnic structure of the country, it is important to mention about Russian Empire and Soviet Union nationality policies. To do so, the fourth chapter puts forth Kazakh history briefly before the Russian penetration and demographic changes during the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union era. Therefore, Stolpin's reforms, which led the legal settlement of Russian farmers on Kazakh lands by the Russian Empire, were mentioned, and major policies of Soviets that affect the country's ethnic composition were examined. These policies, the formation of the

Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, the collectivization period, forced settlement policy, *korenizatsiya* policy, russification policy and Virgin Lands program particularly analyzed.

Despite the county called "Kazakhstan" as attached the name of its titular nationality, the Kazakhs did not form the majority when it declared its independence. There was a large Russian population living in the country as equal to the Kazakh population and several other ethnic minority groups. In this multiethnic society structure, the Russian language became the communication language among these groups and urban Kazakhs became Russified in that environment. Therefore, social division among urban and rural Kazakhs became evident as another obstacle for the Kazakh government's nation-building policies. Thus, the newly born Kazakh government began to implement pro ethnic policies in favor of Kazakh. Therefore, the fifth chapter begins with the important aspects of the nation-building policies of Kazakhstan. State symbols, language, relocating capital city, National Assembly of People, ethnic return migration policy and demography are separately analyzed. Nation-building policies of the state were conducted around promoting ethnic Kazakh culture especially in the first years of independence. For this juncture, state symbols were recreated with more ethnic Kazakh elements. The concerns of the Kazakh government over the large Russian population living in the northern parts of the country prompted the decision to relocate the capital city from Almaty to Astana.

Since several ethnic groups are living in the country and Russian has been spoken by the people of Kazakhstan as an inter-ethnic communication, language policy has been a challenging task for independent Kazakhstan. To avoid social tensions, the state tried to take careful steps over language policies. Along with the Kazakh language, Russian has been declared the official language of Kazakhstan.

Besides that, the government also supported the other languages spoken by minority groups. However, to get a job in the state, people are required to know Kazakh, and even for some particular areas like law enforcement, security, and defense, a certificate showing Kazakh knowledge is required. Although the Kazakh language obtained privileges with these policies, Russian continues to be spoken in the daily life of the society and education as well. The policy of converting the country's alphabet to Latin, which is more suitable for the Kazakh language rather than Cyrillic, has not yet been fully implemented.

Considering the structure and purpose of the establishment of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, it is the most civic form of nation-building policy. The Assembly is working for strengthening socio-political stability and increasing the cooperation between civic society and state, in the realm of interethnic affairs. The people living in Kazakhstan are represented through civil society organizations in the assembly and the president of the country heads the Assembly. On the contrary, ethnic return migration policy, which is naturally part of the process of building an ethnic nation, recalls ethnic Kazakhs living outside of Kazakhstan. Through this policy, the state plans to increase the population of Kazakhs, as well as reviving the Kazakh culture and language. Since the state are funding these returnees, it has led to public discourses about the economic support of the state and the integration of these returnees into society.

After evaluating the contents of the nation-building policies of the Kazakh government separately, an analysis is made on whether these nation-building policies had an ethnic or civic content. Since, there is no sole model of states, as inclusive states both have civic and ethnic elements, the important thing is a balance between these elements. In this direction, the nation-building process of Kazakhstan has both ethnic

and civic components however at the end of the day, the status of Kazakhs in the country has increased thanks to ethnic nation-building policies. These ethnic building policies affected different ethnic identities in different ways. Ethnic Kazakh nationalist policies especially discomfort minorities, Russians and other European ethnic groups such as Ukrainians, Germans, Belarusians who did not feel comfortable as they were before.

The most prominent reaction of minorities against these policies is to migrate. These migration waves occurred mostly from European-originated minority groups like Russians, Germans, Ukrainians who prefer to go to their kin countries and nearly 40 percent of them migrated in ten years period after independence. Those who preferred to stay in the country turned to loyal clients of the government. Asian-originated minority groups like Uzbeks, Koreans, and Uyghurs have been more coherent with the Kazakh society, and mass emigration movement from these minorities has not occurred yet.

After independence, the Kazakhstan government's major priority was on economic growth, and democratization was perceived as an obstacle to the economic stability of the country. Only primary institutions for democratic freedom were allowed such as newspapers and media, with tight controls and economic growth obscured the absence of democracy since there has not been democratic institutions in the country. The nation-building policies of Kazakhstan represented top-down directions rather than bottom-up demands. Nursultan Nazarbayev, the first secretary of the Kazakh Socialist Republic, the first president of independent Kazakhstan controlled the balance between ethno-nationalism and civic-nationalism policies. Since he was an ethnic Kazakh and successor of the Communist Party, he was

supported both by the majority of Kazakhs and minority groups who preferred stability.

