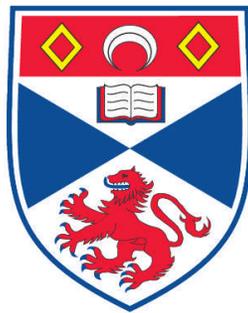


**KAZAKH AND RUSSIAN IDENTITIES IN TRANSITION: THE CASE
OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Natalia V. Howard

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St. Andrews**



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**KAZAKH AND RUSSIAN IDENTITIES IN TRANSITION:
THE CASE OF KAZAKHSTAN**

Natalia Victorovna Howard

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the
Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of St Andrews**

31 January 2011

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ABSTRACT

Kazakh and Russian Identities in Transition: The Case of Kazakhstan

This dissertation concerns the development and interaction of Kazakh and Russian identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. My research questions were: (1) what was the character of these identities in 2003/04 (the time of my research); (2) how have these identities interacted to form dominant and subordinate identities, and (3) how can the character of these identities and their interaction be explained? In order to research these questions I used a general questionnaire followed up by open ended interviews of a representative sample of Kazakhstani citizens. While my research findings show continued uncertainty and provisionality in both Kazakh and Russian identities, which confirms the broad trend of previous surveys, they also indicate signs of change in the emergence of more consolidated dominant and subordinate identities in the less Russianised areas like Chimkent and among the younger generation, while by contrast the older generations of Russians, particularly in the more Russianised areas, find it difficult to accept the delegitimation of their dominant status as reflected in the nationalizing policies pursued by the new state. In theoretical terms these findings confirm the importance of the study of ethnic stratification, which has not received sufficient attention in previous research in this area. In explaining these developments I found that the character of the transition and also of the 'prior regime type' in Kazakhstan has had a significant effect on ethnic relationships, but also that international factors, such as those presented in Brubaker's triadic model, and internal factors, elaborated by Schermerhorn and Horowitz, were also important.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall first outline the general aims of the thesis and explain why this research is important and what considerations led me to take up the topic (1.2). Next I shall discuss my research methodology and sources and summarise my analytical framework (1.3). Then I shall give a general overview of the literature I have used in researching the background of my thesis, showing how my work attempts to fill an under-researched niche, which lies at the intersection of several academic literatures (1.4). Finally, I shall give a breakdown of the structure and chapters of my thesis.

1.2 Presentation and Justification of General Research Aims

The subject of this dissertation is national and ethnic identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. The aims of this thesis are to determine the character of Kazakh and Russian national identities¹ (and also the possible emergence of a Kazakhstani national identity) since independence and to explain the factors determining these identities and their interaction. These identities are new in the sense that there has been a status reversal² between Kazakhstan's ethnic groups since independence in 1991, with previously politically and economically subordinate Kazakhs becoming the dominant 'state-bearing' nation, while the former 'elder brother' of the USSR, the Russians, becoming a 'national minority' in a potentially 'foreign' state. This radical transformation presented two different problems for both groups. That is, Kazakhs have had to get used to their new 'hegemonic' status and to

¹ As explained in Chapter 2, by the word 'national' here I refer to the link between group's or individual's ethnic identity and the state in terms of their dominant and subordinate positions.

² As discussed more fully in Chapter 2, the idea of the social stratification of ethnic groups and the interaction in terms of power relationships between dominant and subordinate groups has been studied intensively in sociological literature, most notably by Shibutani and Kwan (1965) and Horowitz (1985). By 'status reversal' I refer to the situation in which after a revolution or successful achievement of independence a previously subordinate indigenous group finds itself in a dominant position over the previously dominant 'imperial' or 'colonial' ethnic group.

reassert themselves in the political, economic, cultural and ethnodemographic spheres, while the Russians of Kazakhstan have had to either (1) assimilate into the titular nationality, (2) build a new, but subordinate identity in Kazakhstan, still feeling ethnically Russian, but Kazakhstani of a subordinate status or (3) emigrate and go to what is now technically their motherland state (Brubaker, 1996, Laitin, 1998, Smith 1998, Hagendoorn et al 2001).

The time-frame of my research is 1991-2004, with my empirical research being carried out in 2003 and 2004, although I shall occasionally refer to events or publications after 2004 where these are particularly relevant trends I have identified. The reason for including the period 1991-2002 within my time-frame is that in order to understand and explain my ‘snapshot’ of the state of identities in 2003-4 I had to consider the evolution and interaction of these identities since the Soviet period, using empirical research carried out in this period.

The theoretical puzzle which prompted this research is as follows. The general situation in multi-ethnic states, which have recently gained independence is a rapid increase in ethnic tension as the various groups struggle and bid for dominance, which usually results in open conflict or even war, producing a very sharp reorientation of ethnic identities (Horowitz, 1985, Linz and Stepan, 1996, Snyder, 1999). There is a particular problem where there is a large ‘settler’ population from the former imperial power, now ‘stranded’ in an ‘alien’ state. This may be illustrated by the experience of Latvia and Estonia in the post-Soviet zone and elsewhere by the *pieds noirs* in Algeria. Yet in Kazakhstan there has been no overt conflict and previous survey research conducted from 1995 to 2002 (Masanov, 1996, Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg, 1999, Hagendoorn et al, 2001, Kurganskaya and Dunaev, 2002, 2003) has shown that despite the status reversal and the limited nationalising policies initiated by the elites, Kazakh attitudes to these processes remained rather ambivalent and uncertain, while Russians were not completely disapproving of them. What I wanted to do was to establish whether this was still the case and, if so, to try to explain this rather anomalous

situation, which clearly has important implications for patterns of post-imperial development and national and ethnic identity formation.

The research is new and important for various reasons. Firstly, it is the first research, which directly confronts the issue of national and ethnic national identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and the interaction between these identities. Previous survey research was primarily interested in issues of ethnic conflict or social integration and not in identity as such. Why are these Kazakhstani identities important? Partly because, as mentioned above, they appear to be a rather anomalous case in the general pattern of inter-ethnic relations in newly independent states. But they are also important because of the importance of Kazakhstan in its regional context. Kazakhstan is the largest Central Asian state and has enormous potential economic strength because of its oil and gas resources. It is in a crucial strategic position in a very unstable area between Iran, Russia, Afghanistan and China. Yet it has maintained a stable, secular, if undemocratic, government with peaceful and stable relations with its neighbours. In such a state ethnic identities and their associated interrelations can have great significance for the stability of the whole region.

1.3 Methodology, Sources and Analytical Framework

My three main research questions are: (1) how can we characterise the new Kazakh and Russian national identities which have emerged since independence, particularly in terms of status reversal or dominant/ subordinate relations? (2) how have they interacted in the period since independence? and (3) why have they interacted in the way that they have? The first two questions are descriptive or mapping in nature and the third one is analytical, trying to explain these developments. With regard to my first two questions what interests me is the status reversal in power relationships, which has taken place between these identities since independence. What I shall be analysing is the emergence of new dominant and subordinate national identities, which are the product of interaction between ethnic groups. I shall also analyse the nature and development of the official Kazakh/Kazakhstani

national state project and the impact that has had on both ethnic groups. My third research question tries to outline how this identity interaction can be explained with reference to three sets of factors: long-term historical factors as part of Kazakhstan's Soviet and pre-Soviet heritage ('prior regime type'), international factors such as relationship between homeland and nationalising states in Brubaker's terms and finally by internal factors, such as the character of Kazakhstan's political and perhaps economic transition.

The principal way I am going to test my first question is by the survey that I carried out in Kazakhstan in 2003-2004. My survey was partly inspired by surveys published by Masanov (1996), Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg (1999), Hagendoorn, Linssen and Tumanov (2001), Kurganskaya & Dunaev (2002), and Kurganskaya, Dunaev and Aitkhozhin (2003), which provide a general basis for examining the socio-political climate relating to ethnicity, nationalism and ethnonational interaction in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and which I shall discuss in the next section. All these surveys were based on mass multiple-choice questionnaires without follow-up interviews. My survey, in contrast to the above surveys, involved a smaller-scale sample with a semi-structured questionnaire of 59 questions that was directly related to ethnonational interaction between Kazakhs and Russians (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2). It was administered to 23 Kazakhs and 20 Russians in four of the main cities of Kazakhstan - Almaty, Astana, Petropavlovsk and Chimkent in Spring 2003. Following the analysis of initial data and after winnowing out serious inconsistencies, which included unanswered questions and evidence of a lack of comprehension of questions and concepts, I carried out in-depth interviews with 24 Kazakhs and 18 Russians in Winter and Spring 2004. The 'snowball' sampling technique was employed in obtaining the interview sample with restrictions on the use of multiple family members and the general objective of finding respondents from different ages, genders, occupational and educational backgrounds.

As for the number of my respondents, I interviewed 85 people (47 Kazakhs and 38 Russians). I tried to achieve a reasonable spread of age, gender, and socio-economic group (see Appendix 1). I also tried to take account of the ethnic mix of the four cities, thus in

Chimkent I naturally interviewed more Kazakhs and in Petropavlovsk more Russians (see below). In Almaty I interviewed more Kazakhs because sometimes it was difficult to find an ethnic Russian of a certain age (e.g. between 18-25) in the governmental institutions. The total number of my respondents was mainly determined by the nature of my method of research – the semi-structured in-depth interview. Unlike the mass multiple-choice questionnaires, each of my interviews was tailored to a particular respondent (i.e. if a person wanted to elaborate on some point I allowed him to do that) and the interviews typically lasted between one and three hours. I was also restricted in terms of time (as I stayed in each town approximately 2-4 weeks both in 2003 and 2004) and the ability to source the relevant respondents easily given that the topic of my research was sensitive. This partly led to slight overrepresentation of respondents in the age bracket between 25-35 and between 45-55 in Almaty and Astana, and in Astana, given that I interviewed a number of people in governmental institutions, to an overrepresentation of people who came to Astana from Almaty with the move of the capital.

With regard to the geographical distribution of my respondents, I selected Petropavlovsk, Astana, Almaty and Chimkent to reflect the complex and uneven demographic settlement patterns of Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan and to capture the differences of opinion towards the nationalising policies between the regions. Specifically I selected Chimkent because it is a Kazakh-dominated city (55.7% Kazakhs and 15.7% of Russians³) in the South of Kazakhstan, while Petropavlovsk is a Russian-dominated town (48.9% of Russians and 23.3% of Kazakhs) in the North of the republic situated close to the Russian border. Almaty (35.5% of Kazakhs and 34.7% of Russians) and Astana (25.5% of Kazakhs and 43.3% of Russians) (the former and the current capitals of Kazakhstan respectively) were included in the survey automatically because, firstly, the impact of nationalising policies would be, arguably, stronger and clearer in the capital cities and, secondly, because both the capital and the former capitals are natural magnets for people from a more rural or remote areas in search of jobs and hence the possibility to have a more diverse sample of the population. My selection of cities was also influenced by the surveys that were carried

³ Data derived from 1999 National census of Kazakhstan (www.president.kz).

out in these locations in the 1990s for the purposes of comparison. Of course I was unable to cover the rural areas, and this skewed my results somewhat (at any rate for Kazakhs – Russians are mainly urban-based), but I tried to achieve a reasonably representative sample of the urban areas, bearing in mind the limited opportunities I faced in Kazakhstan as a single researcher.

With regard to the general merits and de-merits of the particular surveys methods, in contrast to the highly structured mass surveys that provided an averaged reflection of the Kazakhstani population, my survey was, of course, much more limited in scope, but on the other hand my semi-structured interviews allowed respondents to make revealing comments and express candid emotional reactions. Even though some of these responses were contradictory and showed lack of understanding of a question, they were much more revealing than the average large-scale questionnaire can be. Indeed, when one is dealing with such subtle and sensitive issues as identities and changes in status, in-depth semi-structured interviews can provide a better means of revealing people's mood and fears than mass surveys with very clear-cut yes-no questions. Of course, my survey and interviews strictly speaking present simply a snapshot of the situation in 2003-2004, however, I tried to compensate for this by comparing my findings with previous surveys since independence, with the development of the Kazakhstani national project and with relevant academic work emerging from the region. The limitations of my in-depth interviewing technique in terms of scope were determined by what I could achieve as a single researcher. This makes the conclusions derived from my survey inevitably somewhat tentative, but, nevertheless, I hope to show that the survey produced some useful material and that its advantages outweighed its disadvantages in relation to my research questions.

It must finally be emphasized that the nature of the political regime in Kazakhstan makes any survey research very problematic in terms of its possible scope, the nature of the questions, which can be asked and the reliability of the responses. As a single researcher and as a Russian Kazakhstani citizen I had considerable difficulties in obtaining interviews with a representative range of respondents and with conducting my research without

political interference. Nevertheless, I was able to use personal networks to obtain what I consider to be a reasonably representative sample in terms of age, social position, ethnic affiliation and geographical spread, which would make my survey results valid and interesting.

To answer my second question about the nature and development of interaction between these identities, the identities will be ‘mapped’ using the schema of changing ethnic stratification derived from the work of R. Schermerhorn (1970) and D. Horowitz (1985). The analysis in this section will operate with concepts of nationality, ethnicity, minority, identity, dominance, subordination, etc. which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. The object of this ‘mapping’ is to clarify, on the basis of the material derived from my survey, the direction of the trends of interaction between the principal ethnic groups in Kazakhstan since independence.

To answer the third question a range of possible explanations will be explored. Various theories, including transition theories, will be used to explain the trends and developments in Kazakh and Russian identities. Specifically, to explain the lack of consolidation⁴ of identities, the analysis will look at specific factors in the Soviet and pre-Soviet history of Kazakhstan which still have salience (‘prior regime type’) as well as use theories of political, economic and national transition and comparative data in transition studies (Linz & Stepan, 1996, Snyder, 1999, Kuzio, 2001) and the geopolitical model of minority-majority interaction devised by R. Brubaker (1996) and elaborated by G. Smith (1999). To explain increasing ethnicisation and status differentiation of identities references will be made to theories of reactive and interactive nationalism, and some use will be made of A. Hirschman’s ‘exit, voice and loyalty’ syndrome.

It has to be stressed that the answers to my third question can only be tentative and exploratory: no definite answer is possible in view of the large number of variables and the

⁴ By ‘consolidation’ of identities I mean the emergence of stable and consistent patterns of thinking and behaviour with regard to the state and other ethnic groups.

complexity of their causal interaction. With all these explanatory factors it is very difficult to separate one type of explanation from another because they are all interconnected and there is constant interaction going on at all levels. Thus, for example, the theories of transition might be useful in explaining not only the flux in Kazakh and Russian identities when people were unsure about the character of the new state (early transition), but also to provide some insights into the gradual ethnicisation of identities when the state has become more established and the elites have become more confident in stressing an ethnic element in the Kazakh national project (late transition). Likewise the limited nature of the democratic transition and the very gradual character of the economic transition may explain the slow ethnicisation of identities. In this respect the time factor is very important for understanding the short-term and long-term character of identities, as factors that interact between each other may change over time and bring in other factors that could make the character of identity relations very different.

Primary sources will be used wherever possible to answer the above questions. The main primary sources are, of course, the material from my survey, but in addition to that I will use documentary primary sources, particularly in the chapter on the national project of Kazakhstan, which has not been much analysed before. Here I would particularly mention the book 'In the Current of History' (*V potoke istorii*) (1999) by N.A. Nazarbaev, which looks at the wide-ranging issues of national and state identity in Kazakhstan, and other compilations of speeches and interviews of Nazarbaev published in 1998 and 2003, which likewise have not received much attention from researchers. This primary material in relation to all three research questions will be supplemented wherever relevant with the critical use of secondary sources both from other surveys and other documentary sources.

To sum up, the main points of my analytical framework will be as follows: first, I will use the concepts related to ethnicity and nationalism (discussed in Chapter 2), while bearing in mind the differences in the understanding of these concepts in Soviet and post-Soviet context and assess how they are perceived by both Kazakh and Russian respondents. Second, I will map Kazakh and Russian identities using the schemas developed by

Schermerhorn (1970) and Horowitz (1985); and third, I will try to explain Kazakh–Russian identity interaction with reference to three sets of factors: long-term historical factors as part of Kazakhstan Soviet and pre-Soviet heritage (prior regime type), international factors such as relationship between homeland and nationalising states in Brubaker’s and G. Smith’s terms and finally the character of Kazakhstan’s political and economic transition. This theoretical framework will be combined with analysis of my survey data and analysis of primary sources (documents, books, speeches relating to Kazakhstani national project) and secondary material from academic works. Much more detailed discussion of this will be carried out in Chapter 2.

1.4 Literature Review

There has been a vast literature on post-independence Kazakhstan and a number of surveys which have been very useful for my research, but none of them bring together the theoretical and scholarly framework that addresses the question of interaction between Kazakh and Russian identities and their increasing status differentiation. My research falls at an intersection of several academic disciplines: historical, sociological and political analysis. In my background reading for the topic I have drawn on several academic literatures, including works on Soviet and post-Soviet nationality developments, comparative theoretical and analytical works on ethnicity and nationality, ethnic interaction and transition. I have tried in my analysis to draw on the insights of these various literatures to produce a rounded picture of the development of Kazakh and Russian national identities.

a) General Academic Literature

My knowledge and understanding of Kazakhstan and its minorities, both historically and in the independence period, have been greatly influenced by numerous studies on Kazakhstan and more generally on Soviet and post-Soviet nationality studies. Here I would like to mention the works of Akiner (1995), Olcott (1995, 2002), Schatz (2004), Cummings (2005) and Dave (2007) because they supplied me with a lot of background material about

Kazakhstan, touched upon national and state identity issues and helped to generate ideas for my research. Olcott's (2002) work had a useful chapter on the national-state identity project of Kazakhstan and on the attitudes of both Kazakhs and Russians to the construction of the Kazakhstani nation. Cummings (2005) provided some important material on the transformation of the Kazakhstan's political elites from being biethnic to virtually monoethnic and indigenous. This has been useful for the purposes of mapping Russian and Kazakh identities over time. Dave (2007) looked at the development of national identity and statehood in Kazakhstan, arguing that Russification and Sovietization was not simply imposed in a 'top-down' fashion, but that it provided opportunities for grass root initiatives, and that Soviet nationality policies have had a lasting effect on the development of national identities in Kazakhstan.

There has also been an abundance of studies on Soviet and post-Soviet nationality policy which have greatly influenced my thinking in this area. Here I would particularly mention the excellent work of R. Karklins (1989), partly because she provides very good material on the interethnic relations in the Soviet Union at a key period, very near the end of the Soviet Union. In particular her survey gives a valuable snapshot of Russian and titular relations in the final years of the USSR which is very useful for the purposes of mapping identities over time. On post-Soviet nationality development I would highlight the volumes edited by Bremmer and Taras (1994), Szporluk (1994) and G. Smith (1998) where the wide-ranging contributions offer analysis of the post-Soviet situation in the various post-Soviet states. All these works were written in the early to mid – 1990s and their conclusions are quite tentative, but nevertheless they make some very important points and give an overview of how the various republics emerged out of the Soviet Union and what their initial problems were. The works that I found most useful relating to the new Russian minorities of the post-Soviet era include Melvin (1995), Kolstø (1995), Chinn and Kaiser (1996) King and Melvin (1998) and Hosking (2004, 2006). Laitin's (1998) work provided very valuable insights into the importance of one particular aspect of nationality development – language policy. On the general interpretation of the dynamics of Soviet and post-Soviet nationality interaction I would highlight Brubaker's geopolitical model linking nationalising state,

national minority and homeland state and will discuss his concepts and approach in more detail in Chapter Two.

My thinking on the nature of ethnicity and nationality and the interaction of ethnic groups has been greatly influenced by a large comparative literature on the subject. This will be discussed in detail in chapter Two, but here I would just like to highlight the particular importance of several authors for my methodology and analytical framework. On the conceptual part which includes the debate about the origins of nationalism and ethnicity I found the classical works of Gellner (1983), Smith (1991), Geertz (1963), Anderson (1991), Hobsbawm (1990), Connor (1994) and Greenfeld (1992) particularly useful. Other works that offered valuable insights into the concept of dominant ethnicity, ethnic stratification and ethnonational interaction, especially through conflict, include Shibutani and Kwan (1965), Schermerhorn (1970), Horowitz (1985), Smith (1991), Hennayake (1992), Doane (1997) Kaufmann (2004), Wright (2004) and Wimmer (2004). For mapping ethnonational relations between Russians and Kazakhs and for analysing trends in the interaction of identities in Kazakhstan I found Schermerhorn's (1970) typology of integration and Horowitz's (1985) model of ethnic stratification very useful. These models provided me with a means to locate the status type of Kazakhs and Russians at different points in Soviet and post-Soviet history and indicate changes in their status over time. These will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

There has also been a growing literature on imperialism and post-imperialism which, although indirectly relevant, provides important insights in the interpretation of my theme. Here I would particularly mention the volumes edited by Dawisha and Parrott (1997) and Barkey and Von Hagen (1997) where the wide ranging contributions discuss the collapse of the Soviet regime in a comparative perspective. Other works that offer interesting broad ideas and cases in which the Kazakh case can be seen in perspective include Lieven (1995, 2002, 2003), Beissinger (1995) and Hosking (1997, 2004, 2006). I would also like to highlight the work of G. Smith (1998) who drew on numerous strands of post-colonial and

post-imperial theory and linked them explicitly to national identity and post-Soviet developments.

Similarly the huge literature on the political and economic transition of post-communist states, as explained further in chapter 2, has helped me understand the distinctive dynamics of Kazakhstan's nationality development, supplying one of my main hypotheses. Here I would highlight works of Rustow (1970), Dahl (1989), Diamond and Plattner (1994), Linz and Stepan (1996), Canovan (1996) and Pridham (2000), partly because they stressed the importance of national unity for sustaining the transition state's integrity and making democracy possible. Linz and Stepan (1996) and Snyder (1998) offered further insights into this area by arguing that in multiethnic states politics tends to be quickly ethnicised given the conditions of democratic bargaining. It has to be noted, however, that although there is a lot of discussion about the impact of democracy in multinational states, they have not been explicitly linked to identity and that has not been properly studied. The same can be said about the economic transition literature which dwells mainly on the technical processes of establishing market economy in post-communist states, but says very little about how the economic transition impacts on people and how that impacts on politics.

b) Surveys

The literature, which is most immediately relevant to my work, is the surveys on national identities in Kazakhstan, which have already appeared. It is important to establish the key points of their aims, methods and results in order to differentiate them from my project. In this section I will look at five surveys that were organised and published by Masanov (1996), Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg (1998), Hagendoorn, Linssen and Tumanov (2001), Kurganskaya & Dunaev (2002) and Kurganskaya, Dunaev and Aitkhozhin (2003). I will try in each case to show how I learnt from both their achievements and limitations to build a research project that would draw on their work but have distinctive aims and methods.

The survey published by Masanov (1996) was carried out between August 1995 and Spring 1996 with an aim of assessing the attitudes of the Kazakhstani urban population relating to the sphere of interethnic relations and to identify factors that could contribute to interethnic conflict in the future.⁵ The survey indicated that there were significant differences in the way the titular and non-titular groups perceived the nationality question in Kazakhstan. That is, Kazakhs generally supported most nationalising policies and practices, but were flexible on all other issues unrelated to the national project of Kazakhstan, while Russians directed their efforts not at preserving their ethnic dominance in the country, but rather at attaining at least formal equality in the socio-economic and political spheres. They also tended to dwell on the Soviet past or look towards the Russian Federation rather than actively engage in the political life of the new sovereign Kazakhstan. These factors, in Masanov's opinion, were a worrying sign that could potentially contribute to the deterioration of interethnic relations in the future. One of the limitations of this survey is that it was done very early in 1996 and that there is no indication whether Masanov conducted a qualitative survey prior to testing his questionnaire on a big sample. Hence some of his multiple choice options appear to be rather rigid, repetitious or too academically phrased. Another problem with Masanov's survey is that he used certain concepts in his questionnaire (e.g. indigenous, national minority) without defining them and this led to the ambiguous results and conclusions.⁶ Yet, despite certain flaws in the formulation of questions and provision of response options, this survey provides a very useful sample of opinions related to the topic from this period.

⁵ The survey was sponsored by ARKOR International with a grant from National Endowment for Democracy and covered 3,000 respondents in five cities of Kazakhstan, including Petropavlovsk, Chimkent, Ust'-Kamenogorsk, Ural'sk and Almaty.

⁶ For example, to find out people's views on who should be considered indigenous in Kazakhstan, Masanov used the word combination 'indigenous inhabitant (*korennoi zhitel*'). This approach, however, is fraught with difficulties, since the word 'indigenous' can have both civic and ethnic connotations when paired with the word 'inhabitant' (e.g. *korennoi zhitel' Kazakhstana*, *korennoi zhitel' Almaty*) and an ethnic connotation when linked with words 'nation' or 'group' (*korennaya natsiya*, *gruppy*). The latter usually refers to the members of the titular group who are primordially connected to each other and to their ethnic homeland. Hence, if Masanov had phrased his question using the concept 'indigenous nation' rather than 'indigenous inhabitants', the answers to this question would have been quite different, and also, possibly, his conclusions.

The comparative survey published by Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg (1999) was carried out between May and October 1996 and aimed to examine the attitudes of titular and non-titular groups pertaining to the possibility for social integration in Kazakhstan and Latvia.⁷ The survey showed that there was a greater willingness among the Kazakhs to accept and integrate the Russians into Kazakhstani society, while Russians were more ambiguous on this matter. On the one hand, they did not seriously challenge the political superiority of the Kazakhs, but on the other, they did not wholeheartedly transfer their cultural and political loyalty to Kazakhstan. The authors argued that the integration of Russians in Kazakhstan would be a lengthy and difficult process given that the cultural divisions between the two groups were so deep and that amalgamation of their culture into one was not a possibility. The main limitation of this survey is that it was done very early in 1996, but on the other hand it provided a good snapshot of the beginning of ethnonational interaction between Kazakhs and Russians and its data roughly correlates with Masanov's findings.