When we examine Kazakhstan's nation building policies, we can see resemblances between Soviet nationality policies. Nazarbayev who was elected as the Communist Party First Secretaries of the country in 1989, ruled the country until March 2019, can be seen as a concrete continuation of the Soviet legacy in the post-Soviet Kazakhstan nation building process. Within this framework, the policies such as re-identifying sub-ethnic groups that are speaking Russian to dissociate them from Russians then the Soviet policy of "first among equals" changed from Russians to Kazakhs. The 1995 Constitution ensured equality to all minority groups and the state assured cultural and national revival of all ethnic groups but exclusive rights were reserved for Kazakhs. Kazakhstan is still recording ethnic origins of its citizens in their identity cards and official statistics. Therefore, the official statistics about population show us the size of minority groups.

At the beginning of its establishment, the "Assembly of People" called as "Assembly of Peoples". The plural form of people was a common used term in order to highlight the "friendship of peoples" of Soviet Union. The criticism about the name pushed authorities to remove the "s" from the people (Ametbek, 2017: 73). During the first years of independence, the Kazakhstan government's focus was to promote ethnic Kazakh identity then Kazakhstan's population got more ethnically homogeneous over years and civic Kazakhstani identity gained popularity. With that confidence, Kazakh government initiated a more civic inclusive approach to promote Kazakhstani identity. However, the ethnic and civic content of government policies shift with the regional developments such as annexation of Crimea by Russia which raised concerns of potential separatist movements from Northern parts of the country. All these nation-

building policies were implemented without any considerable ethnic conflict, ethnic mobilization, or social crisis. The government's attitude towards implementing these policies had an impact on this peaceful environment.

As this thesis formed around post-Soviet Kazakhstan's nation building process, nation building and related phenomena were employed as a basis. Minority rights were mentioned in this thesis as they are signs of whether Kazakhstan follows an ethnic or civic nation building process. However, regarding the rights of minorities in Kazakhstan, further analysis required which could put individual and group rights at the center. It could also be studied as another task that Kazakhstan nation building process can be compared with post-Soviet Baltic countries, which are members of EU now.

Nation building process of post-Soviet countries would differ from each other even if they exposed almost the same policies under Russian Empire and the Soviet Union times. Their experiences are unique as they include more ethnic or civic content in themselves and these countries' political history and national identity differ from each other. As being an outstanding example of multinational countries, post-Soviet Kazakhstan's experience in this area is noticeable as we witness how post-Soviet countries struggle with border disputes and minority problems from their formation to nowadays. Overall, building an inclusive and unifying common national identity among its citizens regardless of their ethnic origin is a survival task for Kazakhstan's territorial integrity.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Sovyetler Birliğinin 1991 yılında dağılması 15 yeni bağımsız devletin doğmasına yol açmıştır. Komünist düzenden çıkan bu ülkelerin oluşturacakları yeni devletler ve uluslar, ulus ve devlet inşa etme tartışmalarını tekrardan gündeme getirmiştir. Sovyetler Birliğinden ayrılan en son ülke olan Kazakistan, 1991 yılının aralık ayında bağımsızlığını ilan etmiştir. Diğer ülkelerden farklı olarak Kazakistan'da meşru halk olarak kabul edilen Kazaklar ülkelerinde çoğunluğu oluşturmuyorlardı. Bu nedenle, Kazakistan'ın devraldığı bu çok uluslu toplumda ulus inşası politikaları diğer devletlere nazaran daha zorlayıcı olmuştur.

Ulus ve milliyetçilik gibi temel kavramların ve ulus inşası olgusunun bu çerçevede tartışılması mevcut uygulamaların temellendirilmesi için gereklidir. Modern anlamından farklı anlamlar taşısa da ulus kavramının kullanımının eski zamanlara dayandığı bilinmektedir. Toplumların ulus olarak tanımlanmadıkları dönemlerde "ulus" kelimesinin din, ırk, sınıf ve soy birliği gibi anlamlarda kullanıldığı görülmektedir. "Ulus" kavramı birçok bilim adamı ve filozof tarafından açıklanmıştır. Çok farklı tanımları olmasıyla birlikte genel olarak bunlardan bazıları Ulus'u inşa edilen bir yapı olarak tanımlarken bazıları ise insanların ortak ataları sayesinde oluşturdukları doğuştan gelen bir yapı olarak tanımlamaktadır. Milliyetçilik ise belirli bir ulusu meşrulaştırılması için kullanılan ideoloji ve siyaseti ifade etmektedir. Yakın gelecekte milliyetçiliğin gücünü kaybedeceği tahminlerinin aksine milliyetçilik