The large comparative survey published by Hagendoorn, Linssen and Tumanov (2001) was organised by INTAS (International Association for the Promotion of Cooperation with Scientists of the Former Soviet Union) between June 1995 and June 1997 and its main aim was to determine the likelihood of potential conflict between Russians and titular groups in five post-Soviet states: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Kazakhstan. The survey indicated that Russians in Kazakhstan were pressured to adapt to the new political and socio-cultural environment if they wanted to preserve their economic positions and safeguard their children's future. Alternatively they had the option of leaving for the Russian Federation. The authors argued that Russians had little opportunity to develop a more distinctive Russian identity given that Kazakhstan was moving away from Russia and Kazakhs saw the Russians as potential fifth columnists and feared the potential Russia's intervention in the future. All this created negative conditions for Russians in Kazakhstan

⁷ The Kazakhstani part of the survey was conducted among 1000 respondents in urban and rural settings of Kazakhstan, including Kzyl-Orda, Zhambyl, Akmola [Astana], Semipalatinsk, Atyrau, Karaganda and Almaty and their surroundings.

whose ‘exit’, ‘voice’ and ‘loyalty’ strategies and the response of the titular group to these strategies would determine the interethnic dynamics in the future.

The survey published by Kurganskaya and Dunaev (2002)⁸ revealed, firstly, that most ethnic groups in Kazakhstan were not ready or willing to integrate into the new Kazakhstani culture based on Kazakh language and traditions. This trend was the most prominent among Russians and Germans, while the Kazakhs – the new state-bearing group of Kazakhstan – were the most eager to establish their culture as a baseline for all Kazakhstani citizens. Secondly, the survey highlighted that, although all ethnic groups expressed a high degree of tolerance to members of other nationalities, there was a lot of tension between titular and non-titular groups in the sphere of state governance. The latter, the authors argued, was the result of state personnel, cultural and language policies as well as other factors such as the increasing pressure of Kazakh family and clan structures on power structures, corruption and the perception of non-titular groups as potentially disloyal to Kazakhstan. These policies and unofficial practices, in the authors’ view, have strengthened ethnic identities of both titular and non-titular groups, decreased the level of inter-ethnic tolerance and contributed to migratory moods among the Russian or the Russophone non-titular population. The main limitation of this survey is the lack of a methodology section. There was also, arguably, a noticeable pro-minority bias in the interpretation of the data, although not in the actual data. The bias, however, had its advantages for the purposes of this research as Kurganskaya and Dunaev provided a very sensitive and perceptive analysis of the Russian situation in Kazakhstan and gave numerous recommendations that could ameliorate their anxieties and fears.

The survey published and organized by Kurganskaya, Dunaev and Aitkhozhin (2003) was carried out to assess the situation pertaining to the question of legal protection and

⁸ This survey was sponsored by the European Commission and carried out in April 2001 by the Kazakhstani NGO ‘Centre for Humanitarian Research’ and the Kazakhstani Institute for Socio-Economic Information and Planning.

observance of minority rights in Kazakhstan.⁹ The survey showed that national minorities in Kazakhstan have been marginalized to the periphery of state-political life, although legally they were not discriminated against. They have been estranged from the ideological, political, economic and socio-cultural resources of power and over the years of independence this alienation has been strengthened and fostered by the ethnic elements in the national-state building. The main limitation of this survey is that its sample does not adequately reflect the social, demographic and territorial structure of the population of Kazakhstan. Yet, despite these drawbacks, the results of the survey closely correlate with other surveys and add a new dimension given the relatively recent date of the research. The authors also recommended abandoning the division between the titular and non-titular groups and proclaim all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan as ‘state-bearing’. They, however, did not specify how these changes should be implemented and how it would impact the ethnonational interaction in the future.

All the above surveys have been very useful for my research because they tackled, although indirectly, the question of the alteration in status between newly dominant and newly subordinate groups. The first three surveys (Masanov (1996), Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg (1999) and Hagendoorn et al (2001)) were carried out not long after Kazakhstan gained its independence (between 1994-1997) and although their conclusions are quite tentative, these surveys indicated how things were in the early 1990s and reflected the beginning of the ethnonational interaction between titular and non-titular groups. The surveys carried out by Kurganskaya and Dunaev (2002) and Kurganskaya, Dunaev and Aitkhozhin (2003) were done after 2000 and hence represent the next stage of ethnonational interaction – a helpful secondary source when I come to map Kazakh and Russian identities.

⁹ The survey covered 1405 respondents in five oblasts of Kazakhstan, including Almaty, the north (Petropavlovsk and the North-Kazakhstani oblast), the south (Chimkent, the South-Kazakhstani and Almaty oblasts), the centre (Astana and Akmolinskaya oblast), the east (Ust-Kamenogorsk and East-Kazakhstani oblast) and the west (Atyrau and Atyrauskaya oblast). Kazakhs and Russians were somewhat underrepresented in this survey (17.9 and 18.6% respectively) while smaller ethnic groups over-represented (64.5%) which in authors’ opinion was justified by the nature and the purpose of the research (i.e. to assess the situation in the sphere of protection and observance of minority rights in Kazakhstan).

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter One (Introduction) describes the rationale for the dissertation, explains the research puzzle and outlines the research design in terms of methodology and analytical framework. It also gives a brief overview of literature and a breakdown of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter Two (Theoretical Background) explores three separate, yet interrelated strands of literature that help to structure both the puzzle and the theoretical framework of the research. The first section discusses general concepts of nation, nationalism and ethnicity and the different interpretations of them, which exists in the Soviet tradition. The second section looks at the question of interactive nationalism and ethnicity and ethnonational interaction mapping techniques. The third section outlines the theories of transition, which provide the general context for the development of identity in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. This section also discusses the issues of post-colonialism and post-imperialism as a subtype of the political transition, which Kazakhstan has been undergoing.

In conclusion it explains how the various theoretical strands of the literature are brought together into the analytical framework.

Chapter Three (The Development and Interaction of Kazakh and Russian Identities in the Tsarist and Soviet Periods) provides some historical background to the identities of Kazakhstan – both Kazakh (titular) and Russian (ex-dominant, minority). It focuses on the historical and structural governmental factors which affected and partly produced both identities. The chapter considers three periods: (1) early steppe history, namely, since the ethnonym ‘Kazakh’ first emerged in the 15th century up to the beginning of the 18th century, (2) the period of Russian colonialism and (3) the period of Sovietization and their impact on both Kazakh and Russian identities.

Chapter Four (The National-State Identity Project of the Republic of Kazakhstan) outlines the describes and analyses the attempts made by the Kazakh national elite to develop a new national-state identity. The first section examines the character and development of the

official Kazakh/Kazakhstani national state identity project with its rather contradictory civic and ethnic ‘Kazakh state elements. The second section describes and assesses the actual implementation of selected key ‘nationalising’ policies, to which my Kazakh and Russian respondents reacted. It also examines how far this project fits the definition of ‘nationalising state’ proposed by Brubaker (1996).

Chapter Five (Emerging Hegemonic Identity? The Kazakh Response to the National-State Identity Project of the Republic of Kazakhstan) investigates on the basis of my survey material whether Kazakhs – the newly empowered group of Kazakhstan – have developed a coherent hegemonic identity and looks at the factors that contribute or inhibit its consolidation. The first part examines how Kazakhs interpret various concepts that relate to the nationality issues (*natsional’nost’* (nationality), *natsiya* (nation), *etnicheskaya gruppya* (ethnic group), etc.), which will be followed by two more sections that focus on the ‘external’ and ‘internal’ aspects of Kazakh identity. The ‘external’ factors include the attitudes of my Kazakh respondents to the creation of independent Kazakhstan and to key foreign states and peoples, and the ‘internal’ factors include the attitudes of Kazakhs to the Soviet past, to the nationalising policies and practices of the new state and to the questions of loyalty, integration and out-migration of the Russian population.

Chapter Six (An Emerging Minority Identity? The Russian Response to the National-State Identity Project of the Republic of Kazakhstan) looks at whether the Russians – the newly subordinate groups of Kazakhstan – have developed a coherent minority identity and at the factors that contribute to or inhibit its consolidation. Specifically, I will explore, on the basis for my survey materials, how Russians interpret various terms that relate to the nationality issue and then in two section will examine the different ways in which a new Russian identity is being and can be crystallised in Kazakhstan. That is, I will look at how Russians have reacted to the creation of an independent Kazakhstan and its new position in the world (external identity) and at how they view various nationalising policies – linguistic, cultural, economic and demographic (internal identity).

Chapter Seven (Trends of Ethno-National Interaction between Kazakhs and Russians) looks at the patterns of ethnic stratification and ethno-national interaction between Kazakhs and Russians during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. Specifically, I will ‘map’ ethnic stratification in Kazakhstan by using the model devised by D. Horowitz (1985) and elaborated by A. Juska (1999) and by extrapolating two additional models from it that will attempt to capture the changes of ethnic re-stratification between the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. I will also supplement the developments in ethnic stratification by ‘mapping’ ethnonational relations between Kazakhs and Russians and locating their type in a generalized scheme of types of ethnic interaction, developed by R.A. Schermerhorn (1970). This will help to indicate changes in status over time by locating the status position in the Soviet period and the likely future position towards which the status relations are moving.

Chapter Eight (Conclusion) reviews the argument, summarises the main new findings and methods of the research, and discusses the implications of this study for further research in this area.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall analyze the concepts and theories, which I propose to use in the analysis of my empirical work. Given that there is no a ready made methodology for analyzing national identity, I propose to bring together concepts, ideas and theories from various types of disciplines because national identity is a complex and many-sided concept and it cannot be tackled from one particular angle. First, I am going to discuss general concepts of nations and nationalism and ethnicity and the very different interpretation of them, which exists in the Soviet tradition. Secondly, I am going to look at the question of interactive nationalism and ethnicity and ethnonational interaction mapping techniques. Thirdly, I am going to look at theories of transition, which set the general context for the development of identity in Kazakhstan and in connection with that I will also look at a particular type of post-imperial transition that Kazakhstan has been undergoing. Finally, I will bring together various theoretical strands at the end of the chapter into some analytical framework, which I make use of in my analysis.

2.2 Discussion of Main Concepts in the Analysis of Nationalism and Ethnicity

Nation, nationalism

Although there is no consensus on the exact time when the term ‘nation’ came into being, most scholars agree that its modern use developed roughly from the time of the French Revolution to mean an active citizenry in a state able to determine the character of their political system. In other words, a nation is a political community, which is linked to a particular territory, culture, and an existing or potential statehood. This means that from the very start the term nation has been closely associated with the principle of self-determination, democracy and belonging to a state and had an emotional connotation of status: a ‘nation’ is more than a ‘people’, it is a *sovereign* people.

The term nationalism came into use in the 20th century to denote an ideology and a form of political behaviour. The ideology of nationalism builds on people's awareness of nationhood (or national self-consciousness) and promotes the idea of 'national self-determination' or 'home rule', especially in a colonial setting. As a form of political behaviour, nationalism can mean either a movement to gain statehood for one's nation or to assert aggressively one's own 'national' interests over those of others. In this way it is closely linked to ethnocentrism – a tendency to view the in-group members (be that an ethnic group, nation or race) in a positive light and the out-group members (other ethnic groups, nations or races) in a negative light – and patriotism – a strong commitment of citizens to their state or an overzealous promotion of state interests by its elites (Kellas 1991:3-5).

The term 'nation' is frequently used interchangeably with the term 'state': thus the adjective 'national' comes to mean 'belonging to the state' and 'nationality' denotes an official status of belonging to a state. It is important to notice, however, that in ethnic nationalisms, nationality becomes 'a synonym of 'ethnicity' and national identity is often perceived as a reflection or awareness of possession of 'primordial' or inherent group characteristics, components of ethnicity, such as language, customs, territorial affiliation, and physical type' (Greenfeld 1992:12). This is not to say that ethnicity in itself is conducive to nationality, but rather its elements can be used in various ways in constructing any number of identities, including national. Nationality, by contrast provides *an organizing principle* (the principle of popular sovereignty and the principle of fundamental equality of membership in the community) that can be applied to different contexts, fusing and transforming them thereby into elements of a specific identity (*ibid.*: 13,14).

Identity, national identity, identity in transition vs consolidated identity

Elusive and misappropriated, identity is at a minimum a troublesome concept. It will be understood here as 'a provisional stabilization of a sense of self or group that is formed in actual historical time and space, in evolving economies, polities, and cultures, as a

continuous search for some solidity in a constantly shifting world – but without closure, without forever naturalizing or essentialising the provisional identities arrived at’ (Suny, 1999/2000:144). Some observers have noted (Laitin, 1998, Suny, 2001, Opalski, 2001) that sensitivity to both the fluidity and historical constructedness of identities and to the popular and nationalists’ apprehension of identities as fixed, internally harmonious and marked by historical longevity, if not rooted in nature, can help the researcher to avoid, first, essentialism and, second, reification. Essentialism can be defined as the attribution of particular thinking or patterns of behaviour to the innate, fundamental and in extreme cases biologically determined nature of a person or group. Identity theory offers an alternative to essentialism by stressing that rather than having a fixed and immutable identity, persons or groups tend to inhabit multiple, overlapping and situational identities that are produced in inter-subjective understandings. Reification can be defined as the presentation of the products of human activity as if they were not the products of human activity, but the facts of nature, the results of cosmic laws or manifestations of divine will. Identity theory instead points to the centrality of human agency in the construction of any identity.

Identities can be of very different kinds, denoting loyalties to various groups, which are not mutually exclusive – personal, cultural, political, class etc. 'National' identity essentially means identification with a 'nation' or 'nation-state'. In this respect the term 'national identity' has the same ambiguity as the term 'nation' has. It can refer either to a people in a state, i.e. citizenry of the state, or to a people wanting a state. National identity comes to mean a set of characteristics expected of a member of a particular nation or state. These can be a matter of discussion and change, but tend to revolve around features such as language, culture, political allegiance, religion or territorial origins. Thus, national identity is fundamentally complex and multi-dimensional and cannot be reduced to a single element. It can draw on elements of other types of collective identity – class, religious, or ethnic – and be linked with ideologies such as liberalism, fascism and communism (Smith 1991:14).

All identities, including the national one, are constantly changing with changing circumstances, but there are times when elements of identity are much more in flux and

there are other times when a relatively stable or ‘consolidated’¹⁰ set of characteristics is observable. A ‘consolidated’ identity can be defined as a new type of identity, which becomes developed and stable around a particular principle or status. A national identity can be called ‘consolidated’ when it coalesces or crystallises around a new concept of nationhood or a new national status (e.g. when there has been a shift from a dominant national status to a subordinate minority status, which will be discussed later). It has to be noted that the word ‘consolidated’ does not mean that identity has become ‘fixed’ or ‘complete’, but rather it means that it stabilized into some kind of equilibrium. The principle behind the concept of ‘consolidated identity’ is inspired by the concept of ‘consolidated democracy’, which is commonly used in democratization literature. It essentially means that the basic new institutions are working and there is a consistent system, which has developed¹¹. Identity and national identity works on the same principle. It becomes ‘consolidated’ when there are periods of stability or equilibrium in between constant flux, which is a normal state of affairs.

The concepts of ‘consolidated’ identities and identities in transition can also be loosely tied to the concepts of banality and extremity of national identity (Billig, 1995, Reicher and Hopkins, 2001). That is, during the periods of relative stability the identities of individuals and groups tend to stay in the background and people are unable to see ‘how they frame the ways in which [they] order their priorities, the ways in which [they] define the relevance of phenomena, the ways in which [they] relate to and evaluate others and, most importantly, in which others order [them] about’ (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001:222). During the periods of transition and flux, by contrast, the events may be construed as putting ‘banal’ identities in question and people may feel that what they took as a solid structure or base is in fact fluid and uncertain. At that point their identities come to the foreground and acquire special significance. Reicher and Hopkins have usefully pointed out that individuals and groups can ‘get very emotional about events that impinge on [their] national identit[ies] because

¹⁰ For definition of this concept see note on p. 13.

¹¹ According to Linz and Stepan, democracy becomes ‘consolidated’ if it has in place five interacting arenas – civil society, political society, rule of law, state apparatus and economic society – to reinforce one another in order for such consolidation to exist (Linz & Stepan, 1996, 7-15).

national identity makes everyday life possible in a world of nations' (*ibid.*). The latter statement may perhaps be viewed with a bit of irony by some secure communities like the English in the UK, but not by the East European minorities and all ethnic groups in the post-Soviet space who would take it very seriously. This is because the senses of their national selves are still relatively unstable and they are still unsure whether their interests and fears will be taken into account. There are signs that their identities are gradually consolidating around the new concepts of nationhood, but they have not become 'banal' yet in Billig's sense of the term.

Ethnicity, ethnic group

The concept of ethnicity is also relatively new, emerging in social science discourse only in the 20th century (McCrone 1998:22). At the beginning it was used in social anthropology to denote 'people' (Greek *ethnos*), while 'ethnography' was related to the act of observing the behaviour and mores of various peoples and producing a written description thereof (Marshall 1994:202). After the Second World War the adjective 'ethnic' was applied to the new immigrants of the industrial states, notably the United States, who differed considerably from the core population. Anthony Smith stressed that ethnicity was reserved for numerical and sociological minorities and never to numerical and sociological majorities, even if they were not indigenous (Smith 2004:17). Later on the term ethnicity was used to classify various groups of the population according to their cultural traits or as representatives of various peoples. In this sense, an ethnic group stood for a part of a named population living in a multiethnic state. The dichotomy between non-ethnic 'us' and ethnic 'them' continued to haunt the concept of ethnicity well into the late 1980s - early 1990s when it started to be applied to majorities and minorities, host and immigrant communities alike.

There is no agreed definition of the term 'ethnicity'. In the contemporary political usage, however, the term is primarily restricted to 'a quasi-national kind of "minority group" within the state which has somehow not achieved the status of a "nation"' (Kellas 1991:4). If understood in these terms, an ethnic group is different from a nation. It is smaller and

more exclusive or ascriptive, meaning that membership in such a group is restricted to those who share certain characteristics, like language, religion, traditions and even physical type. This is not to say that ethnicity is completely static and exclusive. It has a dynamics of its own and can change up to a certain point provided the change is considered 'authentic' among the members of the in-group (Fishman 1994). By contrast, nations are more inclusive and can be both culturally and politically defined. Another important characteristic of ethnicity is that it is not necessarily attached to territory or a political unit, unlike nationhood, or as Timothy M. Frye put it:

ethnic groups may or may not feel a sense of nationalism, that is they may or may not seek the creation of a nation-state that corresponds to a given territory. The sense of nation has a territorial aspect absent from ethnicity, since a member of an ethnic group living abroad can share a sense of identity with a co-ethnic in the home country quite apart from feeling an attachment to a nation-state (Frye 1992:602-603).

Ethnic groups with a territorial link are termed 'indigenous', 'primary', 'autochthonous', 'host', 'territorially-based' or 'titular', while those without it are 'immigrant', 'secondary', 'extraterritorial', 'dispersed', 'non-indigenous' 'non-titular'. Territoriality usually tends to determine whether the group would politicize their culture or integrate (Smith 2004:19) and it also provides people with a 'much more distinct historical and cultural identity as well as more clearly identifiable cultural, economic and political interests' (Karklins 1989:6).

By and large scholars agree that although ethnic and nationalist politics are different, this differentiation can be overcome if the political agenda of an ethnic group is linked to the nationalist doctrine of self-determination and the creation of a nation-state corresponding to their territorial homeland. Kellas, for instance, has pointed out that nationalism focuses on 'national self-determination' or home rule, while ethnic politics is largely concerned with the protection of rights for members of the group within the existing state with no claim for a territorial homeland (1991:6). Therefore, ethnic groups may form the core of nationalist movements, and when they do, they shift from being ethnic to (ethno) national groups.

The concept of dominant (or hegemonic) ethnicity

Another important concept that is useful for this research is the concept of dominant ethnicity. Eric Kaufmann has defined dominant ethnicity as a ‘phenomenon whereby a particular ethnic group exercises dominance within a nation and/ or a state. It is a living and breathing ethnic community that may give birth to, but is by no means coterminous with the nation-state’ (Kaufmann 2004:1,3). This is possibly why the nation and the dominant ethnic group are usually conflated in popular mind and in the scholarly literature (for example, the French in France, Germans in Germany, Russians in Russia). The concept of a dominant ethnicity indeed overlaps with the concept of a nation, but it should not be reduced to either a background or an ethnonational force. After all, ‘not all nationalist movements are driven by a single ethnic group, nor do all ethnic revivals lead to a campaign for national sovereignty’ (Frye 1992:603). A dominant ethnicity is better defined as an active sub-national player that

exercises power to create and maintain a pattern of economic, political and institutional advantage, which in turn results in the unequal (disproportionately beneficial to the dominant group) distribution of resources. With respect to inter-group relations, a key element of dominance is the disproportionate ability to shape the sociocultural understandings of society, especially those involving group identity and inter-group interactions (Doane 1997:376).

The origins of ethnic dominance lie in historical processes of conquest, colonialism and labour migration. These situations fostered inter-group contact, resource competition, and power differentials and usually resulted in a system of ethnic stratification (Liebersohn 1961, Shibutani and Kwan 1965, Schermerhorn 1970). It is important to notice, however, that dominance of an ethnic group is not absolute and not all members of the group will have similar levels of identification and will be involved in-group mobilisation. Moreover, without the existence of a rigid caste system, the dominant group’s power becomes restrained by the subordinate groups’ actions (Schermerhorn 1970, Horowitz 1985,

Hennayake 1992, Weber 1991). Therefore, dominant-subordinate relations should be considered as a dialectical process that structures power levels and institutional arrangements through inter-group struggle (Schermerhorn 1970, Smith 2004).

Varieties of dominant ethnicity

Ethnic groups can dominate a nation or a state in a variety of ways. In pre-1960s Quebec, for instance, *pure laine* Québécois dominated politically and culturally, but not economically. It is important to emphasise that the dominant ethnic group does not have to dominate the state in which its nation resides. This is the case with the Scots and the Welsh who dominate their respective Scottish and Welsh nations, but not the British state. In fact it is possible for a culturally dominant nation to be politically subordinate (for instance, the Basques and Catalans under Franco's Spain or the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians under the Soviet rule.)

Today many ethnic minorities like Chinese, Indians, Jews and Whites in developing countries control the economy, but have no political power. This makes them vulnerable to discrimination and in rare cases even genocide in a world of popular democratisation and economic liberalisation (Chua 2003). Indeed, 'if a national group has full language rights and control over immigration, education, and resource development policy, then its long-term viability is secured, if it lacks these rights and powers, its long-term viability [could be] in ... jeopardy' (Kymlicka 1999:140). In many colonial settings, settler groups like Afrikaners, Rhodesians, Baltic Russians and earlier Baltic Germans used to enjoy political and economic, but not cultural dominance. Their position has been recently challenged by the renewed legitimacy of the democratic self-determination principle and all of them share a sense of loss and face a crisis of ethnic legitimation. Demographic dominance is also uncertain and illusory. Despite the fact that 'numbers count in the quest for political domination' (Horowitz 1985:194), dominant *ethnies* like pre-2003 Iraqi Sunnies and pre-1999 Kazakhs did not even comprise a plurality of the population. This supports Brubaker's argument that dominant or minority status is not determined by an 'objective

fact of ethnic demography’, but channeled and shaped by the national scheme of social classification that is institutionalized by a particular state (Brubaker 1996:48).

Elements and sources of dominant ethnicity

As argued above, ethnic dominance can be found in all sorts of different contexts and ways and there is no agreement among scholars on the necessary key ingredients of ethnic dominance. R. A. Schermerhorn (1970), for instance, looks at the political power of ethnic groups and their ranking within ethnic power systems. Donald Horowitz (1985) and Ashley W. Doane (1997) emphasize politico-economic hegemony, while Anthony Smith argues that it is indigenusness that constitutes the key determinant of dominant ethnicity. The latter argument is especially relevant in the modern, post-imperial age where ‘foreign’ rule is deemed illegitimate. Other elements may include the distribution of moral worth (Horowitz 1985, Weber 1991) and demographic preponderance of a particular ethnic group, especially in the context of a severely divided society. None of the above factors, however, is decisive on its own and it is possibly political-military power combined with either economic power or indigenous entitlement that is generally decisive. The distribution of moral worth can be considered as a by-product of a political-military power when the group has the ability and the resources to construct and restructure the socio-cultural understandings of society and protect the desired narrative from deconstruction. As for demographic preponderance, although it is desirable, there are a number of cases where the lack of it has not prevented the groups from being dominant.

Minority ethnicity, ethnic minorities, national minorities

The term ‘national minority’ is also complex and has various interpretations by different scholars. Louis Wirth, for example, defines an ethnic minority as a ‘group of people who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination’ (in Marshal 1998:420-421). Anthony Giddens similarly stresses that members of a minority group are usually ‘disadvantaged as compared with the majority population and have some sense of group solidarity, of

belonging together. The experience of being the subject of prejudice and discrimination usually heightens feelings of common loyalty and interests' (Giddens 2001:248).

One important characteristic of the term 'minority' is that it is mainly used in relation to a group's subordinate position within society rather than its numerical representation. Thus a national minority is 'not simply a group that is given by the facts of ethnic demography' (Brubaker 1996:60), but a group, which is 'marginal in terms of [its] access to power' (Marshall 1998:420-421). The study of ethnic and national minorities has recently been linked to the broader study of exclusion, labelling, stigma, racism, sexism, homophobia and authoritarian personality.

Rogers Brubaker has usefully identified three elements that are typical of a national minority political stance. In particular national minorities tend to 1) publicly claim that they belong to an ethnocultural nation different from the numerical or politically dominant ethnocultural nation; 2) demand that the state would recognise their distinct ethnocultural nationality; and 3) assert, on the basis of this ethnocultural nationality, that they are entitled to certain collective cultural or political rights. The latter may range from limited demands for education and administration in the minority language to far-reaching claims for territorial and political autonomy and even secession. The minorities may also opt for full participation in the institutions of the host state, including participation in coalition governments, or alternatively favour a separatist and non-cooperative stance. Some minority members would try to demonstrate their loyalty to the state in which they live and hold citizenship and avoid making contacts with external parties, while others may openly look for help and support from their external national homeland, other states or international organisations (Brubaker 1996:60-61).

General theories of nationalism and ethnicity

The above discussion of key concepts regarding nations, nationalism and ethnicity should be seen, of course, in the context of broader theories of nationalism. I am not going to discuss these in detail here, because in my work I am not directly applying or testing any of

these theories. This is because my work looks primarily at the development of national and ethnic identities within an existing state and the interaction between majority and minority identities, whereas most of the theories of nations and nationalism are mainly concerned with the ultimate origins of nationalism in general. It might be useful, however, if I briefly made my position clear on some of the main debates and also specified which theories provided the most useful insights for my research.

Perhaps the most central debate in theoretical discussions of nationalism and ethnicity has been that between 'primordialism' and 'modernism', or in other words, between national and ethnic continuity with the past and the construction/ invention/ imagination by elites of a new type of community appropriate for the industrial age. It will be obvious from my argument, which has stressed the primordialist understandings of ethnicity and nationalism in the post-Soviet context, that this is highly relevant for my work. Without going into the detail of this debate I should make clear that my position is a synthesis of these views, which is broadly similar to that espoused by Anthony Smith in his discussion of this question. Specifically Smith argued that the concepts of nations and nationalism are largely modern and that they have been subjected to much 'construction', 'invention' and political manipulation by elites, but at the same time these concepts are also based on a broad substratum of preexisting cultures and history, or *ethnies*, without which they cannot generate a sense of solidarity and purpose in a modern era (Smith, 1986, 1991). Some observers have pointed out Smith definitions of nations and nationalism are too restrictive and overloaded with a list of characteristics, but nevertheless his discussion of national identity has been very useful for my research and I have made some use of his concept of an '*ethnie*' as a pre-national type of community. This intermediate position is becoming increasingly common, as can be seen in the revival of interest in the work of 'ethnonationalists' like Walker Connor (see Conversi 2002) and in the recent work of David Laitin (2007). Nevertheless, the work of the 'modernists' such as Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson still offer important insights to which reference will be made in this work.

There has also been a related debate over the 'civic' or 'ethnic' character of nationalism, or in other words, whether these terms should be seen as logical opposites or as mixed in theory and practice. There is a growing acceptance that ethnocultural neutrality of civic nations is a myth both historically and conceptually and that both ethnic and civic nationalisms have a cultural or ethnic component. Will Kymlicka, for example, claimed that the newly established states of Eastern Europe have used many of the same nation-building strategies that 'civic' nations of the West have. These include:

1. official language policies;
2. attempts to create a uniform system of national education;
3. migration and naturalization policies – that is, favouring co-ethnics in admissions decisions; requiring migrants to adopt a common national identity as a condition of naturalization;
4. the redrawing of administrative districts to dilute the weight of minorities in each of them;
5. the centralization of power, so that all decisions are made in a context where the dominant group forms a clear majority (Kymlicka, 2001:53)

Hence, Kymlicka proposed to view nationalisms not in terms of their 'ethnic' or 'civic' character, but rather in terms of their 'liberal' or 'illiberal' orientation. Kymlicka suggested that 'liberal' nationalisms usually use a smaller degree of coercion to promote national identity; have a 'thinner' and more inclusive definition of a national community and share public space with those national minorities that consistently and democratically insisted on their national distinctiveness (ibid. 54-58). George Schöpflin has similarly argued that in Western 'civic' nationalisms, ethnicity is not somehow left behind, but rather it is contained and contextualized by the strong state institutions and civil societies, which ensure that ethnicity is not the only source of political power. In Eastern 'ethnic' nationalisms, by contrast, the state and civil society are weak and ethnicity is required to fulfill the roles that it cannot discharge (such as, e.g. providing the criteria for citizenship) and this gives rise to the situation whereby all or virtually all power is exercised by ethnic criteria (Schöpflin, 2000:44, Introduction, Chapters 2 and 3). Schöpflin's definition of a nation and his distinction between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalisms are particularly useful for

understanding the ethnicisation of politics in Eastern Europe and post-Soviet states. The civic – ethnic debate is also relevant to my discussion of the Kazakhstani national project in chapter 4 and to my respondents’ responses to the nationalizing policies.

The two general approaches to nationalism and ethnicity, which in some ways I have found most useful are the 'political' approach of writers such as Breuilly (1993) and the concept of historical '*ressentiment*' as developed by Greenfeld (1992). Breuilly's insight has been to see nationalism and ethnicity very much as a political phenomenon, in which political elites manipulate the cultural and sociological heritage for their own internal interests and in the broader interests of state-building. This fits in very well with my discussion of what Brubaker calls 'nationalising policies', i.e., measures taken by the political elites in newly independent states to boost their political position by policies designed to revive and develop 'national' identity based on the dominant ethnic culture. Greenfeld's (1992) insight was to understand nationalism and ethnicity as a competitive and imitative international process deeply concerned with feelings of the status and self-confidence of communities which resent previous cultural (often imperial) domination and whose elites, anxious to reinforce their own status, set out deliberately to revive an older culture while denigrating the previous dominant culture, in order to stimulate national revival and independence. It is clear that this approach is highly relevant to my work on status reversal amongst identities, and I shall frequently make use of it in my analysis.

Soviet etnografiya (ethnography): Soviet approaches to ethnicity and nationalism

Another important issue that has to be briefly addressed in this section is the question of the Soviet approaches to the theories of ethnicity and nationalism, which are still deeply ingrained in the popular understanding of these questions as well as in post-Soviet academia and political decision-making.

The Soviet academic debate on ethnicity, national identity and nationalism (known under the broad title of *etnografiya*) took place within the framework of a Marxist-Leninist theoretical perspective, which prescribed an inherently deterministic and evolutionist

approach to nationalities theory. It was argued that the first communities of people were clan and tribal ones, based on blood relationships, and associated with the Marxist-defined 'primitive' and 'communal' systems of organization. With the development of the early 'slave-owning' and 'feudal' class societies, a new type of community, the *narodnost*' (an untranslatable Soviet term denoting something between a tribe and a nation – perhaps like Smith's *ethnie*), emerged. The *narodnost*' possessed a certain linguistic, cultural and territorial unity, but in a significantly less developed and less stable way than the 'nation' (*natsiya*). Nations themselves first emerged during the rise of capitalism, initially as 'bourgeois nations'. A nation is defined as 'a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make up, manifested in a common culture' (Stalin, quoted in Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:20-21).

Under the socialist system, bourgeois nations (characterized by class conflict, distrust and hatred of other nations and oppression of national minorities) become socialist nations, (which are classless and stand for equality and friendship between peoples). In addition, under socialism, earlier forms of community can move directly to the socialist nation stage, bypassing capitalism all together. However, not all *narodnosti* are expected to transform into nations, with the less stable and least developed groups often undergoing a 'merging' (*sliyanie*) with a developed 'nation' they are in close economic and territorial contact with. The concept of the 'Soviet people' (*sovetskii narod*) was based on this principle in the sense that with socialism's establishment, the proletariat of different Soviet nations would experience gradual '*sblizhenie*' (coming together) and eventual '*sliyanie*' (merger). Ultimately, the nation is seen as a 'historical category' with a beginning and an end. Indeed, after the inevitable global victory of socialism, and the creation of a single world socialist economy, all socialist nations merge into one whole. As part of this process, national languages and formerly oppressed nations will initially develop and flourish, leading to greater trust and friendship between peoples. Finally, individual nations will disappear altogether, and a single international culture will emerge (Central Asian Review, 1962:317-318)

Perhaps the two individual scholars that have had the strongest influence on the theories of ethnicity in the Soviet period were Yulian Bromlei and Lev Gumilev. Central to Bromlei's analysis was the concept of the '*ethnos*'. Bromlei defined an *ethnos* as 'a historically stable entity of people developed on a certain territory and possessing common, relatively stable features of culture (including language) and psyche as well as a consciousness of their unity and of their difference from other similar entities (self-awareness) fixed in a self-name (ethnonym)' (1981:27). In addition, Bromlei invented a taxonomy of overlapping terms to describe different elements of ethnic identification. The first of these is the *Ethno-social organism* or ESO - a territorial, economic and ethnic community, which perhaps comes closest to the western definition of a dominant ethnicity in a nation-state. The second one is *etnikos* – an *ethnos* who live in different states outside their ESO, which perhaps correspond most closely to the western term 'diaspora' or 'national minority'. Lastly, Bromlei identifies ethnolinguistic (or ethnocultural) and ethnoreligious elements to ethnicity, such as the Slavic or Turkic-speaking groups, or even Islamic identity.

Despite its sensitivity towards aspects of identity and self-awareness, Bromlei's *ethnos* theory was mainly based on such factors as exclusive group membership and status reflected in titular statehoods granted to the major non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union. Those who had their 'own' union or autonomous republics were considered 'socialist nations', the highest type of *ethnos*. Those with a lower status of administrative autonomy (like the Northern indigenous peoples), or who did not have any status at all (like Volga Germans) were dismissed as *narodnosti*. Thus, according to Bromlei and his followers, 'nation' is not an ethnic group with a titular statehood – it is exclusively that part of the group, which resides on its 'own' national territory. To more adequately address Soviet realities and the ideological innovation of a 'new entity of people – the Soviet people' (*sovetskii narod*) – ethnographers had to invent a notion of 'meta-ethnic community' (Bromlei, 1987:37) echoing Gumilev's rhetoric on 'super-*ethnosy*' such as Eastern Slavs or Turks.

Lev Gumilev – the second well-known influential author – has gained enormous popularity in the late Soviet and especially post-Soviet period. Some of his highly controversial works – *The Geography of the Nation* and *Ethnogenesis and the Biosphere of the Earth* - were banned until the late 1980s and became bestsellers when they were finally published in 1989 and 1990. For Gumilev ‘ethnos’ is ‘a form of existence of *Homo sapiens* as a species’ and ‘a phenomenon on the border of biosphere (*biosfery*) and sociosphere (*sotsiosfery*) which has a special function in the structure of the biosphere of the Earth (*v stroenii biosfery zemli*)’ (2004:17). Gumilev included in the category of ‘ethnos’ virtually all historically known cultural, political, religious and other formations, including *rodovoi soyuz* (a possible translation is a clan unit as a sub-tribal entity), *plemya* (tribe), *narodnost* (ethnic group), *narod* (people) and *natsiya* (nation), and *narod* (people). Depending on landscape, ‘energy resources’(!) and particularly internal ‘passionarism’ (*passionarnost*)¹², *etnosy*, as described by Gumilev, lived their own lives of about 1200-1500 years passing through the various stages or ‘phases’ of ethnogenesis - rise, breakdown, inertia, and finally death.

Gumilev distinguished three types of relations among *etnosy*. The first, ‘symbiosis’ (*simbioz*), amounted to a peaceful coexistence of self-contained *etnosy* occupying specific ecological niches and preserving their cultural distinctiveness. The second, ‘xenia’ (*kseniya*), was a parasitic relationship in which a smaller ethnos lived on the ‘body’ of a larger ethnos. As long as the guest-ethnos inflicted no harm on the host-ethnos, interethnic peace could be preserved. ‘Xenia’, however, easily slipped into ‘chimera’ (*khimera*), the third pattern of inter-ethnic relations, which made bloody conflicts unavoidable, and typically resulted in the annihilation of one of the sides. *Etnosy* grew deep territorial roots, but only one ethnos, the indigenous one, could lay claim to a specific territory. To establish the socio-cultural development of ancient *etnosy*, which usually began with the discussion of archaeological artifacts, anthropologists and ethnographers spent decades tracing the evolution of *etnosy* from Neolithic times and mapping their material culture.

¹² By ‘passionarism’ Gumilev meant a heightened activity of a ‘young’ ethnos, asserting its distinctiveness and the right to preserve and reproduce their culture.

Valery Tishkov severely criticized the works of Gumilev and argued that they were ‘ridden with construed pseudo-scholarly terms and categories which could never be placed in any disciplinary discourse or tested seriously’ (1998:3). At the same time he acknowledged that Gumilev was one of the few scholars who drew attention to previously ignored factual materials regarding the role of other cultures and peoples in Russia’s past, as well as mutually enriching cultural interactions and cooperation. This represented a step away from the traditional myth of a national history full of ‘invaders’, ‘the yoke’, ‘patriotic wars’ and other clichés of official Russo-centric Soviet historiography. These aspects of Gumilev’s work explain, in Tishkov’s view, his popularity among non-Russian audiences in general and among a segment of non-Russian intellectuals and elites in particular.

With the emergence of ethnic politics in the crumbling USSR, and especially after the break up of the Soviet Union, the 'primordial' understanding of ethnicity and nationalism took on an added dimension which had implications for the construction of new identities as well as for the purposes of political discourse. The term *ethnos* became a central theme in intellectual and political debates of that time. Today the historical records are being re-worked and reinvented on a massive scale by ethnic elites seeking to elevate the status of their groups in the political hierarchy of *etnosy* (Suny, 2001, Opalski, 2001).

The differences between Soviet and western conceptions of nationalism, ethnicity and related concepts, still very influential amongst the post-Soviet populations, academics and political leaders, represented a constant problem in my research interviews and I shall refer frequently to these discrepancies in my research chapters.

2.3 National Identity Formation and Interactive Nationalism

Before looking at theories of interaction and formation of national identity, it is important to note that the very notion of an identity implies an ‘other’ from whom one is different. If

identity is about sameness, about identifying with those who are similar, it is also about difference, about distinguishing oneself from those who are dissimilar. This section will argue that the development of national identity involves selecting and mobilising particular types of differences, contrasts between ‘us’ and ‘them’ that can justify and ensure a desired trajectory for a nation. These differences can be ‘hardened, fixed into value-laden absolutes of various kinds, and lead to or require the construction of boundaries and barriers, both material and symbolic whose intent or effect is to exclude a negatively defined ‘other’” (Spencer & Wollman 2002:57). This, however, is not a natural and organic process that happens, as presented by political and cultural entrepreneurs, by itself. Rather it involves ‘the deployment of powerful agencies, messages and symbols for particular purposes and may involve conflict and contestation between existing and potential nations, between competing nationalists and between nationalists and others’ (ibid.: 58). This section, therefore, will pay particular attention to those factors that frame the ‘significant’ or ‘hostile’ other and make identity salient.

In general, Shantha K. Hennayake (1992) has distinguished between two types of nationalism that are relevant for our case study, namely, hegemonic (civic) and ethnic. Hegemonic nationalism offers a degree of integration to ethnic minorities as it promotes equality under law, universal adult franchise and secular political parties. Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, comes about when the dominant group resists integration of ethnic minorities and fears that cultural norms will be diluted by ethnic strangers. Hennayake claims that elements of ethnonationalism are employed in virtually all nation-states (e.g. language laws, demographic engineering, etc.), although their intensity and content may vary from case to case. If, however, majority ethnonationalism becomes very explicit, it is usually attributed to several factors. In particular it occurs:

1. when the present majority nation has been subordinated previously under colonialism and/ or imperialism – for example, the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka;
2. where the majority ethnonationalism, especially its popular element, has been suppressed – as was the case in pre-revolution Iran;

3. when the majority nation is threatened by external forces – for example, pre-Bangladesh East Pakistan – or by internal forces – for example, growing Hindu nationalism in India in the face of growing Islamic fundamentalism;
4. when the economic resources of a multi-ethnic nation-state are limited – for example, the situation of the Malays in Malaysia;
5. to solicit support for the adventurist politics of the state – as in Nazi Germany;
6. to regain lost pride – as in post-war France;
7. when the survival of the majority nation is threatened – as in Israel today (Hennayake 1992:529).

Hennayake has pointed out that nationalism on the part of the ‘majority’ nation is ‘the major causal factor in the emergence of minority ethnic nationalism’ (ibid. 527). In other words, when majority nationalism becomes both ‘overt’ and ‘exclusionary’ (i.e. when the majority tries to openly assert its hegemony in the state as with ‘nationalising policies’), a reactive nationalism is stimulated among ‘minorities’ in the state.

It is important to note that not all ethnic groups are able or willing to counter majority ethnonationalism, or at least not to the same degree. Some may find that majority’s policies have little or no effect on their material and symbolic well-being or that they have no resources or ‘territorial link’ to develop an ethnonationalist agenda. Moreover, this approach implies that interethnic tensions between the majority and minority groups are not inevitable, but amenable to management and negotiation. Indeed, if the majority nation can adopt exclusive policies to establish its hegemony in the state, it can also adopt more conciliatory policies and include all ethnic groups as full and equal participants in the socio-economic and political life of the country.

Interactive nationalism theory provides a good theoretical basis for the analysis of the relationships between the titular nations and Russians in the post-Soviet states. Yet this relationship contains a further complicating factor – the role of the external national homeland – Russia. An international triangular interactive process, including ‘titular’ nationalism, ‘counter-hegemonic’ nationalism of local Russians and Russia’s homeland

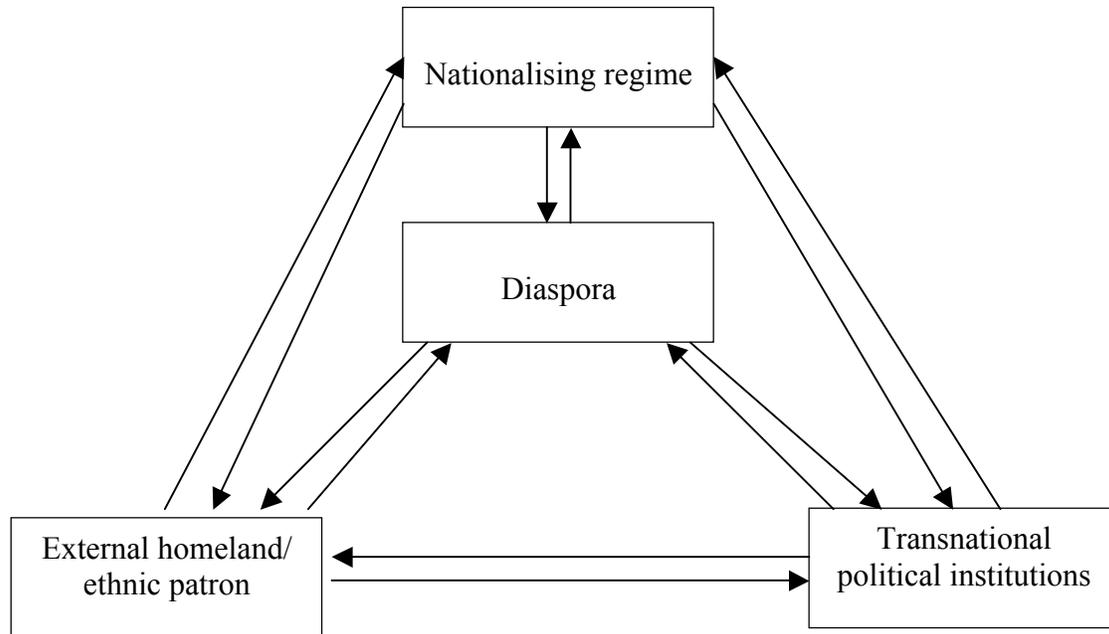
nationalism, provides a better picture of interaction than the two dimensional ‘chain-reaction’ approach (Brubaker 1996). Rogers Brubaker has argued that contentious relationships are based on ‘nationalising’ states, ‘ethnically heterogeneous, yet conceived as nation-states, whose elites promote (to various degrees) the language, culture, demographic predominance, economic flourishing and political hegemony of the nominally state-bearing nation’ (1996:57)¹³. This new nationalism is triggered by the status reversal between the ex-hegemonic metropolitan and the newly empowered peripheral groups and the perception of the latter that it is in a weak cultural, economic and demographic position because of their past subjection to colonial rule. In response to the nationalism of the new state the external national homeland elites claim that they have the right, and even the obligation, to support their co-ethnics abroad and to protect their interests. Furthermore, sandwiched between these two political claims are the national minorities themselves – ‘sharing citizenship but not (ethnocultural) nationality with the nationalising state, and sharing nationality, but not citizenship with the external national homeland’ (ibid. 111). They tend to resist (to various degrees) any actual or perceived policies of assimilation or discrimination and may look towards their external homeland for support, particularly if the actions of the nationalising state have resulted in, or seem to lead to, their redefinition as victim groups. This in turn may negatively affect the nationalist policies of the host state.

Graham Smith (1999), however, has pointed out that the three-dimensional model tells only part of the story in post-Soviet borderlands. Rather the system is at least quadratic or four-

¹³ Graham Smith also uses the term ‘nationalising policies’ which he borrows from Brubaker, but he draws attention to the three broad groups of policies used by the post-Soviet states and their elites. The first is de-Sovietisation. This is the process of eliminating symbols, institutions and personnel that represent a possible return to the Soviet Union. Second, post-Soviet elites are trying to reinvent the core or titular group. This process has three elements: ‘essentialise’, ‘historicise’ and ‘totalise’. Elites ‘essentialise’ when they single out those intrinsic or primordial characteristics that represent the group (e.g. language, culture, homeland), and set it apart from the negatively defined ‘other’ (e.g. colonizers/ colonized). Next, elites ‘historicise’ when they try to rediscover an ethnic past, and especially a ‘Golden Age’, in order to emphasise the potential of the core group. Finally, elites ‘totalise’ when they turn relative differences between the groups into absolute ones. This helps to create a distance between the colonial past and the post-colonial present, the immigrants and indigenes, the ‘chosen people’ and ‘fifth columnists’. The third nationalising policy involves an attempt at cultural homogenisation of the new polity. This effort is rooted in the belief that ‘linguistic, cultural and educational standardization’ will produce a ‘more efficient national economy, a ‘scientific state bureaucracy and ... a more harmonious and loyal citizenry’ (1998:17).

dimensional, combining the nationalising state, diaspora group, the external national homeland and transnational political institutions (TPI) (Figure 2.1)¹⁴.

Figure 2.1. The institutional arena of diasporic politics



Source: Smith, G. 1999:505.

The added dimension of Western-dominated political institutions makes a considerable impact on the interactive dynamics between the nationalising state, national minorities, and external homelands. This is manifested in, *inter alia*, the transnational pressure on nationalising states and external homelands to moderate their ‘nationalising’ and ‘homeland’ nationalisms and comply with the Western prescriptions and norms of the citizen-homeland. To achieve these objectives the TPI can

use the economic and technological dependence of East European societies on Western Europe as a source of leverage ... some combination of European community as [a] magnet

¹⁴Parrott 1997:14-16; Brubaker (1996), Schoepflin (2001), Kymlicka (2001) – ethnicity in EE both before and after the collapse of the SU has been considered through the prism of security and not minority rights.

and CSCE (now the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) as [an] encompassing framework of rules [that] would seem to be the proper institutional antidote to the danger of *hypernationalism* in Eastern Europe (Keohane 1990:10, emphasis added).

The four-dimensional model, arguably, goes beyond other nationalism models and provides a better explanation for the unfolding relationship between the titular nations and the Russians in the Soviet successor states. It pinpoints the ways in which the external homeland ‘attempts to “diasporize” the Russians, the West seeks to secure individual liberties through homeland-citizenship and “de-diasporisation” while the nationalising regimes envisage a homeland-nation in which there is no space for diasporic identities’ (Smith 1999:520). It has to be noted that the role of the TPIs is less relevant to minorities in Kazakhstan, than, for example, to Russian populations in Latvia and Estonia. Up to now the TPIs had a very limited impact on developments in Kazakhstan, whereas, for example, in Latvia and Estonia they were responsible for changing a Constitution.

The international reactive model can be usefully supplemented by the model of reactive strategies elaborated by the economist Albert Hirschman. Originally developed to describe the dynamics of achieving stability within business organisations, it was later applied by Hirschman to the question of mass emigration and the collapse of the GDR (Hirschman 1970, 1978). He argued that groups of the population had three main options to address a decline in their status and a change in national climate: exit (out-migration), voice (protest) and loyalty. I found these concepts very useful and make frequent reference to them in my analysis. The choices of strategies that minorities make to address a decline in their status can also be affected by a number of internal factors and patterns of ethnonational interaction with the host or dominant group. Looking at the patterns of linguistic assimilation in post-Soviet states, David Laitin (1998) identified several (un)favourable conditions that make an impact on the assimilation pattern. Specifically, he argued that assimilation shifts are likely to occur (1) when members of a minority group can expect greater lifetime economic returns if they attempt to integrate/assimilate (e.g. learn the language) (expected economic returns); (2) when the minority community is divided and

does not put a lot of constraints on their members to remain a tight-knit community (in-group status) and (3) when the dominant group accept as one of their own (on the marriage market, in social affairs) those minority members who have attempted to assimilate (out-group status) (Laitin, 1998:29). The prospects of successful assimilation can be further strengthened if both dominant and minority groups view their power relationships as legitimate, if they are relatively congruent in cultural terms and if they have a similar understanding of their future within the framework of one state (Schermerhorn, 1970:Chapter 2).

2.4 Mapping Ethnonational Interaction

In this section I will look at comparative methods of mapping ethnonational interaction in diagrammatic patterns of change. This will help to answer my second research question (How have Kazakh and Russian identities interacted in the post-Soviet period and what mutual effects has that produced on their identities?) and to work out where the Kazakhstani case fits. The problem with these models is that they are not designed to map the interaction between *ethnonational identities*. Schermerhorn (1970), for example, is primarily interested in developing a research framework for investigating problems of *integration* in multi-ethnic societies, while Horowitz (1985) is concerned with the sources and patterns of *ethnic conflicts* and how they can be mitigated. Both of these theories have extensive explanatory variables, but they are designed to explain integration in the one case and conflict in the other. It has to be noted that the aims of my research are very different (i.e. to map Kazakh and Russian identities and explain the patterns of their ethnonational interaction), but in the absence of an extensive comparative literature on identities I will make use primarily of the ‘mapping’ techniques of the literature on ethnic interaction and conflict, and of some insights on explanatory factors for identity formation.