toplumsal bir gerçeklik olarak varlığını sürdürmekle birlikte bu yönde yapılan çalışmalara da yön vermektedir. Genel olarak milliyetçiliğin, etnik ve sivil olmak üzere iki temel türünden bahsedilebilir. Bu ayrıma göre etnik milliyetçilik, ulusu organik ve benzersiz bir yapı olarak tanımlamakta ve dil ve kültür birliğine önem vererek azınlıkları dışlayan otoriter özellikler barındırmaktadır. Öte yandan, daha medeni olarak değerlendirilen sivil milliyetçilik ise toprak temelinde vatandaşlığı vurgulamakta ve azınlık grupların haklarına saygı göstermektedir. Bu kavramlardan hareketle ulus ve milliyetçiliğin ekonomik, kültürel ve politik faktörleri içeren sosyal olgu oldukları açıktır. Bu doğrultuda ulus inşasının da bu faktörlerin şekillendirdiği stratejik bir süreç olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Ulus inşası, devlette yaşayan insanların neden birlik içinde olduklarını meşrulaştırma ve açıklama arzusudur. Bu nedenle ulus inşası sürecinde; bir bütün olmak istenen kişilere uygun kavramlar, anlatılar ve mitler verilmiştir. Toprak, demografi, tarih, devlet simgeleri ve resmi dil ulus inşası sürecinin önemli bileşenleri olarak sayılabilir. Ayrıca tarihi kahramanlar ve savaşlarla ilgili mitler; ulusal semboller ve ulusal bayramlar; sokakları, kasabaları, şehirleri, binaları yeniden adlandırmak; kitle iletişim araçları; uluslararası arenada milli sporcuların desteklenmesi de bir ulus bilinci oluşturmak için önemli araçlardır.

Özellikle Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla birlikte ulus inşası kavramı geniş çapta tartışılmaya başlanmıştır. Bu yıllarda ulus inşası, yeni ortaya çıkan devletlerin eski sistemden modern devlete geçişte başarılı olmak için uyguladıkları politikaları ifade etmektedir. Sovyet sonrası kurulan devletler, Sovyetler Birliği'nin bir mirası olarak din, bölge ve etnik köken açısından değişik dinamikleri aynı anda barındıran nüfuslara sahip olarak bağımsızlıklarını kazanmışlardır. Bu devletlerde ulus inşa sürecinin temel amacı, Sovyet döneminde maruz kaldıkları telafi etmek ve halkın yeni kurulan devlete olan inancını ve sadakatini yeniden tesis etmektir.

Sovyetler Birliği kurulduğu ilk yıllarda özerk cumhuriyetlerin her birinin meşru milletlerinin siyasi ve kültürel yönlerini teşvik etmek için *Korenizatsiya* politikasını (yerlileştirme) uygulanmıştır. *Korenizatsiya*, yerel milliyetçilik yoluyla sosyalist hedefleri desteklemek için merkezi hükümet tarafından seçilen milletlerin kurumsallaşması anlamına gelmektedir. Bu dönemde, Birlik genelinde yerli siyasi kadrolar kurulmuş ve eğitimde büyük başarılar gerçekleştirilmiş ve toplumda okuryazarlık oranı hızla artmıştır. Ayrıca bu dönemde Sovyetler Birliği, bireylerin etnik kökenlerini pasaportlarına kaydetmeye başlamıştır. Ancak *korenizatsiya* politikası 1930'ların sonunda sona ererek yerini Ruslaştırma politikasına bırakmıştır. Rus kültürü ve dili, bu politika temelinde Sovyet kimliğini oluşturmak için Birlik genelinde desteklenmiştir. Sovyet kimliği, Rusları, diğer milletler üzerindeki üstünlüğünü ifade eden "eşitler arasında birinci" olarak şekillendirilmiştir.

Sovyetler Birliğinde özerk devletlerin her biri yerel parti mekanizması tarafından yönetilmesine rağmen siyasi karar verme kapasiteleri yalnızca küçük bir ölçekteydi. Yerel partilerin yerli üyelerinin ana odak noktası, cumhuriyetlerinin ekonomik çıkarları ve ihtiyaçlarına yönelik idi ve ulus inşası politikaları bunlardan biri değildi. Sovyetler birliğinin dağılması sonrasında kurulan çoğu devlet, resmi dil, devlet sembolleri ve tarih gibi kültürel hegemonyalarını tanımlarken Sovyet döneminde maruz kaldıkları bu milletler politikası yüzünden sorunlar yaşamışlardır. Her devlet aynı düzeyde bu politikalara maruz kalmamış olup, Ukrayna, Belarus ve Kazakistan diğer ülkelere nazaran daha fazla Ruslaştırma politikasına maruz kalmıştır. Bu devletlerin bağımsızlık sonrası ulusal kimliklerini inşa etmeleri ve Sovyet kimliğinden ayrışmaları daha zorlu bir süreç olmuştur.

Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetleri Birliğinin (SSCB) nin çöküşünün ardından yeni kurulan devletlerin her birinin etnik kimlik ile siyasi iktidar arasındaki zorluklarla

karşı karşıya kalmaları yeni sorunlara yol açmıştır. Sovyetler Birliği on beş farklı devlete bölünmüş ve çoğu cumhuriyette azınlık sorunları bağımsızlıktan sonra daha da kötüleşmiştir. Bu azınlık problemlerini doğuran sınırların Sovyetler tarafından bilinçli bir şekilde ülkelerin sınırları içinde kasıtlı olarak azınlık grupları yaratacak şekilde oluşturulmuştur. Zorunlu göç politikaları da azınlık grupları yaratmıştır. Özellikle bu azınlık gruplarının büyüklüğü, ülkelerin toprak bütünlükleri ve iç istikrarları için sorunlara neden olmuştur. Azınlık sorunları bazı ülkelerde iç savaşa neden olurken bazı ülkelerin ise komşularıyla sınır problemleri yaşamasına yol açmıştır.

Her ne kadar Sovyetler Birliği döneminde benzer ulus inşası politikalarına maruz kalsalar da, Sovyetler Birliğinden ayrılan ülkelerin ulus inşası süreçleri birbirinden ayrışmaktadır. Baltık ülkeleri, Avrupa Birliği üyelik şartlarını yerine getirmek için sivil bir milliyetçilik biçiminde ulus inşası politikaları izlemiştir. Diğer ülkeler ise özellikle bağımsızlıklarını ilan ettikleri ilk yıllarda daha etnik milliyetçi politikalar izlemişlerdir. Zamanla bu politikalar gevşemiş, azınlıklara göreceli olarak bazı haklar tanıyacak şekilde kapsayıcı hale gelmiştir. Özellikle sınırlarında Rus azınlık bulunduran devletlerin ulus inşası politikalarının Rusya Federasyonunun tutumu ile şekillendiğini söyleyebiliriz. Bu devletlerin etnik ve sivil milliyetçilik politikaları hakkındaki tartışmalar, Rusya'nın Kırım'ı ilhak etmesinden sonra daha da artmıştır.

Kazakistan'ın maruz kaldığı bu süreci özel olarak incelediğimize ise, Rus hegemonyasına girmeden önce göçebe bir toplum olarak yaşayan Kazaklar, 15. yüzyıldan itibaren diğer Türki topluluklardan ayrı bir millet olarak tarih sahnesine çıkmışlardır. 18 yüzyılla birlikte Moğol istilaları karşısında Rusya imparatorluğunun egemenliği altına girmeye başlayan Kazak Hanlığı, on dokuzuncu yüzyılın ortalarında

tamamen tarihe karışmıştır. Rusya imparatorluğu döneminde, Kazak topraklarına çok sayıda yeni yerleşimci göç etmiştir.

Rusya imparatorluğu, isyanları önlemek ve kolayca kontrol altına almak için yeni alınan bu topraklara Rus yerleşimcileri göndermiştir. 1870'lerden itibaren Rus İmparatorluğu, insanları Kazakistan'a göç etmeye teşvik etmeye başlamıştır. Yeni yerleşimcilerle birlikte Kazakistan'da yeni köyler ve kasabalar kurulmuştur. Rusya'daki sert iklim koşulları nedeniyle 1890-1891 yılları arasında binlerce insan devlet izni olmadan Kazakistan'a göç etmiş, 1896'da İskân İdaresi'nin kurulmasından sonra, Rusya İmparatorluğu tarım için göçü daha aktif bir şekilde organize etmiş ve desteklemiştir. Böylece 1900 yılından sonra daha sistemli bir göç devlet kontrolünde gerçekleşmiştir. Rus İmparatorluğunun Rus köylülerinin toprak sahibi olmasına izin veren Stolypin Tarım Reformuyla birlikte (1906-1912) Kazakistan'ın 40 milyon dönümlük arazisi tarıma açılmıştır. Bu reform ve inşa edilen demiryollarının yardımıyla, 1900 yılların başında Kazakistan'ın kuzey ve doğu kesimlerinde Rus ve Ukraynalı köylüler tarafından yarım milyon çiftlik inşa edilmiştir. Rusya imparatorluğu döneminde ülkenin demografisini etkileyen bir diğer önemli olay ise Birinci Dünya Savaşıdır. Savaşın getirdiği yeni vergiler ve askerlik görevi isyana yol açmış ve bu dönemde binlerce Kazağın ölümüne ve ülkeden kaçmasına yol açmıştır. 1917 yılında Rusya imparatorluğunda gerçekleştirilen Bolşevik devrimi sırasında oluşan siyasi boşlukta Kazaklar, 1917 ve 1920 yılları arasında kısa ömürlü laik ve milliyetçi Alaş Orda adında bir hükümeti kurmuştur. 1920 yılında Bolşevikler zaferiyle sonuçlanan bu iç karışıklar sonrasında, Kazakistan ilk Kırgız Özerk Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'ni adını alarak kurulmuştur. 1925 yılında ise ülkenin adı Kazak Özerk Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti olarak değiştirilmiş ve 1936 yılında ise Kazak Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti olarak adlandırılmıştır. Sovyetler Birliğinin