R.A Schermerhorn’s aim, as noted earlier, was to develop a research framework for investigating problems of *integration* in multi-ethnic societies. He argued that both

functionalist systemic theory (related to modernization theory and seeing integration as an inevitable and crucial process in the stabilization of modern societies) and power conflict theory (seeing integration as an active conflictual process the outcome of which may be integration (assimilation) or disintegration) are relevant for researching integration (Schermerhorn, 1970, Chapter 1). He outlined three schematic taxonomies for patterns of ethnic interaction based on both these ideas (*ibid.* Chapter 2), which I am making use of in the mapping process. Schermerhorn does not talk about identity formation as such, but his theories and models can be usefully applied to probe the identities of both dominant and subordinate groups and sketch the trends in their possible development. He defined integration as ‘a process whereby units or elements of a society are brought into an active and coordinated compliance with the ongoing activities and objectives of the dominant group’ (*ibid.*, 66) and identified three main factors that could affect this process, namely (1) legitimation; (2) cultural congruence and (3) reciprocal goal definition of dominant and subordinate groups.

(1) Legitimation

Legitimation is of course a highly contested topic in political science, but in itself I am not interested in it, except in so far that it is one factor affecting mutual attitudes between Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan¹⁵. Integration as a problem of legitimation, according to Schermerhorn, is based on the assumption that ‘when two groups with different cultural histories establish contacts that are regular rather than occasional or intermittent, one of the two groups will typically assume dominance over the other’ (*ibid.*: 68). Schermerhorn’s argument in support of this assumption is logical rather than empirical: ‘complete equality of power is the least probable condition – a kind of limiting case’ (*ibid.*) The inequality of power, in its turn, raises a question of how this authority will be viewed by the members on both sides. Thus, legitimacy becomes an important factor that helps to determine whether

¹⁵ The issue of legitimacy, which will be discussed in chapters 5 and 6, links up with the argument of the general acceptance of ‘primordialism’ by my Kazakh and Russian respondents. That is, both Kazakh and Russians tend to agree that Kazakhs are the ‘titular’ and ‘indigenous’ group in Kazakhstan and therefore it is ‘their’ state and they have a legitimate right to constitute and develop it as they see fit.

‘feelings of hostility arising out of an unequal distribution of privileges and rights [will] lead to conflict’ (Coser, 1956:37). To map the power relations between dominant and subordinate groups Schermerhorn identified three positions on the continuum of legitimacy: (L) Legitimate, (PL) Partly legitimate and (I) Illegitimate and arrived at a nine-fold table of possibilities (Figure 1). He also suggested that these options could be used to map dominant-subordinate relations not only at one particular point in time, but also over time.

Figure 2.2 Paradigm of social domination and legitimacy perspectives

L-L (1)	L-PL (2)	L-I (3)
1. Dominant group regards its power as legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as only partly legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as illegitimate
PL-L (4)	PL-PL (5)	PL-I (6)
1. Dominant group regards its power as partly legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as partly legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as only partly legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as partly legitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as illegitimate
I-L (7)	I-PL (8)	I-I (9)
1. Dominant group regards its power as illegitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as illegitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as only partly legitimate	1. Dominant group regards its power as illegitimate 2. Subordinate group regards power of dominant group as illegitimate

For the purposes of my research I will assume that the more groups view their power relations as legitimate, the less their identities will be pronounced and salient and *vice versa*. Of the five cells that Schermerhorn considers ‘viable’ – 1,2,3,5 and 6¹⁶, only cells 1 and 5 appear to be based on consensus of views. This indicates that by using legitimacy as

¹⁶ Out of nine options cells 7,8 and 9 appear to be ‘empty’ as it is difficult to find a case where the dominant group considers its own rule completely illegitimate. Cell 4 also seems to be ‘improbable’ because the subordinate groups attribute more legitimacy to the power relations than the superordinates.

the sole variable, the most likely form of integration is an imperfect type based on reciprocal compromise. However, there is also another case of imperfect integration that is found in cell 2, which empirically applies to Lieberman’s ‘migrant subordination’, or to the case of the newly arrived immigrants to the United states or other industrial countries. Provided the immigrants accept the goal of assimilation, the power relations will move from cell 2 to cell 1 where both groups resemble each other in their views of legitimation, but if they resist assimilation, several options could open up – cell 5, cell 6 or even cell 3.

(2) Cultural congruence

It has to be stressed that Schermerhorn’s main concern here is with social integration, but clearly cultural congruence¹⁷ or the lack of it has a strong impact on the development of national identity, which is a subject of my research. Thus, a high degree of cultural congruence will tend, in the right circumstances, to produce less distinctive identities, whereas strong cultural divergence will tend to strengthen identities. In particular, large power differentials can reinforce cultural divergence in the formation of identity.

Schermerhorn has argued that when the subordinates have a similar value system to that of the superordinates, integration will be faster and easier, while if it is different, integration will be slowed down or stalled. To make comparisons on the dimension of cultural congruence he linked the contexts in terms of the power differentials involved (Figure 2):

Figure 2. Paradigm representing legitimacy definitions of unequal power distributions where cultural variations occur

A		Large power differentials			B		Large power differentials		
Cultural Incongruity	L-L(1)	L-PL(2)	L-I(3)	Cultural Congruity	L-L(1)	L-PL(2)	L-I(3)		
	PL-L(4)	PL-PL(5)	PL-I(6)		PL-L(4)	PL-PL(5)	PL-I(6)		
	I-L(7)	I-PL(8)	I-I(9)		I-L(7)	I-PL(8)	I-I(9)		

¹⁷ By cultural congruence is meant a high degree of commonality/ shared cultural norms and practices; in particular a shared language, but also common religious, moral and political values, shared historical experience and even shared beliefs about the physical characteristics of the group.

C Small power differentials

Cultural Incongruity	L-L(1)	L-PL(2)	L-I(3)
	PL-L(4)	PL-PL(5)	PL-I(6)
	I-L(7)	I-PL (8)	I-I(9)

D Small power differentials

Cultural Congruity	L-L(1)	L-PL(2)	L-I(3)
	PL-L(4)	PL-PL(5)	PL-I(6)
	I-L(7)	I-PL (8)	I-I(9)

Source: Schermerhorn 1970:75

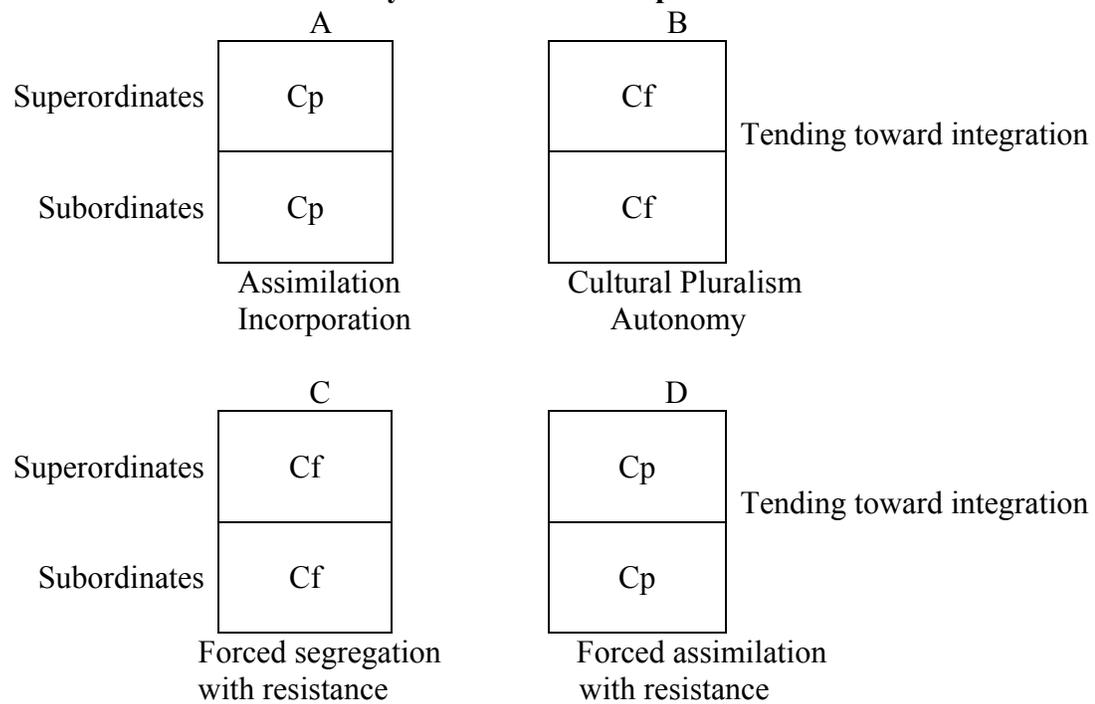
The combination of large power differentials and relative cultural congruity (sector B) has the best potential for integration (and for less distinctive and politicised identities) and can be illustrated by the example of immigrants of European descent to the United States or ‘migrant subordination’ (Lieberson 1961). The pattern of large power differentials and relative cultural incongruity (sector A), on the other hand, is marked by intense conflict, especially in the early stages of conflict, and can be empirically applied to the white invasion and subordination of indigenous populations of Australia, Canada and the United States, or ‘migrant subordination’ (ibid.). It is notable that in sectors C and D, where power differentials are small, conflict tends to be endemic no matter how small or how big cultural differences. The status of Chinese minorities in Southeast Asia provides an example for sector C (Schermerhorn labeled this type of migration ‘migrant intermediation’), while dominant urban Sunnis and subordinate rural Shiites of Iraq as well as Catholics and Protestants of Northern Ireland seem to reflect the pattern in sector D.

(3) Reciprocal goal definition

Of crucial importance for the development of an ethnic relationship (and ethnonational identities) is also the compatibility of group goals. The various possible goals, which a subordinate group can strive toward, Schermerhorn divided into two opposite tendencies – centripetal and centrifugal. Under the first tendency fall all strivings for cultural assimilation and structural incorporation, under the latter, calls for autonomy, separation, federation, and secession. Both among the dominant and the subordinate group each of

these two orientations may be prevailing. If the goals converge, this will lead to integration, Schermerhorn stresses, but if the goals are incompatible, conflict will arise. If a majority in the subordinate group want to be assimilated and this ambition is resisted by the dominant group, this will inevitably lead to tension. The opposite combination may also frequently arise: the dominant group insists on assimilation, while the subordinates want to retain their separate identity, and, for that reason, demand cultural autonomy (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Congruent and incongruent orientations towards centripetal and centrifugal trends of subordinates as viewed by themselves and superordinates



Cp – Centripetal trends; Cf – Centrifugal trends
Source: Schermerhorn 1970:83

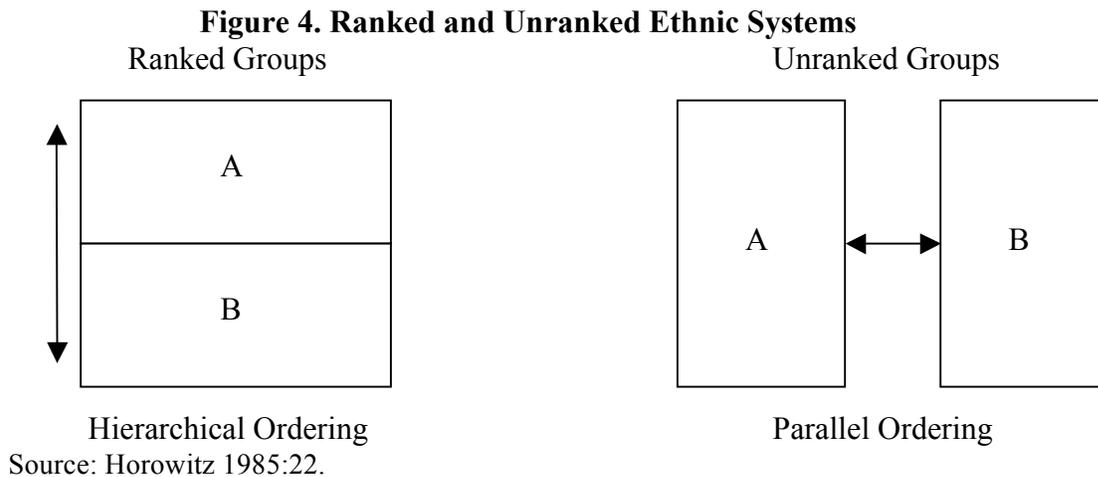
Schermerhorn concludes that if we look at both upper and lower groups in reciprocal interaction we get the four-fold matrix depicted in Figure 3. Wherever there is an incongruity of goal orientations – the centripetal or centrifugal trends of the subordinate group being opposed and frustrated by the dominant group – conflict will be endemic or intermittent (sectors C and D). Whenever both groups favour a centripetal policy, this will facilitate integration (sector A). And ‘if both groups favour a centripetal policy, this too will foster integration, though of a different kind’ (such as ‘live and let live’) (*ibid.*, 82-83).

The question then arises of how far Schermerhorn's theory and schemas can help *explain* the changes in identity interaction. On the one hand Schermerhorn has a completely different set of research aims: he is concerned with the prospects for integration, whereas I am concerned with the development of (new) ethnonational identities and the interaction between them. So obviously the causal variables Schermerhorn cites correspond to his aims and not mine: for example, he offers as 'independent (causative) variables' (1) repeated sequences of interaction between dominant and subordinate groups (annexation, migration, colonisation); 2) degree to which subordinate groups are shut off from general institutions of society (enclosure); 3) degree to which dominant groups control access to scarce resources by subordinate groups (1970:15). Points 2 and 3 could be relevant to my case, that is, if Russians are or feel excluded, cut off and shut out from the operation of the new state this would increase their sense of cultural distinctiveness and therefore their sense of identity, facing a hostile, excluding 'other'; if the Kazakhs restrict Russian access to key professional areas or try to restrict their access to other goods (foreign travel, general economic advancement, etc.), this would have the same effect.

So, although Schermerhorn has a different set of research aims and therefore a different set of explanatory variables, and I am primarily interested in his 'mapping' schemas and not in his explanations, actually several of his variables could help to explain the development and interaction of Kazakh and Russian identities and do chime in with my responses, i.e.; (1) degree of legitimacy of the new state; (2) degree of cultural congruence (low- therefore identities more distinct, but more *de facto* cultural congruence as long as Russian is dominant culturally and economically and as long as there is a post-Soviet shared group of values by Kazakhs and Russians); (3) exclusiveness or exclusion of minorities or restriction of their access to professional or economic advancement. Schermerhorn's discussion of 'intervening variables' (that is, the general context) could also potentially be useful, i.e, agreement between dominant and subordinate groups on collective goals (in my case there initially had been a lot of agreement on a 'civic' model by both Kazakhs and Russians, but this was gradually and covertly undermined by the policies of the new state) and relevance

of other culturally and politico-economically similar societies (this could be relevant to other Central Asian states or other post-Soviet states in transition).

With regards to Donald Horowitz (1985) again his aims are clearly very different from mine. He is explicitly looking at sources and patterns of ethnic conflict and how they can be overcome. Nevertheless, his discussion of group ranking and ethnic stratification schema (*ibid.*, Chapter 1) and a discussion of explanatory variables (*ibid.*, Chapter 5 and Afterword) are partly relevant to my research aims. Working in the same tradition as Schermerhorn, D. Horowitz suggested that coincidence or non-coincidence of social class with ethnic origins determines whether the group is dominant or subordinate (Figure 4).



As the above figure shows, ranked ethnic systems exist when ethnic groups are hierarchically ordered. In this situation social stratification is synonymous with ethnic membership and opportunities for social mobility are restricted by group identity. In fact, the dominant group is usually prevailing over the subordinate group socially, politically and economically. By contrast, in an unranked system, groups are not hierarchically ordered, but coexist in a parallel fashion. Horowitz has noted that the ‘unranked’ systems tend to be quite unstable as both groups have an equal amount of resources and no ritualized way of interacting. He also stressed that distinction between these two types of systems and within systems are blurred in practice. It is most unlikely that all members of Group A could be of upper class standing while all members of Group B are rigidly in a class below. Within

limits, ranked ethnic systems can tolerate discrepancies between the economic status of the groups and that of its individual members, but if carried too far they may be destabilising to the system (Horowitz 1985:26). The above typology can be also used in a longitudinal perspective and reflect the changing status of the newly dominant and minority groups¹⁸.

With regard to a discussion of explanatory variables, Horowitz looks at the issue of legitimacy, which is based on ‘prior occupation’ (*ibid.*, 201-204) and ‘right to succeed colonial power’ (*ibid.*, 205-9). He also discusses symbolic politics and ethnic status, especially language (*ibid.*, 216-24) and the ‘civil service issue’ (*ibid.*, 224-26). This fit quite well with Schermerhorn’s explanatory factors. The other important point that he makes is about the often disastrous effect of introducing democracy into multi-ethnic societies which chimes in with the transition/ democratization literature (*ibid.*, 681) which will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

To sum up, Schermerhorn and Horowitz provide useful ‘mapping’ techniques that will allow me to trace patterns and sequences of ethnonational interaction between Kazakh and Russian identities. They also offer extensive explanatory variables, but they were designed to explain integration in the one case and conflict in the other. And as it happens several of these explanatory factors *are* relevant to my research responses, and hence they will appear in my analytical framework as factors derived from ethnic interaction theory (i.e. legitimacy questions, cultural congruence and exclusion). I have to stress, however, that my aims are very different, but given the absence of an extensive comparative literature on identity I will make use primarily of the ‘mapping’ techniques that Schermerhorn and Horowitz provides and also of some insights on explanatory factors for identity formation.

¹⁸ One can argue, for example, that during the Soviet time the position of the Russians and the titular groups was ambiguous and uncertain and resembled the unranked ethnic system in the Horowitz typology. After the break up of the Soviet Union the titular groups were given the power to improve their achievement capabilities relative to their past status and relative to other national communities. Russians, on the other hand, were downgraded to a minority in the new states, and although their expectations have remained relatively high, their capabilities have been declining – in some places dramatically (Chinn & Kaiser 1996:27). Therefore, the post-Soviet scenario is best characterized by the movement from the unranked ethnic system to the ranked one.

2.5 Transition, the National Factor and Identity

2.5.1 Types of Transition and the National Factor

Theories of ‘political transition’ were first developed in the 1980s (O’Donnell, Schmitter and Whitehead, 1986) after the collapse of authoritarian rule in Latin America. From 1989 they were applied to the post-Soviet area. These comparative theories were concerned with the practical transformatory processes of democratisation and formed a reaction against the functionalist theories of democratic ‘pre-requisites’ or ‘preconditions’ which tended to stress the long-term determinants of democratic development (S.M.Lipset 1960, etc.). These theories have aroused much controversy, but can still be useful for the current analysis in setting the general context in which identity change and interaction are going on in Kazakhstan and in generating research questions which may prove helpful in explaining these developments.

One of the first questions which arose was whether ‘transition’ is a single process or whether there are various ‘transitions’ or ‘types of transition’ taking place. Initially, most political theorists working on post-communist transitions (hence ‘transitologists’) looked primarily at the processes of democratisation and marketisation, and ignored two critical factors – the state and the nation (or political community). Such analyses have been disproportionately focused on the technical and institutional processes of post-communist transformations, with an almost tacit assumption that building a capitalist democracy is not much more than a set of technical changes. Yet, as Katherine Verdery (1999) has noted, post-communism is more than this, for it involves the redefinition of almost the entire fabric of everyday life. Thus, post-communism involves ‘transformations of culture, identity, traditions, history and symbols – which are not always immediately obvious through an analysis of macro-processes of political and economic reform, but which are intimately related to such changes’ (Young & Light, 2001:942).

Linz and Stepan have argued that state and national questions were largely ignored in the first half of the 1990s because they were not important factors in the earlier transitions in Latin America and southern Europe. In the classic study of Latin American transitions by G. O'Donnell, P. Schmitter and L. Whitehead (1986), for example, the issue of statehood was dismissed as these transitions were primarily post-authoritarian and regime-based and took place in the context of a relative national consensus. Gradually, however, scholars have come to realise that many post-communist states inherited weak states and institutions which prevented democratic institutions from functioning and, therefore, a third factor, namely 'stateness', was required to better understand the transition processes. With the addition of stateness to the framework, post-communist transition became a 'triple transition' (Skocpol, 1985, Offe, 1991, Linz & Stepan, 1996, Pridham, 2000), in contrast to the 'double transition' that post-authoritarian states had to come to terms with in southern Europe and Latin America.¹⁹

Democratisation literature values nationhood as a source of social and territorial consensus for transition states. Back in 1970, Rustow established that democratic transition requires, as its only precondition, 'national borders and consequent absence of mental reservations as to which political community the people belong to' (Rustow, 1970:350). Linz and Stepan agree that 'democracy requires statehood; without a sovereign state, there can be no secure democracy'. Dahl similarly suggests that democratisation in the absence of agreement on the proper boundaries of the political unit will not be consolidated (Dahl, 1989:207). All these arguments stress the necessity of consensual nationhood for sustaining transition states' integrity and making democratisation possible.

Apart from sustaining the state, the democratic role of nationhood is also seen in its ability to generate collective power, create a 'we', and to produce people who are ready to make the highest sacrifices for a political community that is both modern and based on some ethno-cultural and historical factors. Margaret Canovan has argued that 'to make sense,

¹⁹ Hall's 'double transition' closely resembles the 'triple' transition of Offe and Linz & Stepan, but he divided his typology into two broad elements which included a) democratisation and marketisation and b) nation and state-building (Hall, 1996:22).

democracy requires a ‘people’, and social justice a political community within which redistribution can take place, while the liberal discourse of rights and the rule of law demands a strong and impartial polity’ (Canovan, 1996:2). David Miller similarly stressed that ‘trust’ is needed for any democracy to function effectively. A shared national identity (or nationality) is a precondition to achieve certain political aims such as social justice and democracy. Trust, therefore, requires solidarity not merely within groups but across them, and this in turn depends upon a common identity that nationality alone can provide (Miller, 1995).

Despite the importance of the national factor in post-communist transitions, the ‘triple transition’ model has been primarily used to mean democracy, market and the state (Kubicek, 2000) and applied to Central-Eastern Europe (Przeworski, 1995) – a region dominated by three more or less monoethnic states (Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) where the nation-building processes were not complicated by cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, and most importantly, by the status reversal of ethnic groups. The near congruity of national and state units in these cases encouraged a lack of appreciation of the fact that the majority of citizens of the former USSR and former Yugoslavia have multiple identities (linguistic, regional, inter-cultural and Soviet/ Yugoslav) that compete with the allegiance required of them by the new national states. This means that the processes of transforming ‘old’ identities or/ and ‘un-mixing populations’ (Brubaker, 1996) would take up energy and time that could have been used on political and economic reform (Linz & Stepan, 1996:29).

Taras Kuzio has built on the ‘triple transition’ by separating the national and stateness issues and has argued that although both processes are highly interrelated, they should be separated into a ‘third and fourth transition’ (Kuzio, 2001a). Stateness, according to Kuzio, can be ‘resolved by legislatures and decrees and in a shorter timeframe than consolidating national identities in people’s hearts and minds. The time-frame for the former may be counted in decades, while the latter is likely to take generations’ (*ibid.*: 175). In this sense, the post-colonial ‘quadruple’ transition model best fits the case of former Yugoslavia and

the former Soviet states because they have to come to terms with questions of stateness, nationality, the relationship of the former ruling 'other' and national minorities. This 'quadruple' transition includes democratisation, marketisation, state-institution building and nation-building.

The simultaneous 'double', 'triple' and 'quadruple' transition facing post-communist countries as seen by Hall, Offe and Kuzio respectively, is defined by them as 'daunting', 'unique' and 'without precedent'. Motyl believes that, 'the simultaneous construction of states, markets, democratic rule of law, and civil society – was historically unprecedented in its magnitude' (Motyl, 1997:53). Offe adds that 'this upheaval is a revolution without a historical model and a revolution without a revolutionary theory' (Offe, 1991:866). Indeed, the post-communist space is a 'region where, for reasons of recent history and not merely 'primordial sentiments', there are disagreements about who is the demos, what is the polis, and, most of all, what, in Robert Dahl's sense, are the proper units for decision-making and state sovereignty' (Linz & Stepan, 1996:29).

The situation is further complicated by the fact that only a small minority of post-communist states are monoethnic. The majority inherited national minorities, secessionist threats, the need to define 'we' and reassess the relationship with the former ruling 'other', to obtain legal recognition of inherited borders and establish a constitutional framework in a short period of time. Civil society, fully functioning institutions and national unity are largely absent within them. Given that the majority of post-communist states inherited weak nations and weak societal culture, there has been a strong need to develop communal values that would hold society together. These values, however, are not usually morally and culturally neutral because they promote one type of behaviour, that is, the values of the core or 'titular' nation. The nation-state ideal has been perhaps the most politically profitable in the new states, in considerable part because of the institutionalized expectations of 'ownership' that the successor states inherited from the Soviet nationality regime and because they have had all necessary mechanisms and mentalities to achieve it (Roeder, 1991, Brubaker, 1996, Snyder, 1998, Bunce, 1999). Moreover, acquiescence in the

centrality of a core ethnicity, even within allegedly civic national-states throughout the world, is more the 'rule' than the 'exception', and is certainly the case in post-communist states, including Kazakhstan.

Linz & Stepan have argued that political elites in control of the state may initiate majoritarian nationalising policies in a culturally and linguistically diverse context and not violate human rights or Council of Europe norms for democracy. However, these policies may harm or slow down democratic transition by affecting five areas of the polity - civil society, political society, state bureaucracy, the rule of law and economic society (1996:36-37). Other students of democratization also see the downside of nationalising policies in a situation of ethnic diversity, as they may potentially disrupt transition states. Roeder believes that 'democracy is unlikely to survive in ethnically plural societies and stable democracy falls off with greater ethnic diversity' (Roeder, 1999:855-860). Offe similarly names 'territorial disputes, migrations, minority or nationality conflicts, and corresponding secessionist longings' and the 'difficulty of defining citizenship rights' as the major challenges of transition (Offe, 1991:868-871). If the state elites are nevertheless interested in democratic transition and consolidation they have to consider the particular mix of nations, cultures and awakened political identities present in the territory and try to develop less majoritarian and more consensual policies (Linz & Stepan, 1996:37.). Snyder, however, noted that while in the long-term democratic processes can help to resolve ethnic tensions, in the short-term democratic contention in institutions can produce a sharp increase in ethnic assertion and conflict (Snyder, 1998:5).

The situation is different, however, if democratisation is not the goal. In a non-democratic regime, a national majority – linguistic, religious, ethnic or cultural – frequently imposes its rule or conception of the state on minorities without threatening the coherence of the state. The government, 'claiming to represent the people', cannot be challenged in the course of normal politics (that is through potentially authoritative and binding institutional channels like courts and open and free elections) because in a non-democracy such channels do not exist. The problems of 'exclusion' of minorities from the electoral process or the rights of

full citizenship are also not politically important because in a non-democratic setting everyone is normally excluded from such rights. This, however, may produce frustration amongst subordinate ethnic groups and an assertion of the ethnic factor in social tension, which means that authoritarianism offers no long-term solution to ethnic diversity within a state, but simply puts ‘conflicts on a long fuse’ (Snyder, 1998:5, Motyl, 1998) and in authoritarian states the possibilities of catering for minorities through, e.g. decentralization or consociationalism are limited.

Attempts have been made, notably by Freedom House, to develop a comparative schema for the democratic transition performance of post-Soviet states, which might enable to locate roughly the current position of Kazakhstan in this respect. The post-Soviet states (excluding the Baltics) predominantly cover the categories of consolidated and semi-consolidated authoritarian regimes in Freedom House’s table of democracy rankings. The highest category they reach is hybrid regimes, and in that they are below the post-communist states of Central and Eastern Europe (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Regional trends in reform: Former Soviet Union (Democratisation score)

Country	Democracy Score										Dynamics
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Hybrid regimes											
Georgia	4.70	4.55	4.00		4.19	4.44	4.69	4.83			↓
Ukraine	4.00	4.25	4.31		4.44	4.69	4.50	4.88			↓
Moldova	3.90	4.00	3.88		3.94	4.19	4.38	4.88			↓
Semi-consolidated regimes											
Armenia	4.70	4.80	4.50		4.56	4.56	4.56	5.00			↓
Russia	3.80	4.10	4.25		4.63	4.81	4.88	5.25			↓
Azerbaijan	5.60	5.55	5.50		5.56	5.44	5.31	5.63			↓
Kyrgyzstan	4.65	4.70	4.88		5.13	5.38	5.63	5.67			↓
Tajikistan	6.20	5.95	5.69		5.44	5.50	5.50	5.71			↓
Consolidated authoritarian regimes											
Kazakhstan	5.30	5.35	5.38		5.56	5.88	6.13	6.25			↓
Uzbekistan	6.35	6.45	6.44		6.50	6.56	6.56	6.46			↑
Belarus	5.90	6.20	6.44		6.56	6.56	6.63	6.54			↑
Turkmenistan	6.94	6.94	6.94		6.94	6.94	6.94	6.88			↑

Data derived from Freedom House report 2003, see Karatnycky, Motyl, Schnitzer 2003:16; Freedom House Press Release 24.05.2004. (The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of democratic progress)

None of the post-communist regimes, however, formally rejects or challenges democracy, most likely because 'it is the only legitimate political regime' in the present day world (Nodia 2002:15). The formal lip service to democratic principles and institutional imitation is often the farthest they travel along the democratic path. Their democratic deficits, as presented by Carothers, include 'poor representation of citizens' interests, low levels of political participation beyond voting, frequent abuse of law by government officials, elections of uncertain legitimacy, very low levels of public confidence in state institutions, and persistently poor democratic performance by the state' (2002:9-10).

These comparative discussions of the various modes of transition and the problems involved in achieving them, even though they are not explicitly linked to the analysis of ethnic identity, are important for the analysis of interacting identities in Kazakhstan in several ways. Firstly, they help to place Kazakhstan's post-independence experience in an international context of states with a broadly similar experience of social, political and economic change. Kazakhstan is not unique, although, as it will be discussed in the next chapter, it has many distinctive features in its legacy and situation, which need to be born in mind in analysing its developing identities. Secondly, the transition theories generate a questions and puzzle which is one of the main starting-points for my research: transitologists have agreed that national consensus and an absence of 'stateness' problems are crucial prerequisites for successful transition and that the embarking on a full-scale transition in multi-ethnic states is fraught with dangers of conflict and instability. Snyder's warning about the potential impact of democratisation in such states is particularly striking. For the purposes of my research the implication is that such conflict would lead to ethnic polarisation and the rapid differentiation and consolidation of new stratified ethnic identities within the state. Yet this has not proved to be the case in Kazakhstan, where there has been little conflict and where dominant and subordinate identities are still largely uncertain and 'provisional' (or they were still 'provisional' at the time of my research in 2004).

Thirdly, the transition theories also suggest explanations for this situation which will be later looked at in more detail: 1) the postponement of democratic transition, as is the case in Kazakhstan, can in the short term mitigate the ethnic conflict which would consolidate identities; in particular, the dangerous combination of economic and ethno-political polarisation can be temporarily avoided (Offe, 1991, Snyder, 1998, Roeder, 1999); 2) these studies emphasise the crucial role of elites (both national and international) in these situations: a cautious and consensual approach adopted by dominant elites, the adoption of sound institutional choice and shrewd internal (e.g. the character of ‘nationalising policies’) and foreign policies, together with support from foreign countries and international organisations, can considerably reduce the potential for ethnic conflict (Linz & Stepan, 1996) and, therefore, of identity differentiation; 3) the character of its ‘transition path’ (i.e., the manner of its transition process, whether it was violent or peaceful, gradual or sudden) has a strong effect on the character of its transition and, in particular, on ethnic conflict (thus peaceful, uncontested transitions, such as was the case in Kazakhstan, and also gradual ones (also the case since the start of reform under Gorbachev), tend to avoid the polarisation involved in sudden, contested and violent transitions) (Dawisha & Parrott, 1997, Lieven, 2003); 4) lastly, the nature of the ‘prior regime type’ (that is, the nature of a state’s previous authoritarian government and national traditions) has an important effect on the character of its transition (Linz & Stepan, 1996, Parrott, 1997, Tilly, 1997), and it is to this that I turn now separately in the next section.

2.5.2 ‘Prior Regime Type’ and the Legacy of Imperialism

Linz and Stepan, in their classic analysis of transition theory, put particular emphasis on the character of the ‘prior regime type’ as determining to a considerable extent the prospects of successful transition, since less oppressive, modernising regimes can facilitate the initial development of civil society, rule of law, economic reform, etc., which prepares the society for the tasks of transition (1996, ch.4). Linz and Stepan classified these prior authoritarian regimes into sultanistic (the most extreme), totalitarian (i.e. full-blown Stalinism), authoritarian (where political control in the form of a dictatorship or oligarchy may be

combined with considerable social and economic freedom) and post-totalitarian (representing the modernising, reforming totalitarianisms of the period between Brezhnev and Gorbachev in the USSR).

As part of the generally 'post-totalitarian' USSR Kazakhstan would seem to have offered a relatively favourable situation for the development of various aspects of transition, such as 'pacts' between contesting groups and the emergence of civil society. Yet here the limitations of this classification become apparent. It does not take into account the considerable variation in the way that reformist 'post-totalitarianism' operated in different Soviet republics, from the liberal westernisers of the Baltic to the far more traditional and authoritarian societies of Central Asia, where in the Brezhnev period a strong *korenizatsiya* or ethnification developed under the aegis of party control which resulted in the general retention of authoritarian government in this area. Nor does the classification pay sufficient attention to the survival of deeply entrenched traditional social and personal values (such as the role of the clan and the family) in these areas. Finally, it does not give any credit to the impact of imperialism as a 'prior regime type' for all the Soviet republics (Tilly, 1997). Of course, as will be discussed in the next section, 'empires' can be of various types of authoritarian and even democratic government, which crosses the boundaries of Linz and Stepan's classification. But the experience of empire makes it more than just a type of authoritarianism and thus merits separate analysis.

But what is an 'empire' and was the USSR an empire, and if so of what type? The concept of 'empire' is highly contested and a very emotive term, making it difficult to define. Nevertheless the discourse of 'imperialism', 'colonialism' and 'exploitation' has become very important for newly independent states and can potentially have a big impact on the formulation and development of dominant and subordinate identities in these states (Beissinger, 1995, Smith 1998). Dominic Lieven offers a historian's definition based on the classic territorial empires. He argues that empire is

a great power which makes a big impact on the international relations of its age. It is a polity which rules over wide territories and many peoples, since the management of space and multiethnicity is among empire's greatest challenges. An empire is also a polity that does not rule by the explicit consent of its subjects, which does not necessarily imply that it has to be illegitimate in their eyes (Lieven 2002:24).

Michael Doyle, by contrast, offers a much broader political scientist's definition:

Empires are relationships of political control imposed by some political societies over the effective sovereignty of other political societies. They include more than just formally annexed territories, but they encompass less than the sum of all forms of international inequality. Imperialism is the process of establishing and maintaining an empire (Doyle, 1986, 19).

This definition is intended to cover forms of non-territorial 'informal' empire, which some analysts would want to describe as 'hegemony', and also controversially lays stress on the modern concept of 'sovereignty', which would not be appropriate for many of the peoples, which empires have contained. I will not go into the numerous ramifications of the debate on the nature of empires, imperialism and colonialism, but its essential parameters are clear enough for the purposes of this research: 1) the involuntary incorporation of peoples into or control by another, large state; and 2) the economic and political control of these peoples by the elites of the dominant state in the interests of this dominant state rather than in the interests of the peoples themselves.

In these terms, was the USSR an empire? Again this has been a matter of big debate, and I will just sketch the main points here. The great irony of the USSR was that it consistently pursued an 'anti-imperialist' stance in world politics, supporting newly independent states in Africa and elsewhere against the ex-colonial powers, while on its own territory and in Eastern Europe pursuing policies of authoritarian control and exploitation of sovereign or potentially sovereign peoples in a manner which very much fits the definition of an 'empire' (Chinn & Kaiser, 1996, Parrott, 1997). In Eastern Europe its 'imperial' expansion

was clear in the 1940s, from a 'sphere of influence' to a region in which the form of government and the internal and external policies of the states were totally dominated by the USSR. The formation of the USSR was a complex process, since after the Civil War the new Republic annexed militarily virtually all the territories of the former Russian Empire except those, which had become independent by international treaty. In the struggle for its existence the USSR was thus forced to replicate to a degree the structures and policies of the former tsarist empire. Under Stalin in particular, from the mid 1920s to the early 1950s, there were pursued authoritarian and exploitative policies which were typical of the classic territorial empires: total reconstruction from the centre of the economic, political and social character of the country without any regard for national differences; ruthless punishment of opposition to these changes (the crushing of resistance in Ukraine and Kazakhstan); deportation of 'troublesome' peoples (the Caucasian peoples and Volga Germans in WWII); development of exploitative monocultures (Central Asia) and the general disposition of the most advanced industry and best living and social conditions in the central Slavic areas of the country; maintenance of concentrated Slavic political and military control while allowing only lower-level political and economic decision-making to non-Slavic peoples (Olcott, 1995, Zaslavsky, 1997, Edmunds, 1998).

But on the other hand the USSR was not a typical empire. While all effective political, economic and military control was concentrated in the Slavic centre, it did offer a system of pseudo-federalism for the larger constituent peoples whereby the country was divided into 15 Union republics which by the later Brezhnev period came to have extensive control over local affairs and in which the policy of *korenizatsiya* gave political and administrative experience to large numbers of the titular population and provided the potential for later separate governments. This also involved increasing use of the local languages, the use of which was encouraged in education and the arts in a controlled way (Suny, 1993, Chinn & Kaiser, 1996, Brubaker, 1996, Smith, 1998). In the same way the USSR pursued nation-wide policies of education, economic development, social and housing improvements and welfare provision which were comparable to and often better than the policies of similar modernising states. Thus the legacy of the Soviet 'empire' was highly ambivalent, and this

ambivalence, as will be argued in chapter 5, had an enormous effect on identity formation and interaction in the newly independent states which clearly exemplified in the comments of my respondents: while the Kazakhs resent the general subordination of the sovereignty and culture of their people and the exploitation of their natural resources they are grateful and even nostalgic for the economic and social modernisation which they experienced, the development of literacy, education and economic infrastructure and, in particular, the development of health and welfare provision for all. This ambivalence about the 'imperial' past, as it will be seen, is one of the factors which explains the uncertainty and provisionality of Kazakh identity today.

The study of empires and imperialism and, in particular, the comparative study of the disintegration of empires and the emergence of 'post-colonial' states has generated a huge literature which deserves to be considered by students of the USSR and the post-Soviet states. I do not have space to examine and expound on this literature in detail, but I will draw attention to some of the main arguments and patterns, which relate to the subject of the development of interactive identities in Kazakhstan. I shall take as my main basis the excellent collective comparative study edited by K.Dawisha and B.Parrott *'The End of Empire? The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective'* (1997), which reviews many of the main arguments. The main factors which Parrott (1997:14) highlighted as influences on the outcomes of imperial transformations include: '1) the nature of the international environment (that is, the views of the international community on imperial control and the support of leading powers or international organisations for decolonisation and the newly independent states); 2) the character of nationalism among the dominant and subordinate nationalities (that is, the existence of a national liberation movement and general relations between 'indigenous' peoples and 'colonial settlers' in the regions concerned); 3) the role of political violence in the creation and maintenance of empire (that is, the memory of extermination, deportation and general oppression]; 4) the liberalization of the empire's political structures; 5) the armed forces behaviour and level of cohesion; 6) national economic resources and international economic relations; 7) the political and economic strategies of peripheral societies during and after the break-up of the empire.

In what follows I shall briefly discuss the relevance of the above factors to my research question of identity interaction in Kazakhstan. Clearly the international environment was supportive of the break-up of the Soviet 'empire' and the emergence of new 'successor states', which was made clear by their rapid acceptance as full members of the UN (Olcott, 2002). The role of international organisations has in general been supportive in terms of aid for development, while the action of such bodies as the OSCE has been rather hesitant, partly because of the mandate of that body based on consensus and non-interference in internal affairs, and partly out of respect for the continued influence of Russia in her sphere of influence in the 'near abroad'. But obviously the general influence has been towards the mitigation of ethnic conflict (Melvin, 1995, 1998). The character of existing national feelings amongst dominant and subordinate groups also had an impact on identity: there was no national independence movement in Kazakhstan. While the emergence of dislike of Russian dominance amongst Kazakhs was noted in the riots following the appointment of Kolbin, a Russian by nationality, in 1986, it is clear that in general relations between Kazakhs and Russians have been good, if not exactly close (because of cultural differences) (Zaslavsky, 1997). This is another factor producing uncertain and provisional identities. The role of the memory of considerable violence against Kazakhs in the collectivisation period of the 1930s is potentially a factor in the accumulating post-imperial discourse (Sarsembaev, 1998, Seidimbek, 2001, Gali, 2002), but at the moment is too much overlaid by more positive experience of modernisation and welfarism to figure prominently in the development of identity (Cummings, 2005). As already mentioned, the 'empire's' political structures were liberalised in the Gorbachev period, but probably the impact of this was much more limited in Central Asia compared with other parts of the Soviet Union, which meant that traditional authoritarian political and social structures, which became deeply entrenched in the Brezhnev period, could linger on there preventing any moves from democratic transition (Cummings, 2002, Ishiyama, 2002). The role of the armed forces was limited in the Soviet case because of the political dominance of the party over the military, so the role of the military played virtually no role in the transition in Kazakhstan except by their non-participation (Lieven, 2002) (i.e. unlike in Yugoslavia no attempt was made by

the metropolitan elite to use the military in Kazakhstan to retain control or influence political development in that area).

The economic resources and economic relations of the country could have an even greater impact. On the one hand an awareness of previous economic exploitation of resources by the metropolitan elite is a factor amongst a growing number of Kazakhs, and the consciousness of their possession of huge oil and other mineral resources which may generate enormous wealth in the future has influenced the policies of the governing elites and the general confidence and self-assertion of the Kazakh population. So far the distribution of this potential wealth has not produced ethnic economic polarisation, partly because of the important role skilled Russian labour played in the economy, but it is an important potential factor, which could greatly increase ethnic conflict and therefore identity consolidation in the future. Lastly with regard to the strategies of the elites, this is also a very important factor. While Nazarbaev has stalled democratisation, his pronouncements and policies have been cautious and conciliatory both in the internal and external arenas: his concession to the Russian language of the status of a 'language of inter-ethnic communication' and later the status of 'official language' and his generally conciliatory policies towards Russian settlers, while doing his best to 'camouflage' the gradual Kazakhization of political structures and the economy (Bohr, 1998, Karin & Chebotarev, 2002), and his cautious and cooperative international stance, maintaining close ties with Russia while developing economic and political relations with the west, China and his neighbours in Central Asia, have done much to make Kazakhstan one of the stable success stories of post-Soviet development, thus mitigating internal ethnic conflict and polarisation.

Thus several of the factors highlighted by students of imperialism and post-imperial development have a strong relevance to the general situation in Kazakhstan and some of them have a direct impact on identity interaction and will be used in the general analysis.

2.6 Conclusion and Analytical Framework

In this last section I shall outline the main concepts and arguments which I shall be using in the analysis of my research data and relating them to my research questions and to the theories discussed in this chapter.

My first two research questions are largely descriptive in character, that is what is the current (at 2004) state and character of Kazakh and Russian identities in Kazakhstan and how have they changed and interacted since the later Soviet period. For the first question I shall be making use of the various aspects of national and ethnic identities discussed in the first section, while bearing in mind the substantial differences in the understanding of these concepts in the Soviet and post-Soviet context. For the second question I shall be making use of the concepts of ethnic interaction and stratification discussed by Schermerhorn (1970) and Horowitz (1985) and using their diagrammatic schemas to ‘map’ the current state, past changes and likely future developments of this interaction, as revealed in my respondents’ comments. As I have noted in section 2.4, these schemas were originally applied to the studies of integration and conflict, but I think they can be usefully and illuminatingly applied to the study of interacting identities.

My third research question is explanatory, that is why have Kazakh and Russian ethnonational identities developed and interacted in the way they have and why is their current state still quite uncertain and provisional after 15 years of independence (this was my original puzzle). This question is problematic. It is not easy to research national identity in terms of clear-cut independent (causal) variables, as is perhaps the preferred method of social science, since identities are elusive, ever-changing and multi-faceted phenomena, which require a more holistic explanation, more characteristic of historical explanation. Indeed, my research interviews were open-ended and wide-ranging in character in order to grasp the broad character of identity. So this was not the sort of research where I could rigorously investigate the impact of one or two independent variables (say language and economic factors), and indeed if I had done so it would have produced a very one-sided and

partial analysis of the identities concerned, since there are so many long-term and short-term factors which influence the formation of identity. Many of these factors could only be investigated properly by a large-scale survey, and in some cases would have been very difficult to research in the current political and informational climate of Kazakhstan. Instead I have tried to trace in the comments contained in my wide-ranging interviews features which have been highlighted by comparative theories as being important in the development of identity and then tried to assess their relative salience, thus producing in the end a broad explanation for my research data, at various levels of explanation.

At the most general level my initial hypothesis was that the puzzling provisionality and uncertainty of both Kazakh and Russian identities was linked with the general character of political and perhaps economic transition in Kazakhstan, i.e. that the 'stalled' character of democratic transition in Kazakhstan (which transition theorists argue tends to lead to sharp ethnic political confrontation in multi-ethnic states (see Horowitz, 1985, Linz & Stepan, 1996, Snyder, 1999) had a 'dampening' effect on the interaction and consolidation of new identities, while the 'prior regime type' of Soviet 'imperial' rule (bringing together many important long-term historical features affecting ethnographic and economic development) created ambivalent positive and negative attitudes which are still apparent in people's assessments of their identity. On this basis I have used arguments from the comparative literature on post-Soviet transition and on post-imperial de-colonisation (Dawisha & Parrot, 1997, Lieven, 2004) to help locate and explain the current situation with regard to both identities. I will argue that identities in Kazakhstan are still as much 'in transition' as other aspects of Kazakhstan's political and state development and in many ways reflect these processes.

But of course there are many other factors highlighted by various comparative theories which I shall try to use to produce a more detailed explanation. These theories may be divided into those highlighting external (international) or internal (intra-state) factors. With regard to 'external factor' theories I shall make particular use of the 'triadic nexus' theory of Rogers Brubaker (1996) and its additions by Graham Smith (1999) and others. The purpose

of this theory was, like those of Horowitz and to some extent Schermerhorn, to predict and explain the emergence of conflict, but I shall argue that it can be usefully applied to the analysis of identity. Discussions of national identity have long emphasised that a hostile 'external other' is one of the classic determinants of identity (Greenfeld, 1992, Prizel, 2001). To some extent I shall 'invert' these arguments by suggesting that the fact that good, close relations have been maintained between Russia and Kazakhstan (so that Russia has not become formally a hostile 'external other'), and that the 'exit' option of out-migration of Russians to the Russian Federation are important factors explaining why Kazakh and Russian identities have not become excessively polarised in Kazakhstan, even though it is possible to see the gradual emergence of a 'post-imperial' 'hostile other' mentality despite good inter-state relations. I shall try to trace this ambivalence towards the Soviet past and the contemporary Russian state in the comments of my respondents and try to show that attitudes to the outside world generally, and to Russia in particular, reveal much about the identities of Kazakhs and Russians.

As regards theories stressing internal factors the theories of ethnic interaction offer several insights into the development of identity, which I shall try to use. Schermerhorn's independent variables (1970:15) of sequences of power interaction between ethnic groups (i.e. colonial dominance and then the role reversal with independence), the degree of social separation of subordinate groups and the extent of control of resources by dominant groups are all very salient to the study of identity and find echoes in the comments of my respondents. Also helpful are his suggestions that cultural congruence and attitudes towards the legitimacy of power are very important and I shall try to investigate these ideas in my analysis. Also illuminating as regards internal factors are Brubaker's (1996) concept of the 'nationalising policies' introduced by newly independent governments to strengthen national cohesion and their own legitimacy, and I shall pay particular attention to this aspect in my discussion of my research into the development of Kazakhstan's 'national project' in chapter four, since it was the reaction of Russians and Kazakhs to these policies which was one of the key focal points in my assessment of the consolidation of their identities. Likewise I have frequently used the concepts of 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty' which Albert

Hirschman (1970, 1978) originally developed to explain the behaviour of firms and later applied to the crisis of the latter days of the GDR. Finally I shall refer to the work of David Laitin (1998, 2007) and others on the impact of language, since the status of Kazakh and Russian is one of the crucial issues in contemporary Kazakhstan and language has long been held to be a crucial determinant of national and ethnic identity.

Thus it is this combination of external and internal, long-term and short-term factors which form the analytical framework, which I will use in the description and explanation of the character, development and interaction of Kazakh and Russian identities in Kazakhstan.

3 THE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERACTION OF KAZAKH AND RUSSIAN IDENTITIES IN THE TSARIST AND SOVIET PERIODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide some necessary historical background to the identities of Kazakhstan – both titular (Kazakh) and minority (Russian). This is not intended as a general history of the rise of Kazakhs or the causes of imperial Russia's expansion in the Kazakh steppe and its subsequent Sovietization. The focus instead is on the historical and structural governmental factors which affected and partly produced both Kazakh and Russian identities. The chapter considers three periods: (1) early steppe history, namely, since the ethnonym 'Kazakh' first emerged in the fifteenth century up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, (2) the impact of Russian colonialism on both Kazakh and Russian identities; and (3) the impact of Sovietization. As with all historical periods, they are somewhat arbitrary and inevitably overlap. It is the third period which provides the focus of this chapter. This is the period in which the modern Kazakh identity was crystallised and the imperial Russian identity strengthened. And these are the identities that the new Kazakhstani regime has tried to reshape and redefine after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

3.2 Early History of Kazakhs

3.2.1 Origins and Early Development of the Kazakhs

The area of present-day Kazakhstan, known as Descht-e-Kipchak in the Middle Ages and as the Kazakh or Eurasian steppe in the tsarist period, was inhabited by a complex mixture of peoples, cultures, languages and religions generating a variety of political and social institutions. But underlying them all, from the Mongols of the 11th -12th centuries to the Kazakhs in the 15th to 18th centuries, was a nomadic pastoral type of socio-economic

organization which changed little over the centuries (Khazanov, 1984: xxiii, Masanov, 1995, 2001).

There is no consensus over the chronology or precise circumstances of the Kazakh origins. The term Kazakh as a form of self-identification came into use by the residents of the area as early as the end of the fifteenth century and certainly by the mid-sixteenth century (Masanov, 2001). It was not an ethnic category but rather meant a person who led a free and unencumbered life-style associated with nomads. Many theories have been put forward to explain the origin of the term. Some speculate that it can be traced back to the Turkish verb *qaz* (to wander), because the Kazakhs were wandering nomads, or that it comes from the Mongolian word *khazaq* – a wheeled cart used by the Kazakhs to transport their *yurts* (felt dwellings) and belongings. As to the origins of the people themselves, the most celebrated explanation is that of the mythical Alash (or Alash(a) khan). In various popular songs and tales Alash is described as the founder of the Kazakh people, whose sons each established one of the three Kazakh *zhuz* or clan agglomerations – Elder (*ulu*), Middle (*orta*) and Younger (*kishi*). This legend has always played an important unifying role for the Kazakhs (Olcott, 1995:4, Seidimbek, 2000).