kuruluşunun ardından uygulanan *korenizatsiya* politikası çerçevesinde Kazak dili desteklenmiş ve yerli siyasi kadrolar oluşturulmuştur. Bu dönemde aynı zamanda uygulanan amacı küçük ölçekli çiftlikleri kolektif çiftlikler altında birleştirmek olan Kolektifleştirme politikası kapsamında göçebe olarak yaşayan Kazaklardan hayvanlarını vermeleri ve bu çiftlikler altında çalışmaları istenmiştir. Bunu reddeden Kazaklar başka ülkelere kaçmış veya açlıkla yüzleşen Kazak nüfusu azalmıştır. Ayrıca bu politika sayesinde Kazak nüfusunun büyük bir kısmı yerleşik hayat düzenine geçmiştir. İkinci dünya savaşının arifesinde Sovyetler Birliği tarafından uygulanmaya başlanan Ruslaştırma politikası Kazakistan'ın toplumsal yapısını derinden etkilemiştir. Ülkede hali hazırda bulunan Rusların dili ve kültürü doğal olarak baskın bir konuma geçmiştir. Bu dönemde Ruslaştırma politikasının yanı sıra birçok farklı etnik kökenden insan Kazakistan topraklarına zorla göç ettirilmiştir. 1954 yılında başlatılan Kazakistan'ın topraklarında tarımsal üretimi arttırmayı amaçlayan "Virgin Land" programı kapsamında ülkeye yeni göç hareketi gerçekleştirilmiş, özellikle Rusya ve Ukrayna'dan yerleşimciler gelmiştir. Bu son göç hareketinden sonra ülkedeki Kazakların nüfusunun ülke nüfusuna oranı yüzde otuzlara kadar düşmüştür. Rusya imparatorluğu ve Sovyetler Birliği dönemlerinde yürütülen politikalar sonucunda bağımsız Kazakistan, çok farklı etnik milletlerden oluşan çok uluslu bir toplumu devralmıştır. Sovyetler birliği döneminde maruz kalınan Ruslaştırma politikaları sayesinde Rusça hem milletler arası iletişimi sağlamak için hem de şehirde yaşayan Kazaklar tarafından kullanılmaya başlanmış ve ülkenin ortak dili haline gelmiştir.

1991 yılında Kazakistan bağımsızlığını ilan ettiğinde ülkedeki Kazakların nüfusu ülke nüfusunun yüzde kırkını oluşturarak çoğunluğu sağlamıyordu. Bu çok uluslu yapıda kurulan yeni Kazak hükümetinin ulus inşası politikaları, özellikle

bağımsızlığın ilk yıllarında etnik Kazakların sayısını artırmak ve Kazak kültürünün desteklenmesi etrafında şekillenmiştir. Bu durum için bayrak, amblem, ulusal marş, heykeller gibi ülkenin sembolleri etnik Kazak unsurlarıyla yeniden yaratılmıştır. Ülkenin kuzey kesimlerinde yaşayan geniş Rus nüfusunun ayrılıkçı olabileceği yönünde endişe taşıyan Kazak yetkililer tarafından ülkenin başkentini 1994 yılında, Almatı'dan ülkenin kuzeyinde bulunan Astana'ya taşımıştır.

Kazak hükümeti, Sovyetler döneminde ülkenin ortak dili haline gelen Rusça konusunda sosyal problemler yaratmamak için keskin politikalar izlememiştir. Rusça, Kazakçayla birlikte ülkenin resmi dili olarak kabul edilmiştir. Kazakça üst düzey devlet yetkililerine ve bazı özellik gerektiren savunma ve hukuk alanlarında bulunan devlet kadrolarında işe girmek için zorunlu tutulmaktadır. Ülkede kullanılan Kiril alfabesini değiştirmek için çabalar olmasına rağmen henüz değiştirilememiştir. Bununla birlikte 1999 yılında Kazak dilinin kitle iletişim araçları, televizyon ve radyo kanalları için zorunlu olduğu ve ülkede konuşulan diğer dillere de eşit süre vermesi gerektiği ilan edilmiştir. 2013 yılında her kanalın Kazakça en az yüzde 35 yayın yapması gerektiği yeniden düşünülmüş ve 2015 yılında bu sayı yüzde 50'ye yükseltilmiştir. Uygulamada, Kazak programlarında ziyade Rusça programların rağbet görmekte izleyicilerin en yüksek sayılara ulaştığı "prime time" saatlerde kanallar tarafından yayınlanmaktadır.