In order to distinguish the Kazakh nomads from the new Cossack settlers in the steppe, tsarist administrators referred to Kazakhs as ‘Kirgiz’ (whom they saw as essentially similar in clan structure and language) and this name persisted in all official correspondence between the Kazakh elites and colonial administrators during the period of the Russian empire. Some Russian ethnographers and geographers started to label steppe nomads as *kirgiz-kaisak* or *qazakh* to differentiate them from *kara-kirgiz* (mountain Kirghiz) and *buruts* (Kirgiz). Chokan Valikhanov, for example, wrote in the mid 19th century:

The Great, Middle and Small *kirgiz-kaisak* hordes constitute one Kazakh people, which should be differentiated from the ‘Kirgyz’ who are referred to as *burut* by the Chinese and ‘mountain’ (*dikokamennye*) or black (*kara*) by the Russians. Even in the physiognomy of

the *burut* (Kirgiz) there is something distinctive, non-*kaisak* (non-Kazakh) (Valikhanov, quoted in Masanov, 2001:57).

Nevertheless, even at the beginning of the 20th century *kara-kirgiz* were considered to be one of the *kirgiz-kaisak* tribes and during the first universal census of the Russian empire in 1897 Kazakh and Kirgiz were lumped in as one people. It has to be stressed that none of the above ethnonyms were understood in ethno-national terms. Indeed, the Kazakh ‘national’ consciousness started to develop only at the beginning of the 20th century, when the leaders of the first Kazakh nationalist movement *Alash Orda* started to refer to their people as a *narod* or *natsiya*, adopting Leninist terminology on the subject (Suny, 2001, Sabol, 2003, Dave, 2007:31).

3.2.2 The Early Kazakh Socio-Political Organisation

A unified, although loose and decentralised Kazakh Khanate was the only common political formation among the steppe nomads, which existed from the mid-15th to the late 16th century. This disintegrated in the 16th century into a tripartite structure of ‘hordes’ (*zhuz*) or clan agglomerations related to the three climatic zones of the steppe: the Elder Horde in the south and east, the Middle Horde in the northern and part of the central regions and the Younger Horde in the west, from the Caspian Sea south of the Urals to the Aral Sea. The Middle Horde was the largest and Younger Horde the smallest in population terms. But all three stressed their common origins in their mythical common progenitor, *Alash* (*ibid*: 32).

Political authority in these hordes was fluid, diffuse and highly localized. Traditional Kazakh society, to cite Bacon (1980), was ‘conical’ in shape, or ‘pyramidal’ to use the taxonomy developed by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1963). The small part at the top represented the Kazakh hereditary stratum, the *ak suiek* or ‘white bone’, while the wider lower segment consisted of the non-hereditary masses, the *kara suiek*, or ‘black bone’. ‘Bone’ here refers to lineage and the colours ‘white’ and ‘black’ were inherited from

Mongol practice. At the top of the hierarchy were the sultans, presiding over local clan (*ru*) organizations, who claimed direct descent from Genghis Khan. Also part of the top 'white-bone' (*aq suiek*) stratum, known as *tore*, were the clergy (*hoja*), who were of Arabic origin and claimed descent from the Prophet Mohammed. They had great influence in their role as tutors to the sultans and khans but did not have high material status. The khans who headed the hordes were not hereditary rulers but were elected by a gathering of sultans, judges (*bi*) and clan elders (*aqsaqals*). The judges, clan elders and poets (*aqyn*) were closer to the people (*kara suiek*) and helped to maintain social cohesion within the system (*ibid.*).

The lineage system of the Kazakh clan (which lay at the heart of the nomadic social organization) was of the 'segmentary' type, i.e. a patrilinear unit tracing descent from a single ancestor but divided by 'segmentation' into smaller sub-units of parent lineages (Khazanov, 1984). These lineages were central to nomadic life, having extensive social, not merely biological associations, and nomads were expected to be able to name ancestors at least to the seventh generation, with some, of the highest status, going back forty generations. Lineages exercised various functions. Firstly, they functioned as a marker of exogamy, i.e. marriage among nomads was permitted only in the seventh and in some cases in the eighth or tenth ascending generation. Secondly, as a socio-legal unit, the lineage, used interchangeably with 'clan', affected the issue of property. The property of an individual who died without any immediate relatives simply passed to the clan. Moreover, without written chronicles or monuments these transmitted lineages were essential to nomadic group identity (Dave, 2007: 33).

The clan and tribal organization of the Kazakh nomads was very fluid and adaptable as it had to preserve their way of life in the face of the harsh environment and the threat from new settlers. Both Masanov (1995) and Olcott (1995:69) argue that, although nomadic pastoralism originated as a means of survival and an ecological adaptation, it became through its epics and folklore a system of values and a way of life in itself. Even sedentarisation did not immediately undermine this culture. As Armstrong points out (1982:16), some ex-nomadic groups retained a strong 'nostalgia' for the old ways,

preserving 'a persistent image of a superior way of life in the distant past. Such nostalgia and collective memory became more enduring than the material circumstances of life'.

3.3 The Tsarist Period

3.3.1 The Tsarist Incorporation and Administration of the Kazakh Steppe

For centuries the Kazakh steppe has been an area of frequent encounters and intermingling between numerous nomadic tribes and semi-nomadic and agriculturalist communities. Military weakness, derived from the inability to support a standing army, was one of the biggest problems of nomadic society, as was reflected in the decline and the disintegration of the Kazakh Khanate. Eventually this led the leaders of the Younger, Middle and Elder hordes to swear allegiance to the tsars in the 18th century (1731-1742), by which they obtained protection from attacks but in return they had to pay tribute and protect Russian borders and caravans. The Younger and Middle Hordes were fully absorbed into the Russian Empire by the mid 19th century, and the Elder Horde was incorporated only a quarter of a century later following the Russian conquest of Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara and Kokand in the 1860s-1870s (Dave, 2007:34-5).

In the 18th century the rapidly expanding tsarist empire still had very fluid borders and a flexible, decentralized system of governance. In contrast to the Christian groups, whom the Tsars either tried to assimilate (Poles, Ukrainians, Belorussians) or to attract with concessions (Georgians, Armenians), the animistic Kazakh nomads were regarded as aliens (*inorodtsy*) who were not to be integrated but, on the contrary, excluded from the army, leading educational establishments and administration (Laitin, Petersen and Slocum, 1992:129-68; Weeks, 2006). Catherine II actually encouraged the Islamization of the Kazakh nomads and other similar tribes in order to promote a more settled, and therefore governable, way of life. She was aiming 'not at the introduction of Mohammedanism' as such, but was using Islam 'as a bait to catch fish with', to consolidate Russian control of the Central Asian borderlands (Bobrovnikov, 2006:206-7). The Kazakh nomads, however,

became Muslims much earlier, but their Islamic institutions remained less formal than among the neighbouring sedentary populations and therefore less comprehensible to the colonial administrators and scholars (*ibid.*, Masanov, 2001).

In the second half of the 19th century there were some limited attempts to promote reforms and ‘civilise’ (i.e., Christianise and educate in Russian) some Islamic groups, such as the Bashkirs and Kazakhs. The Russian Orthodox missionary Nikolai Il’miniskii and his Kazakh pupil Ibrai Altynsarin, for example, had tried to convert a small group of Kazakhs in the 1860s, but their efforts had only small impact on the steppe nomads in general. They, however, managed to create a Cyrillic-based alphabet and a grammar for the Kazakhs (Kreindler, 1979:5-26). As the above attests, the tsarist authorities were unable to direct enough human and financial resources to govern the region and to bring culture and ‘civilisation’ to the *inorodtsy*. Struggling to transform their own feudal-agrarian society into a modern, industrial and consolidated European state, they came to treat their Islamic Central Asian subjects as a cultural ‘other’ which actually strengthened their own rather weak sense of ‘European’ identity and fitted in well with the limited amount of resources they could devote to the development of the region (Bassin, 1991: 1-17; Khalid, 1998: 51; Dave, 2007: 36).

It was, however, the Russian conquest of Turkestan in 1865 and the consequent imposition of tsarist administration and laws which introduced the Kazakhs for the first time to centralised political control. In 1868 the Kazakh steppe lands were divided into three administrative units called *gubernii* (governorships) – Orenburg, West Siberia and Turkestan – which were in turn subdivided into *oblasti* (provinces), *uezdy* and *volosti*, with the lowest unit being the village (*aul*). The *volost* boundaries were drawn up on a purely territorial basis, crossing tribal or clan affiliations, in a typical ‘divide and rule’ fashion (though in fact this division stimulated clan conflict in the election of administrative offices) (Khalid, 1998: 69). Broadly speaking, the Younger Horde came under the jurisdiction of the Orenburg *guberniya*, the Middle Horde under the West Siberian and the Elder Horde under the Turkestan *gubernii*, which drove a wedge between the steppe-nomad

tradition of the Middle and Younger Hordes and the southern Kazakhs of the Elder Horde, who had closer contacts with the Uzbeks and Turkmen (for more detail see Weeks, 2006).

3.3.2 The Impact of the Russian In-Migration into the Kazakh Steppe

From the later 19th century settler in-migration transformed the character of the steppe populations and their nomadic civilisation. This process had started with the settling of the Cossacks as a privileged military caste who became agents of tsarist colonisation and Russification and it intensified after the liberation of the serfs by Alexander II in 1861 with the influx of poor peasants in search of arable land, with additional pressure coming from political exiles and convicts and also from Old Believers (*starovertsy*, *staroobryadtsy*) and non-Orthodox Christians (Poles, Balts) (Bekmakhanova, 1986; Dave, 2007: 37). With the increasing agricultural crisis of the later 19th century the tsarist authorities became preoccupied with guaranteeing a sufficient supply of arable land in the area: a decree of 1868 allowed the State to take over pastoral land and confined livestock grazing to specific areas. But the peasant land hunger continued, and after the 1905 Revolution the Stolypin reforms, making a 'wager on the strong', allowed any 'excess' pastoral land to be used for farming (Dave, 2007: 37; Erofeeva, 2001). The cumulative effect of these measures was to destroy the already weak nomadic economy (Olcott, 1995: 90-91).

As pointed out above, the nomadic way of life had been a form of ecological adaptation, with stable nomadic populations and livestock herds maintaining a natural equilibrium with the resources of the grazing area. In the northern area the population density was 4-5 persons per sq. km. and in the central desert lands about 1 person per sq. km. (Masanov, 1999: 122-152). The arrival of settlers (some 35,000) from European Russia in the later 19th century created pressure on land and water resources which reduced the area available for nomadic pasturage. According to the first (and admittedly rather inaccurate) imperial census of 1897 'Kazakhs' (Kirgiz) formed 81.7% of the steppe population (about 3.39m.) and settlers 15.7%. But after the Stolypin reforms, the percentage of settlers in the 'Kazakh' steppe had risen to 41.6% (some 3 m.) (Olcott, 1995: 83, 90).

3.3.3 Later Tsarist Nationality Policy: from Exclusion to Partial Assimilation

As we saw above, earlier tsarist nationality policy classified 'Kazakh' (Kirgiz) nomads as *inorodtsy*, or inassimilable aliens, and presumed a fundamental difference between the nomadic and settled ways of life. In practice the boundaries between the two were more fluid and nomads used the same climatic zones with settled people and lived side by side, but not together (Bacon, 1966; Khazanov, 1984). Nevertheless, despite the important links between nomadic and agricultural communities and the partial overlap between their identities, the nomadic and the sedentary peoples embodied two different principles, representing separate myths and symbols (Armstrong, 1982:40, Dave, 2007:38). Nurbulat Masanov gave a concise portrait of Kazakhs of the 16th to the beginning of the 20th century:

Kazakhs were all those who were leading a nomadic life style and... who were 'loyal to the ancestors' precepts' and did not turn to the settled way of life. Kazakhs were all those who 'wandered away' from the state and did not accept the state control. Kazakhs were all those who were well aware of their difference from the sedentary people and agriculturalists and ... who looked at them [the sedentary] with a sense of superiority [*sverkhu vniz*]. Kazakhs were all those who considered their culture and way of life as the best and the only possible in the whole world (Masanov, 2001:66).

It has to be stressed that these parameters did not yet had a connotation of ethnicity. This identity category became available only at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, when the tsarist administrators started to classify their diverse population according to race, nationality and language (Khalid, 1998: 83).

As mentioned above, a small group of mainly Bashkirs and Kazakhs were targeted for conversion to Christianity and education in Russian language and culture, in the belief that their weak civic awareness and the lack of a literary tradition would make them more likely to embrace the European civilization and that thereby they would become more manageable Russian subjects. This did not at first involve eliminating their 'ethnicity' or language,

though Russification, i.e. assimilation to Russian culture, faith and language, was clearly the ultimate aim (Steinwedel, 2000: 78; Altynsarin, 1975: 24). In 1916, confronted with the outbreak of the First World War and the urgent need for military recruits, the tsarist authorities overcame any idea that the Kazakhs were *inorodtsy* and inassimilable and authorized their general military conscription into the Russian imperial army. This led to extensive protests by Kazakhs, who were already dissatisfied with the continued Russian in-migration and which, they believed, had put increased pressure on already strained water and grazing resources, and produced frequent outbreaks of famine in the steppe. Joining the Russian imperial army was, therefore, viewed by many Kazakhs as a way to finally undermine their nomadic way of life and increase their subordination within the tsarist state (Sabol, 2003, Dave, 2007:40).

Lastly, the Kazakh traditional identity which was conceived along clan and *zhuz* lines came increasingly under pressure. As noted above, the first imperial Russian census of 1897 classified the diverse population of the tsarist empire on the basis of ‘nationality’ (*natsional’nost’*), which was closely linked with language and Kazakhs were increasingly pressured to replace their ‘zhuz’, ‘clan’ and ‘lineage’ allegiances with the one of ‘nationality’. Although there was a strong correlation between the closely related varieties of their spoken language and their group boundaries, neither language nor a shared ‘nationality’ were crucial identity markers for Kazakhs, for whom nomadic life-style and traditional symbols and imagery together with the status of clan lineage were still the main markers of identity. Language, as Dave noted, became an important identity marker for Kazakhs considerably later when the Kazakh elites and the Bolsheviks started to discuss the question of literacy and the choice of script (Dave, 2007: 40-41).

Thus, despite limited efforts to promote state-building through border demarcation and administrative centralization, the tsarist policies towards the Kazakh steppe remained largely colonial, exploitative and segregationist. Seizures of nomadic pastural lands, pressure from the Russian in-settlers and conscription of Kazakhs into the Russian imperial army exacerbated the crisis of the pastural nomadic economy and contributed to the

development of a collective consciousness of being persecuted and colonized among the Kazakhs.

3.3.4 The Development of a Kazakh Ethnonational Identity up to the Soviet Period

In the second half of the 19th century the tsarist state was beginning to experience what Dominic Lieven has labelled ‘the dilemma of modern empire’ (2003:50-51; 2006:19), which involved the tension between the preservation of a system of traditional authoritarian rule and the increasing challenge from the newly emerging modern ideology of nationalism and popular sovereignty. This drove the tsarist state by the reign of Nicholas II to rely increasingly on an appeal to Russian nationalism to boost its popularity. In addition increasing socio-economic modernization meant that the traditional tsarist policy of alliance with peripheral elites would not be sufficient to keep the empire together. As the state itself started to interfere more deeply in society to respond to the challenges of modernity, new social groups emerged and new, sensitive issues developed related to the question of language, literacy and education in state employment (*ibid.*). It was against this background that a Kazakh national identity started to develop.

Some have pointed out that traditionally Kazakhs and their culture showed no awareness of what might be called ‘political’ concerns in the western sense of the term. As Olcott (1995:109-110) notes: ‘[Until] the mid 19th century, it [Kazakh epics and folklore] showed no evidence of political consciousness or even sub-national loyalties. It was very parochial, dealing only with families.’ It was only in the early 20th century, under influence of the example and competition from similar emergent ‘national’ groups, responding to the tsarist policies outlined above, that leading Kazakh intellectuals started to use the discourse of nationality to promote the idea of Kazakh unity and the conception of a Kazakh ‘nation’ in order to achieve some cultural and even territorial autonomy within the framework of the Russian imperial state. Out of this arose the first Kazakh national movement, the *Alash Orda*. This tried to combine Turkic, Islamic and nomadic elements of Kazakh identity, but its vision and understanding of Kazakh national identity was clearly geared towards Russia,

although they imagined Russia as a different political entity from the disintegrating tsarist empire (Dave, 2007:41).

As argued above, the increased interaction between tsarist administrators, Russian settlers and nomads had had the effect of unifying the Kazakh elites and general population in outbreaks of protest. These interactions were usually of an infrequent and localized nature, but they created the perception among Kazakhs (both the elites and the masses) that they were persecuted and dispossessed (Kirev and Kolodin, 1957). Furthermore, the crisis of the nomadic pastoralism forced the Kazakh elites to come to the conclusion that traditional skills were no longer sufficient to survive in the face of diminishing pastoral lands and they encouraged their fellow nomads to embrace literacy and acquire education as the new survival mechanisms in the modern time (Buleikhanov 1910, cited in Dave, 2007: 42).

The leaders of the *Alash Orda* movement advocated cultural and territorial autonomy within the boundaries of the Russian state. They hoped that this would allow them to regain control over pastures, to cancel various taxes and dues on land and to reorganize the existing administrative borders to serve the needs of the nomad economy. To achieve a degree of consensus on the above issues, the *Alash Orda* leaders, who themselves hailed from various clan, *zhuz*, social rank and educational backgrounds, had to be involved in a complex process of negotiation. Firstly, with all the clan groupings and political factions within them with whom they discussed and defined a general 'Kazakh' national position; secondly, with their Turkic neighbours with whom they had a similar intellectual and ideological orientation within the framework of the Muslim (*Jadid*) movement; and lastly, with the Russian authorities who were vacillating between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks and advancing different proposals for the restructuring of the Russian empire and establishing a post-revolutionary and post-imperial order. The political alliances and loyalties of the *Alash Orda* leaders, however, remained fluid and shifting as the practical considerations usually changed the political and ideological positions.

Some observers have argued that by the beginning of the 20th century many Kazakhs had started to organize politically and express their concerns over, and remedies for, tsarist colonization and Russification practices, economic and social dislocation and national-cultural deterioration (Olcott, 1995, Kendirbaeva, 1999, Sabol, 2003). The efforts of the newly formed *Alash Orda* to stop Russian in-migration and to restore their lands for pasture created bonds of fraternity and solidarity between the Kazakh elites and ordinary nomads and contributed to the development of a common national consciousness (however limited). The February Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent formation of the Provisional Government were generally welcomed by most sections of Kazakh society (Olcott, 1995:129-55). There was a general agreement among the different strata of Kazakh population that extensive socio-economic reform was required, because nomadic pastoral organisation had become increasingly unsustainable and had to adjust itself to modern conditions.

S. Sabol (2003:4-5) has argued that the development of the pre-revolutionary Kazakh nationalist movement resembled that of other national movements in Europe and Asia. Their efforts – political, social and organizational – conform to Miroslav Hroch's theory of national revival which contains three distinctive stages or 'phases'. Phase A was a period of scholarly interest; Phase B was the period of patriotic agitation; and Phase C was the rise of a mass national movement (Hroch, 1985: 22-23). The Kazakh national intelligentsia was aiding the transition from Phase A to Phase B, when the WWI broke out and significantly impaired their efforts. The 1917 Russian revolutions propelled them into Phase C, although the majority of the Kazakh population were possibly not ready for their leadership or type of nationalism. Indeed, it could be argued that gradual, if incomplete transition to Phase C after 1917 was used as important background material that the Soviet authorities tried to co-opt and transform through the Soviet nationalities policies in the 1920s (Sabol, 2003:4-5).

3.3.5 The Development of Russian Ethnonational Identity before 1917

The emergence of Russian national identity can be attributed to probably the second half of the 19th century. Until the second half of the 19th century the political legitimacy of the Russian empire was based not on popular sovereignty expressed through the Russian nation, but on tsarist dynastic rule. Early ideas of Russianness and Russian identity were bound up with Orthodox Christianity, the political world loosely defined by the ruling dynasty and were contrasted to ‘others’ at the periphery, namely the Catholics of the West and the non-Christian nomadic peoples of the Volga region and Siberia. While the expansion of the Russian empire may have diluted the territorial sense of Russia, it did not pose a direct threat to the underpinnings of this political system.

In the later 19th century, nationalist agitation by intellectuals and the introduction of a deliberate policy of Russification by the government began to foster a sense of Russian national identity among the mass of the population. As a result, despite the lack of consensus among Russian elites about the actual extent of ‘Russia proper’, Russian nationalism started to emerge as a significant political force. Some observers have noted that there were some important ethno-nationalist components to this process, but there is some evidence that this new identity was based on a multicultural and cosmopolitan (civic) view of Russianness which was gradually supplanting the traditional one of loyalty to Tsar and Orthodoxy (Brooks, 1985, Melvin, 1995). Thus, although the last few decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century were marked by a rise in Russian national consciousness, the basis of this identity remained shifting and ambiguous.

R.G. Suny (2001) usefully suggested four reasons for the inability to forge a clear-cut and well-defined Russian national identity in tsarist Russia. The first one was the vast geographical expanses, limited resources and low population and communication density of the Russian state which made it very difficult for the authorities to exercise their will on their subjects very frequently. Moreover, in the non-Russian peripheries indirect rule was usually the norm and little effort was made until late in the 19th century to interfere with the culture of the non-Russians. Second, with the emergence of the discourse of the nation by the beginning of the 19th century and the ability of non-Russian elites to conceptualise their

peoples as ‘nations’ (with all the attendant claims of political rights, cultural recognition and even statehood), it had become increasingly difficult for the tsarist state to assimilate various peoples into the dominant nationality. To make matters even more complex, many Russian speaking non-Russian subjects found their upward mobility in the civil service blocked to a degree. This frustrated mobility of the peripheral elites, or what Benedict Anderson (1991) labelled as ‘cramped’ or ‘vertically barred’ pilgrimages among Creole functionaries, encouraged them to reshape the political and economic sphere in which they could operate with fewer restrictions.

Thirdly, Russia was a state and an empire in which its population was divided horizontally among dozens of ethnicities and religions and vertically between ruling and privileged estates and the great mass of the peasant population. As argued earlier, the Russian state maintained vital distinctions between Russians and non-Russians, and whole peoples, labelled *inorodtsy*, were subject to special laws, among them Kazakhs, Kalmyks, peoples of the North Caucasus and various peoples of Siberia and Central Asia. Such hierarchies and divisions inhibited the development of the kinds of horizontal bonds of fraternity and solidarity that already marked the rhetoric of the nation in the West. And fourthly, there was the failure of Russian elites to articulate a clear idea of the Russian nation, to elaborate an identity distinct from a religious (Orthodox) imperial, state, or narrowly ethnic identity. Russia was never equated with ethnic Russia; almost from the beginning it was something larger, a multinational ‘Russian’ state with vaguely conceived commonalities – religion, perhaps, or loyalty to the tsar – but the debate among intellectuals and state actors failed to develop a convincing, attractive notion of Russianness separate from the ethnic, on the one hand, and the imperial state, on the other (Suny, 2001:43-44).

3.4 The Soviet Period

It is now widely acknowledged that the Soviet rule played an important role in the formation of both modern Kazakh and Russian identities (Olcott, 1995, Akiner, 1995,

Gleason, 1997, Roi, 2000, Masanov, 2002, Dave, 2007, Hosking, 2004, 2006, Lieven, 2002, Tolz, 1999). Indeed, the Soviet regime tried to re-define senses of ‘self’ and ‘other’ in a way that helped to further the goal of building socialism and to replace the previous sources of belonging based on people’s relationship with the national group, church and state. A key ideological target was to homogenise society and to create a socialist nation in which the Communist Party could thus claim to represent everyone (Young and Light, 2001, Pipes, 1994, Ashwin, 2000) To understand how both Kazakh and Russian identities interacted with the Soviet structures and with each other, I will first look at the basic features of the Soviet administrative system which will be followed by a historical background to the question under investigation.

3.4.1 The Soviet Administrative System

The Soviet administrative system was nominally federal, divided into four levels of regional, ethnically-based administrative political units. Fifteen national groups were granted the highest status of Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) or ‘union republics’, which together constituted the entire Soviet Union. Directly accountable to and within the territories of the union republics were twenty Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs), eight Autonomous Regions (*oblasti*) and ten Autonomous Areas (*okruga*) (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Ethno-federal units of the USSR

Union republics	Autonomous republics (ASSRs)	Autonomous oblasts (regions)	Autonomous okrugs (districts)
<i>USSR</i>			
RSFSR	Bashkiria Buryatia Chechnya-Ingushetia Chuvashia Dagestan Kabardino-Balkaria Kalmykiya Kareliya Komi Mari Mordvinia North Ossetia Tatar	Adygai Gorno Altai Jewish (Birobijan) Karachaevo-Cherkessia Khakassia	Agin-Buryat Komi-Permyat Koryak Nenets Taimyr Ust-Ordyn-Buryat Khanty-Mansi Chukot Evenk Yamalo-Nenets

	Tuva Udmurtia Yakutia		
Ukraine			
Belorussia Moldavia			
<i>Transcaucasia</i>			
Azerbaijan	Nakhichevan	Nagorno-Karabakh	
Georgia	Abkhazia Adjaria	South Ossetia	
Armenia			
<i>Central Asia</i>			
Uzbekistan	Karakalpakia		
Kazakhstan			
Tajikistan		Gorno-Badakhshan	
Kyrgyzstan			
Turkmenistan			
<i>Baltic</i>			
Lithuania			
Latvia			
Estonia			

Source: Sakwa, 1998:240.

The rights and obligations of each of these units were stipulated in the Soviet Constitution (1936, 1977), including areas of dependence, guaranteed institutions, rights of autonomy and – in the case of union republics – secession. The criteria for inclusion as a union republic were established by Stalin in 1936 when fifteen autonomous republics were elevated to a union republic status. These included: (1) sufficient population, nominated to be over one million; (2) compactness of population, and (3) location on the borders of the Soviet Union, in case of secession.

Graham Smith (1998:4-8) has argued that the nature of Soviet federalism was based on four main principles. First, the union republics were denied the right to national determination *de facto*, although this right was enshrined in the Soviet constitutions of 1936 and 1977. The centre, however, granted the local elites a limited degree of political flexibility in running their republics provided they ensured that nationalism did not become part of their republic's agenda. The republican elites were also able to exert some leverage in the sphere

of fiscal federal politics, especially throughout the post-Stalinist years, and to highlight the republic's economic interests and needs. These efforts, however, were subjected to frequent checks and balances and the local elites tried to comply, in most cases, with what the centre considered politically acceptable. It has to be noted that the right to national self-determination was largely a legacy of the early Bolshevik period. The promise of a union that it would be possible to leave and that provided room for solving grievances at the local level encouraged numerous non-Russian nationalities to rejoin the fold. In the long-term, however, the Soviet authorities hoped, drawing on the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, that inter-national and inter-regional equalization would homogenise various social groups and make national differences a thing of the past (Kaiser, 1994, Chinn & Kaiser, 1996). Hence, the right to national self-determination proved to be largely symbolic and the constitution's emphasis on the unity of the Soviet state made this right virtually meaningless, at least until Gorbachev's *perestroika* and democratisation policies after 1986 (Sakwa, 1998).

Second, the particular nature of Soviet federalism ensured that there was a paradoxical co-existence of two nation-building projects at both the all-union (*obshchesoyuznyi*) and republican (*respublikanskii*) levels. That is, on the one hand, the Soviet elites were engaged in creating the all-union symbols of statehood and nationhood and promoting, starting with Khrushchev in 1950s, the all-union Soviet identity which was based on the ideas of internationalism, communism, the knowledge of Russian language and identification with the Soviet state. While on the other hand they also provided some institutional space at the republican level that allowed local elites to carry out limited nationalising policies. This manifested itself, *inter alia*, in the practice of promoting the titular nationalities in the sphere of higher education and employment (the policy of *korenizatsiya*) and in defining the republics as 'the states of and for particular [titular or indigenous] nations' (Brubaker, 1996:38). These policies had both intended and unintended consequences, but their overwhelming effect was 'to accelerate the nationalisation of ethnic indigenes' and 'make the national problem more intractable over time' (Chinn & Kaiser, 1996:69). The existence of a nation-building strand at the republican level also created a tension with the union-wide nation-building effort that tried to centralise and homogenise the Soviet Union as a

whole. This situation was resolved only in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed and republics were able to ‘decolonise’ themselves by promoting the culture and language of their respective nationalities (Brubaker, 1996, Linz & Stepan, 1996).

Third, the federal nature of the Soviet Union had important implications for both Russia and the Russians. The Russian situation was quite unique in the Soviet Union. On the one hand, they were the dominant nationality of the USSR, effectively controlling key party and state institutions and infusing the Soviet identity with their language and culture. But on the other hand, unlike other nationalities, they did not have a clearly demarcated national territory endowed with their own national institutions, such as, for example, the Communist Party, the Academy of Sciences or KGB. The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (the RSFSR), itself a composite entity, ‘was not taken seriously by Russians as the Russian nation-state or the national homeland of the Russian people’, (Szporluk, quoted by Smith, 1998:6). Hence, they tended to identify with the Soviet Union as a whole and see themselves as part of (or central to) what Khrushchev referred to in the 1950s as the Soviet community.²⁰ Some observers have noted that Russians tended to identify with the Soviet Union because, firstly, they did not have a choice of sub-state national identity like other titular nationalities (Brubaker, 1996) and secondly, because their national identity was totally fused with the Soviet structures of power and the supra-national Soviet identity (Melvin, 1995, Laitin, 1998, Hosking, 2004, 2006). This situation started to change only after the break-up of the Soviet Union when the titular nationalities began to nationalise their newly independent polities, and Russians, in reaction to that, started to identify themselves as members of the Russian nation (Melvin, 1995:127).

And fourth, although all union ethnorepublics had the same level of institutional support as part of the Soviet federation, they were not all treated similarly by the centre. These relationships were based on the different nature of incorporation into the Soviet Union,

²⁰ Surveys conducted before the dissolution of the USSR showed that more than two thirds of Russians, no matter where they lived, indicated that the Soviet Union, not Russia, was their motherland (Drobizheva, 1991)

which ranged from ambiguous to outright violent, on the ethnic proximity between the Russians and various titular groups and on the perceived economic relations (or exploitation) with (by) the centre. The more Russians and other titular groups saw themselves as being ethnically close, working on mutually beneficial terms and being incorporated voluntarily, the less they tended to view their situation in negative terms and develop a strong national identity and *vice versa* (Smith, 1998:4-8). All the above features of the Soviet administrative system, as enumerated by Smith and echoed by other observers, deeply affected and partly produced both Kazakh and Russian identities. The historical background to this tripartite interaction – between the Soviet federal system, the Kazakh and the Russian identities – will be provided in the next section.

3.4.2 The Development of Soviet Nationality Policy and its Impact on Kazakhstan

The federal structure of the USSR was the consequence of the Bolsheviks' pragmatism during the period of the consolidation of the Soviet state in the 1920s. They believed that in the short to medium term the federal system would help to attract and mobilize the diverse population of the Russian empire and to destroy the tsarist rule, and in the long-term, with national and class antagonisms resolved and individuals socialized towards 'international' socialist community, the national identities would be voluntarily supplanted by the 'international' Soviet socialist identity (Chinn and Kaiser, 1996, Young and Light, 2001). In 1924-5 the formal National Delimitation of Central Asia was carried out during which the borders of Kazakhstan were marked out; it is these borders that have now become the international frontiers of post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Thus, by delimiting the boundaries of Kazakhstan and introducing a number of affirmative action programmes, the Bolsheviks in effect created the Soviet federal state and provided the guidelines for transforming the 'oppressed' peoples into 'socialist' nations (Cummings, 1998).

To win over the Kazakh population, the Soviet authorities introduced a far-reaching policy of social and political reforms. To give at least an impression of regional autonomy, Soviet Kazakhstan was granted regional statehood and the right to secede from the Soviet Union.

At the same time, the Soviet authorities expected to establish a trans-republican, all union Soviet identity. This, as we shall see later, would result in a dual policy and dual identity – identification with the Soviet state and encouragement of a national self-definition (Brubaker, 1996, Smith, 1998, Cummings, 1998, 2005). In practice, however, although the Bolsheviks were theoretically committed to the policies of internationalism, most of their administrators in Kazakhstan were of Russian or Slavic origin and they had little or no experience outside the Russian Federation. As a result, the subsequent political and economic changes for many Kazakhs strengthened the feeling that one colonial regime was merely supplanted by another (Sakwa, 1998, Anderson, 1997:27).

The famine and destruction resulting from the years of revolution and civil war had devastated the Kazakhs and effectively destroyed nomadic pastoralism (Olcott (1995:159) estimates 750,000 Kazakhs died, McCauley (1976:18) around a million). The Soviet state advocated sedentarisation, but it could not provide enough human and financial resources to aid this process. Sedentarisation of Kazakhs was in many ways a continuation of the process initiated under the tsarist rule, but now it had become a central element of the Soviet policy. The Soviet authorities exhibited no hesitation unlike their tsarist predecessors and once they were in power they demanded rapid and radical change. In 1926-7 they started an intensive campaign of seizing arable land from tribal leaders and redistributing it among the poor. In 1928 the Soviets confiscated and redistributed 145,000 animals, marking the beginning of collectivization. In the first years 50,000 Kazakh families were settled in collective farms and by the end of the First Five-Year Plan, the sedentarisation of Kazakhs was considered officially complete.

In 1929 the Soviet authorities nationalized Kazakhs' property and forced them into the new collective farms. This process was accompanied by the impoverishment, exile and loss of Kazakh tribal elites. The farms which Kazakh were forced to join were usually in the arid and inhospitable areas of the republic and the state usually did not provide them with adequate tools and seeds to function as farmers. Furthermore, many Kazakhs killed their animals rather than hand them over to the state and the result was famine. All in all, the cost

of sedentarisation and collectivization campaigns in terms of human and animal losses was catastrophic. Jasny, in his classic study of Soviet collectivisation, estimates that the Kazakh population dropped by about a million from 3,968,289 in 1926 to 3,098,764 in 1939. He adds that Kazakhs by 1939 should have numbered 4.6 million and stated that as such collectivization caused a population drop of 1.5 million (Jasny, 1941: 323). Akiner, citing the Kazakh demographer Makash Tatimov, similarly notes that

out of a Kazakh population of approximately 4,120,000 in 1930, some 1,750,000 had died from starvation, epidemics and executions by 1939 – over forty percent of the entire population (this is in addition to deaths from natural causes). 200,000 fled into neighbouring countries and remained there (another 400,000 fled, but later returned) and 453,000 took refuge in neighbouring Soviet republics, also to remain there permanently (Akiner, 1995:45).

However, despite the human and animal cost, 98% of the rural Kazakhs lived in collective farms by 1938 and collectivization was believed by Moscow to have been successfully completed.

In political terms, the period before and during the sedentarisation and collectivisation campaigns was marked by the efforts of the Soviet state to co-opt the Kazakh elites into the Soviet power structure and to Sovietise the region. The leaders of the *Alash Orda* national movement had recognized the Soviet power in 1919 and were already absorbed into the Soviet administrative structures. Most of them, however, did not lose their nationalist agendas and saw communism and socialism as a useful strategy to advance their political interests (Benningson & Wimbush, 1979:27-30). The Soviet government had also tried to promote a policy of *korenizatsiya* in order to attract local national cadres and to establish a genuine loyalty among the Kazakh population. This involved the allocation of a percentage of the administrative posts which was proportional to the percentage of Kazakhs in the republic and the introduction of Kazakh as the official language in the republic (Olcott, 1995:211).

By the late 1920s it had become increasingly obvious that the Soviets' commitment to the ideas of internationalism was hollow. Some observers have noted that the traditional feelings of superiority of Russians towards Kazakhs were easily combined with the new Soviet ideology and this led Kazakhs to believe that they just exchanged one Russian empire for the other (Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, 1966:134). Indeed, the Russians did not want to renounce their dominant position in the Communist Party of Kazakhstan and to share the right to determine the course of the revolutionary process. The Moscow government and the local Russian communists, for example, were strongly opposed to the creation of a parallel Turkic Communist Party in the region and to the return of lands seized by Russians during the tsarist period. Moreover, the very nature of the Bolshevik government, which was a government of and for the proletariat, was instrumental in excluding a considerable number of Kazakhs from the Party who were still a predominantly rural population.

In 1927 *korenizatsiya* policies were officially ended on the grounds that industrialisation of Soviet Kazakhstan required highly qualified personnel that Kazakhs could not readily provide. This was accompanied by the extensive purging of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, mainly because their commitment to the ideological principles of communism was believed to be hollow and because they represented 'nationalist' and 'bourgeois' elements of the traditional Kazakh hierarchies. Naturally, the Great Terror Campaign of the late 1920s –early 1930s eliminated anyone with links to the *Alash Orda* movement, which effectively destroyed the nationalist aspirations among the Kazakh elites. The Communist Party of Kazakhstan, however, was soon replenished by the new Kazakh members who were loyal to the Stalinist political system and largely untarnished by the ideas and events of the previous two decades (Edmunds, 1998:77, Olcott, 1995:220).

The Kazakh SSR also became strategically important as a 'dumping ground' for those groups that the Soviet regime considered disloyal or untrustworthy: Russian and Ukrainian kulaks at first, and before and during the Second World War Crimean Tatars, Volga

Germans and Koreans (Rashid, 1994:107). By 1939 Kazakhs had become a minority in their 'own' republic: if in 1926 they comprised 58.2% of the population, in 1938 that percentage had dropped to 36.4%. Only in 1989 did Kazakhs achieve a plurality again in the republic, when the Soviet census put the Kazakh percentage at 39.7% as opposed to 37.8% Russians. Lastly came the 'Virgin Lands' Campaign in 1954 designed by Khrushchev to transform the remaining pastoral lands of northern Kazakhstan into a Soviet breadbasket. This brought in about 650,000 Russians and Slavs in the guise of administrators, agitators, technicians, 'fraternal helpers' and 'enthusiasts', which profoundly altered the ethnic mix of the republic and helped form the basis of modern Kazakhstan's diverse population (McCauley, 1976:177).

When Khrushchev was replaced by Brezhnev in 1964, who was seen within the republic as pro-Kazakhstan, the Virgin Lands Campaign was reassessed. He appointed the Kazakh, Dinmukhammed Kunaev, his protégé and close associate, as the 1st Secretary of Kazakhstan who became responsible for reviving *korenizatsiya* policies and clan patronage networks leading eventually to Kazakh dominance of party and state administrative structures (Olcott, 1995, Cummings, 2005). The political power of Kazakhs during this period of revival of Kazakh fortunes, however, was still largely dependent on the goodwill of the Moscow leadership and the constraints of the Soviet state structure. As Khazanov puts it:

The Kazakh political elite's privileged position in the local power structures depended on their compliance with all of Moscow's demands and goals.... In addition, they had to embrace the Russian language and – at least in public – some of Russian culture and lifestyle. In return, Moscow gave them the right to run internal affairs in Kazakhstan, and to distribute preferential treatment and high-level jobs. In order to secure their support, the Soviet regime reserved a significant percentage of these jobs for Kazakhs (Khazanov, 1984:252).

Rywkin similarly observed that

Specific controlling jobs are reserved for Europeans. These include positions of Second Party Secretaries, heads of special sections, heads of security, directors of factories of ‘all-union importance’ ... an even larger number of managerial jobs are reserved exclusively for Moslems: positions of First Secretaries, of Secretaries for Agitation and Propaganda, top governmental and Soviet positions, republic relations... and directorships of most of the non-essential enterprises (Rywkin, 1979:45).

With the death of Brezhnev in 1982, Kunaev’s power started to decline and he became increasingly sidelined under the brief incumbencies of Andropov and Chernenko. When Gorbachev came to power in 1986, Kunaev was dismissed from his position as the 1st secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan and replaced by a Russian, Gennadii Kolbin, who had no previous links with the republic. It was against this backdrop that the December riots broke out. These were harshly suppressed with many deaths and injuries. The circumstances of these events still remain uncertain. What is clear, however, is that, firstly, they were the result of general unease amongst the Kazakhs that their political power was being downgraded, and, secondly, that this became a crucial ‘mythic moment’ for the development of the Kazakh national consciousness and aspirations for autonomy, now constantly referred to in the new Kazakh history (Akiner, 1995, Nazarbaev, 1999, Seidimbek, 2000, Gali, 2001, Masanov, 2002, Karin & Chebotarev, 2002). In the subsequent months many Kazakhs as well as Russians started to feel that the December demonstrations marked a crucial point in Kazakh-Russian relation and this understanding led to ‘a distinct divergence between the political interests of the two groups’ (Edmunds, 1998:88). In the Kazakhs’ case, ‘this merged with the growing awareness of ethnic political identity, providing the impetus for the emergence of a nationalist trend in public opinion’ (*ibid.*). In the Russians’ case, this similarly highlighted their precarious status as an ethno-national minority in the republic despite the fact that they were the dominant or state-bearing nation in the Soviet Union as a whole. These feelings and aspirations were shrewdly managed by N. Nazarbaev when he replaced Kolbin in 1989 and became a

colleague of Gorbachev in the Politbureau, soon to become in 1991 the first President of independent Kazakhstan.

3.5 Conclusion: The Development and Interaction of Kazakh and Russian Identities in the Tsarist and Soviet Periods

This chapter has outlined the development and interaction of Kazakh and Russian identities from earliest times to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Both Russians and Kazakhs were relatively late in developing clear national identities and these identities remained qualified in various respects before 1917. The Russian national identity started to emerge in the 19th century after the Russian experience in the Napoleonic wars and under the impact of the rising ideology of nationalism and popular sovereignty in Europe (Greenfeld, 1992). In the later 19th century the tsars came to increasingly rely on an appeal to the national feeling of the Russian population of the empire and the benefits of industrial and agricultural modernization to support their weakened regime. However this national identity was still bound up with commitment to empire: as with other 'core' ethnic groups of land-empires Russians did not see their 'national' identity as separated from their territorial and cultural control of a multinational empire (Lieven, 2000, Hosking, 2004, 2006).

A Kazakh identity started to emerge from the 15th century with the coalescence of the three nomadic clan hordes into a cultural grouping with a more or less stable ethnonym and agreed common lineage (*Alash*). The incorporation of these steppe nomads into the tsarist empire and the consequent interaction with Russians consolidated this identity, but it was not till the later 19th and early 20th centuries, as increasingly intrusive tsarist national and economic policies impacted on the Kazakhs, that this ethnic identity acquired a political dimension as a 'national' identity. This was largely the product of the activity of newly emergent Kazakh intellectuals who formed the *Alash Orda* Kazakh national movement. This elite group advocated restoration of a modernized nomadic economy based on their traditional territory, increased literacy and education in Kazakh (based on Arabic script) to enable Kazakhs to share the benefits of modernization and a degree of autonomy within the

tsarist state (not independence) which would remove many tsarist taxes and dues and allow the Kazakhs freedom to flourish and develop. These policies started to find a response amongst the mass of Kazakhs who were increasingly discontented with oppressive tsarist administration, particularly in terms of the elimination of their traditional nomadic land by colonisation. In the revolutionary years the *Alash Orda* leaders abandoned the tsarist state and saw their aims as best promoted by a pragmatic alliance with the Bolsheviks, who at that time advocated national self-determination and an end to tsarist imperial oppression. But at this time we can only speak of an incipient national identity, not fully shared between elite and masses and still retaining an attachment to pre-modern nomadic and clan structures.

During the Soviet period this incipient sense of Kazakh national identity was further expanded and elaborated to provide the basis for a national narrative that traced the ‘inevitable’ (in the Marxist-Leninist sense) evolution of the Kazakhs from an amorphous collection of tribes into a fully-fledged ‘socialist nation’ (Akiner, 1995:34). The Soviet nationality policies, in this respect, were supposed to inculcate a double identification among Kazakhs – with the national group and with the Soviet state – which was based paradoxically on a ‘self-conscious repudiation of nationalism and ethnic identities’ (Dave, 2007:71). That is, on the one hand, the Soviet elites provided Kazakhs with all necessary attributes of nationhood – national boundaries, national government structures and national language – but on the other hand, they integrated and subordinated this new national identity within the larger (hierarchical) structure of the Soviet empire-state. Thus, despite the fact that Kazakhs were able to enjoy the benefits of their territorialized nationhood (which were associated primarily with the affirmative action (or *korenizatsiya*) policies and intangible sense of being the legitimate ‘owners’ of the Kazakh SSR), their national identity nevertheless was embedded in the Soviet empire-state and hence was subordinated and provisional.

The relationship of Russians and their identity to the new Soviet regime was also ambiguous. The Soviet regime relied on the political acquiescence of the Russians who

were encouraged to regard the successes of the Soviet Union as advancing the interests of Russian people. This close relationship between the Russian and Soviet identity ensured that Russians enjoyed a powerful but not completely dominant position in the USSR: they had advantage rather than guaranteed privilege (Brubaker, 1996, Kolstø, 1995). The position of advantage was reinforced by the centrality accorded to a depoliticized Russian culture in the Soviet system and the role assigned to the Russian language, which was not only the *lingua franca* of the Soviet Union, but also the language of success. Moreover, Russo-Soviet culture served as the primary means by which other ethnic groups were assimilated into a general Soviet way of life; it was therefore central to the regime's ultimate goal of creating the Soviet people. This was reinforced by the dominance of Russians (and Ukrainians) in the top levels of key institutions – the Party, the KGB and the military.

Expansion of the Russian linguistic and culture space under Soviet rule was further strengthened by the migration of Russians, other Slavs and Russian-speakers to urban industrial regions outside the Russian Federation and the linguistic Russification of non-Russians who lived in these enclaves. This process, however, slowed down and even reversed in the 1970s and 1980s due to the demographic indigenization of the republics and the increase in national identification of the titular populations. In Kazakhstan, for example, the Kazakh population nearly doubled between 1959 and 1979, increasing from 2.8 million to 5.3 million. The Russian population, on the other hand, increased from 4 to 6 million, but declined proportionally from 42.7% of Kazakhstan's population in 1959 to 40.8% in 1979. These demographic changes occurred primarily because of a much higher birth rate among Kazakhs than among Russians in Kazakhstan. In addition, the Russian in-migration that had continued from the time of the original conquest of the Kazakh lands slowed during 1960s and was reversed during the 1970s, from which time there has been a net out-migration of Russians from the republics.

Some authors have argued that Russians started to leave Kazakhstan because better economic opportunities existed in Russia and because they were concerned that the

affirmative action programmes, designed to promote Kazakhs within their own republics, put them at a relative disadvantage (Karklins, 1989, Kolstø, 1995, Chinn & Kaiser, 1996, Brubaker, 1996, Dave, 2007). By the late 1980s Kazakh over-representation in higher education and political representation and the dramatic shift towards higher Kazakh participation in all sectors of the economy provided an added incentive for Russians to out-migrate. All the above factors contributed to the rise of Russian ethno-national identity in Kazakhstan alongside the Soviet one. It has to be noted, however, that this identity remained comparatively weak because Russians lacked a clearly demarcated national territory – a homeland – other than the Soviet Union as a whole (Melvin, 1995). It was only with the Gorbachev reforms of the 1980s, and especially after the break-up of the Soviet Union, that Russian identity in Kazakhstan really began to undergo significant change.

To sum up, by the end of the Soviet period both Kazakhs and Russians were equipped with provisional ethno-national identities that presented them with two different problems. Russians' ethno-national identity in Kazakhstan had paradoxically both dominant and subordinate elements to it in a sense that it was vested in the political structures of the whole Soviet Union, but at the same time it had to coexist and tolerate the insitutionalized 'titularity' (*titul'nost'*) of the nominally state-bearing Kazakh nationality. Kazakhs' ethno-national identity, on the other hand, was nominally dominant within the boundaries of the Kazakh SSR (this was manifested in the fact that the Kazakhs were the legitimate 'owners' of their national republic and could enjoy both institutionalised and unofficial preferential treatment as a titular nationality), but at the same time they understood that their national identity was rooted in and hierarchically subordinated within the overall structure of the Soviet state. These two ethno-national identities were at least partially (and latently) in a constant competition for the cultural-political space within Kazakhstan – a competition which was institutionally supported by the structures of the Soviet federal system. After the break-up of the Soviet Union this competition has continued with a renewed force, although the emphases, contents and interpretations of both ethno-national identities have changed significantly. These changes will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter.

4 NATIONAL-STATE PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and analyses the attempts made by the governing elites of post-Soviet Kazakhstan to develop a new national-state identity. This project is fundamental to the research on Kazakh and Russian identities in this thesis, since it provides a point of reference to which the dominant and subordinate ethnic groups react and by which they assess their own identities. In my in-depth interviews a number of my questions were specifically designed to elicit the reactions of respondents to specific aspects of this state-identity project, and their reactions were very revealing about the state of their own identities. Therefore it is important to understand what the Kazakhstani elites have been trying to achieve and what have been the main trends of change in the development of the project in the years 1991-2004. In what follows I have used almost always primary sources for my material: official statements, the writings of President Nazarbaev and published articles by leading intellectuals and public figures involved in the development of the project. It is important to stress that what I am looking at is the officially approved and directed state identity project. While it is clear that the details of this have provoked considerable disagreement amongst advisory experts, and the published texts undoubtedly represent compromise between different viewpoints, nevertheless it is to the officially sanctioned statements and policies that the dominant and subordinate ethnic groups react in the development of their separate identities, and this is the subject of this research.

In the following sections I shall, firstly, look at three broad categories of national-state identity projects that exist in the theoretical literature (4.2), secondly, I shall analyse the character and development of the official Kazakhstani national identity project using primary sources (4.3), thirdly, I shall examine the official justification of this project and describe and assess the actual implementation of selected key policies (4.4) which will be followed by a conclusion.

4.2 National-State Projects: Views and Models

Before embarking on the description and analysis of this project it is important to set the general theoretical context by referring back to and summarising the discussions of these questions in chapter two. The whole concept of a deliberate national-state identity project has raised considerable controversy. The classic historical model has been that of Third Republic France, which after the chaos of the revolutionary and Napoleonic periods deliberately set about the integration and unification of the country to convert a patchwork of regional identities into the shared linguistic and symbolic secular culture of 'France one and indivisible', in other words to convert 'Peasants into Frenchmen' in the terms of the classic analysis by Eugene Weber (1979). This was a straightforwardly top-down, state-elite led process, involving considerable use of both carrot and stick, and achieving by the first decades of the 20th century a considerable amount of success and hence imitation by other states.

In terms of modern scholarship there have been broadly two trends of analysis of national unification projects. The first may be labelled the liberal-consensual or multicultural approach of Will Kymlicka (2001). Here the emphasis is placed on consultation and the respect for the cultural rights of all the various groups in the country, resulting in a compromise between the groups. The other approach is what may be called the 'nationalising policies' approach exemplified by Rogers Brubaker (1996). This approach argues that in newly independent multi-ethnic states the tendency is for the newly dominant titular group to impose on the population as a whole a series of cultural policies which are aimed at reinforcing the dominant position of this group and at correcting the cultural injustices done to this group by the previously dominant imperial power: these he calls 'nationalising policies' and include measures to restore the 'national' language, rewrite national history and refashion education, promote personnel from the titular group in politics, state administration and economic life and to refashion national symbolism (flags, hymns, festivals, street and place names, monuments, etc.) around the culture and values of the core indigenous group. Clearly the term 'nationalising' has strong pejorative

connotations, and the impact of these policies on subordinate ethnic groups can be expected to be negative, developing amongst them a closer bond with their ‘motherland’ state (often the old imperial metropole).