Avrupa Güvenlik ve İşbirliği Teşkilatı'nın önerisi ile 1995 yılında kurulan Kazakistan Halk Meclisi, kuruluş yapısı ve amacı göz önüne alındığında ulus inşası politikasının en sivil olanıdır. Meclis, sosyal ve politik istikrarı güçlendirmek ve etnik gruplar arası ilişkiler alanında sivil toplum ve devlet arasındaki işbirliğini artırmak için çalışmaktadır. Yerel yönetimlere ve parlamentoya temsilciler gönderen Halk Meclisine ülkenin cumhurbaşkanı başkanlık etmektedir. Halk Meclisi, dil kursları,

gazeteler, dergiler ve tiyatrolar yolluyla farklı etnik grupların dilleri ve kültürleri desteklenmektedir. Kazakistan dışında yaşayan etnik Kazakların ülkeye geri döndürülmesini amaçlayan etnik geri dönüş politikası ise etnik yapıda bir ulus inşası politikası olarak değerlendirebilir. Devlet bu politikayla hem Kazak nüfusunu artırmayı, hem de Kazak kültürünü ve dilini canlandırmayı planlamıştır. Etnik geri dönüş politikası kapsamında gelen göçmenlere devlet tarafından mesleki eğitim, Rusça dahil devletin resmi dilinin öğrenilmesi ve barınma ve tarım için arazi sağlanması gibi maddi destekler sağlanmaktadır. 2014 yılında başlayan Ukrayna krizi sonrası ülkenin kuzey kesimlerinde meydana gelebilecek potansiyel ayrılıkçı hareketlere karşı olarak Kazak hükümeti, bölgede Kazakların Ruslara karşı demografik üstünlüğünü elde etmek için ülkenin kuzey bölgelerine etnik geri dönüş politikasıyla gelen göçmenlerin yerleşmesini teşvik etmektedir. Uygulanmaya başlamasından beri bu politika sayesinde bir milyon Kazak göçmen ülkeye gelmiştir. Bu politikanın da sayesinde Kazakların nüfusu artmış ve 2019 yılı itibariyle ülke nüfusunun yaklaşık yüzde yetmişini Kazaklardan oluşmaktadır.

Kazakistan'ın ulus inşa sürecinin etnik mi yoksa sivil bir milliyetçilik biçiminde mi olması alması konusunda devam eden tartışmaların devam etmektedir. Bu iki kavram, iki ana ulusal kimlik olan Kazaklar ve Ruslar tarafından desteklenmektedir. Etnik milliyetçilik, Kazaklar tarafından Kazak kültürünü teşvik etmek için desteklenirken, sivil milliyetçilik biçiminin ise Ruslar ve diğer etnik gruplar tarafından desteklenmektedir. Bu tartışmalar, Kazak ve Kazakistanlı olarak iki farklı ulusal kimliği temsil etmektedir. Bu tartışmaların gölgesinde ulus inşa politikalarına bakılacak olduğunda, bağımsızlık sonrası uygulanan ulus inşa politikalarının hem etnik hem de sivil bileşenleri olduğunu görülmektedir. Devlet sembolleri daha çok etnik Kazak unsurları üzerinde yoğunlaşmıştır. Ancak söz konusu dil olduğunda

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hükümet politikalarını dikkatli adımlarla yürütmüştür. Kazak dili anayasa ve yasalarla ön plana çıkarken, Rusçanın da ülkede resmi statüsünü koruduğunu görmekteyiz. Kiril alfabesinden Kazak diline daha uygun olan Latin alfabesine geçmemesini bu kapsamda değerlendirebiliriz. Ülkenin 1995 anayasası bağımsızlık kazandıktan sonra ülkede yaşayan herkese vatandaşlık vermesi sivil politika biçiminin somut bir örneğidir. Ancak, kan bağına dayanan ve Kazaklara münhasır haklar tanıyan etnik geri dönüş politikası, etnik politika biçimini temsil etmektedir. Mevcut anayasa hem etnik hem de sivil öğeler barındırmaktadır. Bir yandan, 14. Madde ile "etnik köken, cinsiyet, inanç, ırk, dil, din veya diğer herhangi bir özellik" temelinde herhangi bir kişiye karşı ayrımcılığı yasaklarken bir yandan. 41. madde ile cumhurbaşkanının Kazakça konuşmasını zorunlu kılmaktadır.

Ülkenin anayasası etnik kökenine bakılmaksızın tüm vatandaşlara eşit haklar sağlamasına rağmen, Kazakistan vatandaşlarının etnik kökenini kimlik belgelerinde ve resmi istatistiklerde kaydetmeye devam etmektedir. Bu durum Kazakistan için ortak ulusal kimliğin tartışmalı olduğunu kanıtı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Özellikle azınlık gruplar kamuya açık belgelerde etnik kimliklerini korumak isterken, etnik Kazaklar ise etnik kimliklerin kamuya açık belgelerden çıkarılmasını desteklemektedir. Tüm etnik azınlıkların kapsayıcı Kazakistan kimliği çatısı altında bütünleşmesine inanıyorlar. Aksine, Ruslar ve diğer etnik gruplar bu tür bir hareketi asimilasyon olarak görmektedir.

Diğer Orta Asya ülkelerinde olduğu gibi siyasi kültür, sivil toplum ve demokratik kurumların eksikliği eski komünist liderlerin yolunu açmıştır. Kazakistan'ın ilk Cumhurbaşkanı olarak 1991 yılında komünist partinin eski başkanı olarak Nursultan Nazarbayev seçilmiştir. 2019 yılında istifa edene kadar ülkeyi yöneten Nazarbayev'in parlamentonun siyasi gücünü cumhurbaşkanlığı makamında

kademeli olarak toplanmış ve herhangi bir siyasi rekabet olmaksızın ülkeyi giderek otoriterleşen bir şekilde yönetmiştir. Etnik Kazak Nazarbayev, ekonomik büyüme ve kişisel kültünün de yardımıyla etnik milliyetçi eğilimleri başarıyla kontrol etmiştir. Aynı zamanda eski bir komünist parti üyesi olarakta ülkedeki diğer etnik grupların da desteğini almıştır. 2019 yılının Mart ayında yerini Kasım Cömert Tokayev'e devretmiştir. Nazarbayev görevinden ayrılsa da, ülkenin güvenlik konseyi başkanlığı ve partisindeki bazı görevlerine devam etmektedir. Her ne kadar yeni cumhurbaşkanı Tokayev, hükümetin mevcut tüm politikalarını sürdüreceğine dair söz vermiş olsa da Tokayev'in gelişiyle birlikte ülkedeki kimlik politikalarına ilişkin tartışmalar artmıştır.

Kazakistan'ın ulus inşa süreci hem etnik hem de sivil bileşenlere sahiptir ancak günün sonunda etnik ulus inşası politikaları sayesinde Kazakların ülkedeki statüsü artmıştır. Bu etnik ulus inşası politikaları farklı etnik grupları farklı şekillerde etkilemiştir. Etnik Kazak milliyetçiliği politikaları özellikle Ruslar, Ukraynalılar, Almanlar ve Belaruslular gibi Avrupa kökenine sahip azınlıkları rahatsız etmiştir. Azınlıkların bu politikalara karşı en belirgin tepkisi göç etmek olmuştur. Kazakistan'ın çifte vatandaşlık seçeneğini kaldırması ve özellikle bağımsızlığı takip eden yıllarda uygulanan etnik milliyetçilik politikalarının ile süregelen ekonomik nedenlerle bu ülkeden göç hareketini desteklemiştir. Bu göç dalgaları daha çok Ruslar, Almanlar, Ukraynalılar gibi akraba ülkelerine gitmeyi tercih eden Avrupa kökenli azınlık gruplarından meydana gelmiştir ve bunların yaklaşık yüzde 40'ı bağımsızlıktan sonraki on yıllık süreçte göç etmiştir. Özbekler, Koreliler ve Uygurlar gibi Asya kökenli azınlık grupları ise Kazak toplumu ile daha uyumlu olmuş ve bu azınlıklardan kitlesel göç hareketi henüz gerçekleşmemiştir.

Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması ulus, milliyetçilik ve ulus inşası kavramlarının yanı sıra azınlık hakları sorununu da gündeme getirmiştir. Genel itibariyle azınlık

hakları, dil hakları, özerklik, dini ve vicdan özgürlüğü, ifade özgürlüğü ve temsil özgürlüğü, eşit eğitim ve istihdam fırsatlarını içermektedir. Bu haklar, Avrupa Güvenlik ve İşbirliği Teşkilatı, Birleşmiş Milletler, Avrupa Birliği, Avrupa Birliği Komisyonu tarafından azınlık haklarına ilişkin uluslararası kriterler belirleyen uluslararası sözleşmeler tarafından düzenlenmektedir.1992 yılında Birleşmiş Milletlerin ve Avrupa Güvenlik ve İşbirliği Teşkilatının üyesi olan Kazakistan, azınlık haklarını düzenleyen başlıca uluslararası sözleşmelerden AGİT'in Kopenhag Belgesi ve Birleşmiş Milletler'in Ulusal veya Etnik, Dini ve Dilsel Azınlıklara Ait Kişilerin Haklarına İlişkin Bildirgesini imzalamıştır. Azınlıklarla ilgili bu anlaşmalar, Kazakistan için kritik öneme sahiptir. Azınlık hakları konusunda daha kapsayıcı ve medeni bir politika benimsemesini teşvik eden bu antlaşmalar sayesinde Kazakistan uluslararası arenada bir aktör olarak yer alması adına önemlidir.

Üniter devlet yapısına sahip olan Kazakistan, hiçbir azınlık grubuna özerklik hakkı tanımamaktadır. Kazakistan bağımsızlığını kazandıktan sonra ülkede yaşayan herkese vatandaşlık vermiştir. Çeşitli yasalarla ülkede dini ve etnik temelli siyasi parti kurmak yasaklanmıştır. Her bölgeden belirli sayıda milletvekili çıkarma şartı gibi dolaylı yasalarla nüfusları belirli bölgelerde yoğunlaşan azınlık grupları için siyasi parti kurmak ve parlamentoda temsil edilmek zorlaştırılmıştır. Azınlık grupların kurdukları sivil toplum örgütleri devlet tarafından sıkı bir şekilde kontrol edilmektedir. Azınlıkların temsil edilmesi Kazakistan Halk Meclisi'nin kanalıyla gerçekleşmektedir. Halk meclisi parlamentoya 9 temsilci göndermektedir. Ülke yasaları, tüm vatandaşlara ücretsiz ilk, orta ve yükseköğrenim imkânı sağlamaktadır. Resmi müfredat Kazakça ve Rusça'dır. Bununla birlikte, tamamen Özbek, Uygur ve Ukrayna dilleri gibi azınlık dillerinde öğretim gerçekleştiren okullar bulunmaktadır. Ancak, yükseköğrenim için Rusça, Kazakça veya İngilizce dilleri biri seçmelidir. Ana dilde ifade özgürlüğü

kapsamında hükümet medyada azınlık dillerini yer almasını desteklemektedir. Televizyon ve radyo kanallarının Kazakça ile birlikte diğer etnik grupların dillerine de eşit zamanlı yayın yapmaları zorunludur. Bu kapsamda, Kazakistan Halk Meclisi tarafından çeşitli gazete ve dergilerin farklı dillerde yayınlanmasını desteklenmektedir.

Kazakistan Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti'nin ilk sekreteri, bağımsız Kazakistan'ın ilk cumhurbaşkanı Nursultan Nazarbayev, etnik milliyetçilik ile sivil milliyetçilik politikaları arasında dengeli bir siyaset izlemiştir. Etnik bir Kazak olduğu ve Komünist Parti'nin halefi olduğu için hem Kazakların çoğunluğu hem de istikrarı tercih eden azınlık grupları tarafından desteklenmiştir. Kazakistan'ın ulus inşası politikalarını incelendiğinde ise Sovyet döneminin izlerini taşıdığını görebilir. Eski komünist parti lideri olan Nazarbayev'in 2019 yılına kadar ülkeyi yönetmesini de bu yönde yorumlanabilir. Rusça konuşan ve Ruslaşmış olarak nitelendirilen ülkede yaşayan Ukraynalılar, Polonyalılar, Almanlar gibi Avrupa kökenli etnik grupların dilleri ve kültürleri desteklenerek bu grupların etnik kimlikleri Rus kimliğinden ayırmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu kapsamda, Sovyetlerin uyguladığı kurumsallaştırılmış milletler politikasını Kazakistan tarafından devam ettirildiği söylenebilir. Bunun yanı sıra, etnik Kazak dili ve kültürünün teşvik edilmesiyle birlikte, Sovyetlerin "eşitler arasında ilk" politikasının da Ruslardan Kazaklara dönüştüğünü de söyleyebiliriz. Sovyet dönemi politikalarının somut bir kanıtı olarak, Kazakistan halen daha vatandaşlarının etnik kökenlerini kimlik kartlarına ve resmi istatistiklerine kaydetmektedir. Bu uygulama, ülkede yaşan etnik gruplar tarafından desteklenmekle birlikte, ortak bir ulusal kimlik yaratmanın önünde engel olarak değerlendirildiği için Kazaklar tarafından karşı çıkılmaktadır.

Tüm bu politikalar birlikte değerlendirdiğin de, bağımsızlığının ilk yıllarında,

Kazakistan hükümetinin odak noktasının etnik Kazak kimliğini desteklemek yönünde olduğu görülmektedir. Kazakistan nüfusunun yıllar içinde etnik olarak daha homojen hale gelmesiyle, Kazak hükümeti Kazakistanlı kimliğini desteklemek için daha sivil kapsayıcı politikalar uygulamaya başlamıştır. Ancak, 2014 yılında Ukrayna topraklarında bulunan Kırım'ın Rusya tarafından ilhak edilmesi gibi bölgesel gelişmelerle birlikte Kazak hükümetinin ulus politikalarının etnik ve sivil içeriği değişmekte ve ülkenin kuzeyinden gelebilecek olası ayrılıkçı hareketler konusunda endişeler ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bütün bu ulus inşası politikaları, kayda değer bir etnik çatışma veya sosyal kriz olmaksızın uygulanmıştır.

Sovyet Birliğinin dağılmasının ardından kurulan ülkelerin ulus inşa süreçlerinin, farklı olduğunu görülmektedir. Bu ülkelerden bazıları daha etnik ulus inşası politikaları uygularken bazıları ise daha sivil nitelikte ulus inşası politikaları uygulamaktadır. Çok uluslu bir ülke olan Kazakistan'ın ulus inşası süreci, Sovyet sonrası bazı ülkelerin, oluşumlarından günümüze kadar gelen sınır anlaşmazlıkları ve azınlık sorunları ile nasıl mücadele ettiklerini bakıldığında dikkat çekicidir. Genel olarak, etnik kökenleri ne olursa olsun vatandaşları arasında kapsayıcı ve birleştirici ortak bir ulusal kimlik inşa etmek, Kazakistan'ın toprak bütünlüğü için bir hayati öneme sahiptir.

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