One of the questions that will be asked in this chapter is how far the actual practice of the Kazakhstani national identity project approximates this ‘nationalising’ model. In the case of Kazakhstan the previous Soviet regime, as was discussed in the previous chapter, tried to develop policies of national cultural unification around the idea of the ‘Soviet person’, and it will be shown that the legacy of this approach is still quite strong in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Dave (2007) and Martin (2001) have pointed out that in most cases post-Soviet elites have been much more uncertain in their approach to national identity than Brubaker’s model suggests, since they lack the solid base of legitimacy which many post-colonial governments have derived from liberation struggles, which means, as Dave puts it, that the new elites have contented themselves with a symbolic nationalisation of the state rather than attempting a real nationalisation of the citizenry, thus concentrating on what Chatterjee has termed the ‘outer’ rather than the ‘inner’ domains of national identity.

A final point in this debate about national identity policies is the tension between ‘civic’ and ‘ethnic’ elements, which were also discussed in chapter two, since this figures largely in the overall scheme of the Kazakhstani national identity project. In that chapter it was argued that, while theoretically the ‘civic’ and ‘ethnic’ approaches are clearly distinct, in practice they are inevitably interlinked in the necessity of using as a basis a single linguistic and value culture (often in a concealed or implicit way, such as with English and ‘WASP’ culture in the United States), and indeed, as Smith has argued, such a link with a historical ethnic culture is indispensable for the success of even a civic-oriented national project (a point recently taken up by Kazakhstani scholars (e.g. Kadyrzhanov, 2007).

In the following analysis we will bear in mind these theoretical approaches and in the conclusion make an assessment of the character and trends of the Kazakhstani project with reference to them.

4.3 The National-State Project of Kazakhstan: Concepts and Values

Since independence the national state project of Kazakhstan has controversially combined and balanced two main viewpoints – the ethnocultural rights of the core or titular nation and the civic rights of all citizens of Kazakhstan irrespective of their ethnic background. President Nazarbaev has publicly stated on numerous occasions that the multicultural and multiconfessional nature of the republic requires an inclusive conception of citizenship and that the state's task is to create an inclusive, state-centred 'Kazakhstani' identity, rather than an exclusive, narrowly defined, ethnic 'Kazakh' identity. Nevertheless, despite Nazarbaev's repeated pronouncements that all peoples residing in Kazakhstan are Kazakhstani citizens and equal before the law, it is obvious that it has been difficult to maintain this balance between ethnic and civic nation building policies.

The 1993 Constitution of Kazakhstan, for example, controversially defined Kazakhstan as 'the form of statehood for the self-determined Kazakh nation' (*forma gosudarstvennosti samoopredelivsheisya kazakhskoi natsii*) (*Konstitutsiya Respubliki Kazakhstan*, 1993,1), which relegated all non-titular groups to an inferior position within the state. Even the 1995 Constitution, refashioned to sound more ethnically neutral, contained an only slightly more subtle indication of the primacy of the Kazakh ethnic group in the formation of the Kazakhstani nation. The preamble to the revised Constitution reads: 'We, the people of Kazakhstan, united by a common historical destiny, constituting a state on the primordial Kazakh land (*na iskonnoi kazakhskoi zemle*)...' (*Konstitutsiya Respubliki Kazakhstan*, 1995:1). By defining the territory as 'primordial Kazakh land', the new Constitution underscored the intimate connection between the Kazakh nation and the territory of the present-day state (Bohr, 1998), indirectly pointed to Kazakh 'ownership' of this territory and covertly characterized all other non-indigenous and non-titular groups 'as subject to the titular community's hospitality (i.e. the formation of a 'host-state' structure)'. (Diener, 2004:23).

The attempts by the Kazakh elites to nationalize the socio-political space have clearly been Kazakh-centric, and although rarely openly exclusive, have contributed over the last fifteen years to the establishment of the 'host-state' structure. Promotion of the Kazakh language over the virtually universally spoken Russian, de-Russification of public symbols and toponyms, re-evaluation of history, appointment to public office of ethnic Kazakhs, repatriation of the Kazakh diaspora and promotion of the Kazakhisation of the state in terms of population distribution represent the three components of Williams and Smith's (1983) theory of nationalizing social space - manipulation of the environment, abstraction of the land and hardening of space. These state-sponsored and officially approved expressions of ethnonationalism and their perception (at least partly) as conscious acts of discrimination by non-titular groups have allegedly engendered a number of discordant social processes during the first fifteen years of independence.

Rustem Kadyrzhanov (2007), a Kazakhstani academician, has pointed out that Kazakh national elites have had to combine and balance between civic and ethnic approaches to nation-building because they have dominated, almost in their pure form, the socio-political sphere of Kazakhstan since independence. The 'ethnic' or 'titular nationalism' approach implies that it is undesirable, if not impossible, to build one nation in a multiethnic society because ethnic identities of individuals will always predominate over their civic, state identity and identities of other ethnic groups. Hence, the national state project of Kazakhstan should be essentially a Kazakh national project and Kazakhs have to be considered the only 'legitimate' nation in Kazakhstan, while all other groups should be relegated to the status of diasporas. The second 'civic' approach to nation-building, by contrast, elaborates that the national-state project cannot be the idea of only one ethnic group in a multinational state, but should be an all-national project which aims to unify all ethnic groups into one nation on the basis of their citizenship. The adherents of the Kazakh national idea, according to Kadyrzhanov, are almost exclusively drawn from the Kazakh ethnic group, while the proponents of the civic approach happen to be usually the representatives of the non-indigenous, mostly Slavic ethnic groups, although a considerable

number of Kazakhs also subscribe to this idea (*ibid.*, 97)²¹. Kadyrzhanov also stressed that Kazakh national elites tried to combine ethnic and civic strands of the national state identity project largely ‘by trial and error, guided by practical necessities and with little or no theoretical support from the academic community’ and as a result they ‘put into practice the model of the civic Kazakhstani nation which they based around the state-forming Kazakh ethnic group (*gosudarstvoobrazuyuschego kazakhskogo etnosa*) (*ibid.*, 101). In this way the elites have tried to ‘resolve’ the contradictions inherent in both civic and ethnic nation-building strategies.

There have been numerous attempts by the Nazarbaev regime to define and capture the essence of the national-state project of Kazakhstan (Nazarbaev, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2001, *Kontsepsiya formirovaniya gosudarstvennoi identichnosti respubliki Kazakhstan*, 1996a), but perhaps the most clear definition and detailed elaboration of this idea has been offered in the President’s book ‘In the current of history’ (*V potoke istorii*) (Nazarbaev, 1999),

²¹ Amrekulov and Masanov (1994: 164-67) came up with a similar, although somewhat more elaborate typology of the members of the Kazakh intelligentsia (and by extension of the Kazakh population) with regard to their viewpoint on the construction of the ‘ethnocratic’ state. Specifically, they argued that in crafting nationalizing policies, Kazakh national elites are primarily guided by the members of the first and most numerous group of Kazakhs (about 62%), which encompasses rural members of the educated classes, born mainly in Kazakh towns and villages with a traditional-patriarchal structure. Members of this group tend to perceive Russian culture as alien and even if they become integrated into urban life they tend to retain their traditional world outlook, which sets them in natural opposition to a linguistically and otherwise Russified urban *milieu*. The elites also take into consideration the interests of the second group (approximately 38%) who have assimilated both Kazakh and Russian cultures to a nearly equal degree (being generally of rural origin but having been educated in Russian-language primary and secondary schools) and are therefore characterized by an ‘ethnocultural and linguistic dualism’. The members of these two groups usually fill the ranks of the state apparatus, promoting the notion of a strong ethno-national state. Carrying with them the memory of past injustices, they seek to redress those grievances in the form of new nation-building measures. The primary targets of their nationalizing measures are not only ethnic Russians and other non-titular groups, but also their Russified co-ethnics (*mankurty*) – a third and the least numerous group (about 5%), which includes the urban Kazakhs, who are not only linguistically Russified but also estranged from Kazakh culture and regard Russo-European culture as their own. The third group, according to Masanov and Amerkulov, usually supports the civic ‘all-inclusive’ conceptions of the nation and the introduction of Russian as the second state language.

where he devoted a whole chapter to the issue of national identity, and I have generally used this text as a benchmark for his ideas. Specifically, the President has argued that the successful development of national identity in post-Soviet Kazakhstan requires a two-tiered approach. The first tier is connected to the development of the notion of the ‘people of Kazakhstan’ (*naroda Kazakhstana*) as a single and multi-ethnic entity, and the second tier is related to the promotion of ethnic Kazakh self-consciousness that would eventually consolidate the Kazakhstani nation (*kazakhstanskuyu natsiyu*).

When talking about the first tier, Nazarbaev has noted that he is talking about the ‘people’ (*narod*) of Kazakhstan and the development of a unified civic and political entity (*edinaya grazhdanskaya i politicheskaya obschnost’*) and not the development of a ‘supra-ethnic entity’ (*superetnicheskaya obschnost’*). He equated the latter with the ‘Kazakhstani nation’ and believed that it is premature to implement it in post-Soviet Kazakhstan:

Why is it too early to talk about the development of a single Kazakhstani nation (*o edinoi kazakhstanskoi natsii*)? And why do I prefer to talk about a civic and political unity rather than an ethnic unity? First of all, the ethnic diversity of contemporary Kazakhstan does not allow us to talk about the development of a single ethnic identity (*edinoi etnicheskoi identichnosti*) in the nearest future. One has to be a realist and understand that we can be united first and foremost by the political values, although Kazakh language, as a cultural integrator, should play an important role here. Speeding up the development of a single ethnic consciousness (*edinogo etnicheskogo soznaniya*) can have dramatic consequences for all Kazakhstanis. Secondly, we have recently seen that the assimilation model of the Soviet Union - the attempts to unite everybody in one language, ideology and culture - had failed... In a democratic state assimilation mechanisms are also present, but they work naturally and evolutionally and not by force. Thirdly, the Kazakh nation itself has to gain the experience of independent development and has to become stronger on the way to national consolidation and the revival of a single ethnic consciousness. It is important to strengthen and foster the unity of ethnic Kazakh consciousness. And this is an absolutely natural position (Nazarbaev, 1999:187-188).

The above quote indicates that the President projects the idea of a Kazakhstani nation onto the concept of the ‘Soviet people’ (*sovetskii narod*) in that in the short to medium term all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, including Kazakhs, will develop their cultures and national self-consciousness (this approximates to the Soviet concept of flourishing (*rastsvet*) of all nations) and in the long-term they will gradually merge into the new historical community of the Kazakhstani nation (this roughly approximates to the Soviet concept of rapprochement (*sblizhenie*) and merger (*sliyanie*) into one historical community of the Soviet people). It is also clear that the President has allocated the role of the leading ‘elder brother’ or ‘*primus inter pares*’ to the Kazakh ethnic group, around which all other members of the ‘people of Kazakhstan’, while retaining their identity, are supposed to gradually merge to form an identity as a Kazakhstani nation. (This, indeed, bears a strong resemblance to the role of Russians in the Soviet national project). The quote above also indicates that the President understands the notion of ‘Kazakhstani nation’ in ethnic rather than civic terms, equates it with the idea of becoming Kazakh (or being assimilated to Kazakh culture) and roots it in the Soviet primordial understanding of ethnicity and nationhood, which renders, as will be discussed later, the concept of the national identity project controversial and contradictory.

Thus, the essence of the first tier of identity is the development of a basic civic and political identification with the state of Kazakhstan, which protects the interests of all citizens irrespective of their ethnic affiliation, while the second tier is linked to the development of Kazakh national consciousness and Kazakh national identity. Nazarbaev believes that the task of the second tier is central to the national-state project of Kazakhstan and it is informed by three main factors. Firstly, he argued that Kazakhs had achieved a majority status by the turn of the century and their ‘youthful’ demographic profile (the average age of Kazakhs is 25 years old) puts them in a good position to become the leading ethnonational force in Kazakhstan. Secondly, Kazakhs are represented at all levels of social life and they successfully explore new social niches related to the functioning of the new state bureaucracy, military sphere, diplomacy, national capital, etc. And thirdly, Kazakhstan has been acknowledged at the international level as the national homeland of Kazakhs,

which indicates that Kazakhs as the titular or core nation have a legitimate right to nationalize it as they see fit. Specifically, the President has pointed out that Kazakhs deserve special attention by the state because the very existence of Kazakhstan is dependent on their existence as a nation:

In legal terms, the territorial independence of present-day Kazakhstan flows naturally from the ethnopolitical genesis of the Kazakhs. This nation, which is legitimized by its historical destiny, constitutes, and will always constitute, the ethnopolitical basis for the state independence of the republic of Kazakhstan, and for this reason should be recognized as such by all Kazakhstanis and by the world community without being suspected of nationalism. After all, what is a tree without roots, and what is the present without the past? (Nazarbaev, 1996a:165)

It has to be noted that Nazarbaev does not explicitly elaborate on how the civic and the ethnic projects will eventually mix or meet, apart from the idea that all the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan will gradually and voluntarily merge into a Kazakhstani nation. He, however, gives some indication that Kazakh culture and language and Kazakhs as a titular or core group will be the main integrating factors of the new national community. ‘Kazakh culture’, said Nazarbaev

is a culture of the majority of the population of the state and it has a whole set of institutional mechanisms. It is a culture that developed genetically (*geneticheski sformirovavshayasya*) on this territory and by and large determined the character of the historical development of Kazakhstan. It is, finally, a contemporary culture with all its attributes and connections to the world cultural process. Therefore, there is nothing paradoxical or politically incorrect about the integrating role of Kazakh culture and it is necessary to say that straightforwardly and without any ambiguity (Nazarbaev, 1999:140).

The President has taken care to clarify that the state will support all cultures and encourage intercultural interaction, influences and borrowing, but it also expects all representatives of the non-titular groups to ‘diligently internalize the culture of the Kazakhs as the Kazakhs at

one time internalized and absorbed Russian culture' (*ibid.*, 194). As for the language issue, the President similarly stressed that although all languages are welcome in Kazakhstan, the representatives of non-indigenous and non-titular groups are expected, alongside their own language, to gradually master Kazakh (Nazarbaev, 2003:227). And finally, the President has noted that the Kazakhs as the titular and core group of Kazakhstan are uniquely placed and destined to unify all other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan:

For the first time in modern history, independence has given the Kazakhs the chance to assume a leading role in our country; it has given them a real possibility to rule their state, to transform the economy and revive the national culture, traditions and language. Only the Kazakhs can, and should, assume the responsibility for the fate of the multi-ethnic population of Kazakhstan, helping people from other national groups to adapt to the new circumstances, creating together an atmosphere free from any attempts to destabilize society and encouraging unity. After living for two centuries under Tsarist domination, and then for seven decades under the Soviets, the Kazakhs as a nation are uniquely placed to guarantee that no individual national group will ever be oppressed again (Nazarbaev, 1998:125).

The President finally put together two components of the national-state project and argued that they did not contradict, but mutually reinforced each other and moved along the same trajectory:

When solving the problems of the Kazakh national identity (*natsional'naya identichnost' kazakhskoi natsii*), one should not forget about the other identity level – the political and civic identity (*politicheskaya i grazhdanskaya identichnost'*) of the people of Kazakhstan. These are different levels of identification and there is a need to say it quite openly. There is no contradiction about it. There is a historical right: the aspiration of Kazakhs to achieve a well-defined national identity in order to preserve their national 'I' in a rapidly changing world. There is also a historically objective and absolutely necessary movement of all Kazakhstanis towards common civic identity (*obschegrazhdanskaya identichnost'*).

The trajectories of both components of the national-state project are well defined, but stand sharply apart at the moment. They are intended to meet in the future, as is implied by the designers of the state-identity project, but this will happen only when the Kazakh nation develops a strong national consciousness and becomes capable of consolidating the other ethnic groups of Kazakhstan and when these groups are willing to be consolidated by the titular nation and merge into one Kazakhstani nation. But how is this Kazakh ethnic consolidation and the achievement and cultural dominance within Kazakhstan to be achieved? This brings us to a consideration of the so-called ‘nationalizing policies’ pursued by the governing elite. I will not go into great detail about the content and development of these policies. What I shall try to do is to establish some key points in some of the main important policies to which my respondents reacted. For this purpose I have selected, the following policies: the promotion of a justificatory ideology for the national Kazakh state; language development, changes in national symbolism and iconography, promotion of demographic development, and state personnel policies in the state sector.

4.4 The National-State Project of Kazakhstan: Nationalizing Policies

The nationalizing policies in Kazakhstan can be understood to encompass a state policy directed at the revival, and promotion of the language, culture, demographic preponderance, economic flourishing and political hegemony of the Kazakh nation (Brubaker, 1996). A. Bohr has argued that some nationalizing measures designed to secure the cultural and political revival of the titular nation have been promoted openly (the upgrading of the local language, re-writing of history, re-invention of national holidays) while others have been ‘tacit’ and implemented in accordance with the unwritten rules of the game (1998:142). Karin and Chebotarev similarly noted that nationalizing policies or the policy of Kazakhization have been largely denied at the state level, poorly integrated as a coherent and visible state policy and implemented under the ideological guise of the revival of the titular language, culture and tradition, on the one hand, and neo-Soviet

rhetoric of internationalism and friendship of peoples on the other (Karin and Chebotarev, 2002).

4.4.1 The Ideology of the National State

The elites of post-Soviet Kazakhstan have employed two main types of justification to support the nationalising policies. The first type involves the idea that the promotion of national identity (meaning ethnic or ethnonational identity) development is natural and legitimate and can be seen in the experience of many other states and ethnic groups. This type of justification could be viewed as a defence against the negative associations of the concept of nationalism, which were established in the Soviet period. The second type relates to the re-writing of history by the new dominant group, in which the main theme is what Aurel Braun (2000) has called, ‘majority victimisation’. Instead of the previous Soviet version in which Kazakh history was seen as the progressive development of Kazakh culture and statehood in the framework of the Soviet Union, the new interpretation of history, while not completely rejecting the positive aspects of Russian dominated development, confronts the negative and tragic experiences of the Tsarist period and Soviet totalitarian legacy as partly justifying policies, which redress Kazakh dignity and status. It is important to stress, however, that the tone and content of this justification varies depending on the character of the audience to whom it is addressed. That is criticisms of the Tsarist and Soviet periods are more muted when addressed to the Russian-speaking groups within the country, and much more frank and direct when made to Kazakh-speaking audiences and to the international community. What we see here is the gradual development of an official ideology²² justifying the national project and its nationalizing policies.

a) Ethnonational Development as Natural and Legitimate

²² By ideology I mean an organized system of ideas used by governing elites to legitimize their rule.

When talking about the development of the Kazakh national consciousness and the feeling of belonging to Kazakh culture, Nazarbaev has been keen to stress that this is not dangerous nationalism, but an absolutely normal and legitimate position to be found in most existing states. For example, when talking about the ethnic priority of the state, he says that ‘there is no need to hide it or think of diplomatic excuses here. It is an absolutely normal state of affairs. Why hide it? Every people (*narod*) creates their own special spiritual field and feels proud of it’ (Nazarbaev, 1999:190). Elsewhere he expressed the hope that the Kazakh nation would soon revive its ethnic consciousness: ‘It is necessary to strengthen and foster a unified ethnic Kazakh consciousness. And it is an absolutely natural position’ (*ibid.*, 188). As Billig (1995) has noted, the success of any national identity project depends largely on the ability of its designers to hide all signs of its artificial construction and to present national development as a completely natural and normal process. To substantiate the ‘normality’ of feelings of national identity President Nazarbaev draws on the experiences of other ethnic groups. For example, he cites Russian national identity

The best sons of Russia with pride and love fostered and felt their ‘Russianness’ (*russkost*), and I do not have the heart to accuse them of so-called nationalism. This feeling of national identity has not prevented them from respecting other cultures and ethnic consciousnesses. I fully understand the contemporary entrepreneurs of Russian culture who openly and proudly assert the greatness of the Russian national spirit (*ibid.* 190).

It is interesting to note that Russian ethnic identity is also evoked by Nazarbaev in other contexts when he is dealing with the suppression of Kazakh identity during the Tsarist and Soviet periods. As with any constructed state national identity, the elites pick and choose those elements that are likely to resonate with people’s feelings and memories. Russian ethnic identity is therefore used as an example of consolidated ethnic consciousness to be emulated by Kazakhs as well as a reminder of the threat when this identity was politicised and imposed in a top-down fashion by the totalitarian regime.

In the same way, when the President talks about a demographic shift in favour of the Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, he declares that this is an important event to be proud of. He cites example from other 'core' nations that constitutes a majority in their states and considers that this process is in the order of things:

Why does everybody consider as absolutely normal the preponderance of the French in France, Russians in Russia and Germans in Germany? And why should the demographic of Kazakhs in their native land raise any questions? (1999:194).

Presumably Nazarbaev has in mind here biologically determined and primordially defined ethnic groups, the 'core' nations that formed the contemporary German, French and Russian nations.

b) Re-writing of History - the Theme of Historical Grievance

One important justification for affirmative policies of ethnonational development is the rhetoric of 'majority victimisation' and the need to redress the damage done to national identity during the period when the Kazakhs did not have their own state. But as noted above, the picture in Kazakhstan is somewhat contradictory since the political elites do not have a consistent set of attitudes towards the historical past. The theme of 'majority victimisation' is selectively used with reference to certain major issues and events in the Tsarist and Soviet periods, such as sedentarisation, collectivization and aspects of demographic preponderance of Kazakhs.

The President presents the independence of Kazakhstan as giving Kazakhs the opportunity to feel their 'Kazakhness' (*kazakhkost*) for the first time. The period prior to independence is referred to as a time of 'fractures' (*nadlomy*) followed by 'periods of inertia', which lasted for centuries and had a profound effect on Kazakh national awareness. This was the result of insufficient institutional protection to ensure the ethnocultural reproduction of Kazakh life. Therefore, a re-evaluation of the historical past is needed to make the right

‘diagnosis’ of the current state of Kazakh identity and to bring it back to the required level. (*ibid.*: 191-192). Kazakh history in this sense is not ‘a cemetery of facts, but an enormous motivational and explanatory force’ (*ibid.*: 238).

It is important to stress that the official use of the ‘majority victimisation’ rhetoric varies in different contexts, depending on the intended audiences and the nature of the occasion. For example, in his book ‘In the Current of History’, which is intended for internal mass consumption, the President addresses ‘victimisation’ issues relatively cautiously. He tries not use the words ‘colonialism’ or ‘colonial’ when referring to the Tsarist or Soviet periods and instead uses softer euphemisms that depict colonial experiences without labeling them directly (for example, ‘totalitarianian’ rather than Soviet or Russian). He deliberately refrains from condemning the Russian/Soviet past too much because it would not only offend their own Russian population and observers within Russia itself, but would also implicate their own elites’ Soviet past. In addition, such nationalist rhetoric would not resonate positively with the many Russified Kazakhs who have positive memories of the Soviet period.

There are however certain cases where the President employs a stonger version of ‘majority victimisation’ rhetoric together with an emotional appeal to get to the hearts and minds of its listeners. For example, his speeches at the First and Second World *Kurultais* (gatherings) (1992, 2002) as well as certain books intended for foreign audiences. The President calls both the Tsarist and Soviet periods ‘ruthless’ and ‘colonial’ and claims that with independence the ‘chains’ that have bound the Kazakhs for centuries have been broken’ (Nazarbaev 1992). What is important, however, is the qualification that the President makes to this statement. He distinguishes between the system as such and the population as a whole who should not be associated with these crimes:

Every person tries to further the betterment of his nationality. But we should not do that at the expense of discrimination, humiliation and rejection of other nationalities that live in our republic. This includes Russian people. They are not responsible for the misfortunes of

our people. The responsibility for what has happened lies on the policies and the society of that period that endorsed these policies (*ibid.*, 3)

This qualification may be explained by the fact that in 1992 the Slavic population comprised more than forty per cent of the Republic's population and the President was careful not to alienate them. In 1998 in his book *My life, my times and the future*, he, however, was more open about the role of Russians in the Soviet system and explained why so many non-Russian groups were antagonized by the Soviet nationalities policies.

One of the reasons why ethnic tensions have continued in Kazakhstan is the way that the damaging nationality policies, which were carried out during the Soviet period, were associated in the minds of many Kazakhs with the Russians. This is not surprising. These attempts to unify the way of life, traditions and culture of the peoples of the Soviet Union, to create a truly 'Soviet people', were carried out in a Russian form and in the Russian language. This attempt at forced assimilation could not fail to antagonize the Kazakhs, and indeed virtually all the other non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union. ...After Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991, a substantial proportion of the Kazakh people felt a kind of euphoria that we had somehow scored a victory over the Russians (Nazarbaev 1998, 124).

In addition to forced cultural assimilation, the erosion of Kazakh national identity is linked to the forced sedentarisation and collectivization campaigns of 1930s and the Virgin Lands Campaigns of the 1950s. The President has pointed out that the traditional way of life of the Kazakhs was undermined by the imposed goal of an alien cultural and economic system (1999). This marked the beginning of the public discussion of the suffering of the Kazakhs endured during this period which was an important historiographical point for the new state. Yet the Kazakhstani authorities realize that they can ill afford to engage in, or allow nationalist groups to engage in, openly anti-Russian rhetoric. Similarly, the President blames the decline of the Kazakh language – a crucial element of Kazakh national consciousness, to be due to the insufficient social and institutional protection prior to independence:

We have seen that the educational system was built on the principle that the Kazakh language was unimportant and residual. During that time it was impossible to enter the most mobile and competitive professions using the Kazakh language. As a result the Kazakh nation and especially its elites did not have the motivation to use their own language. This has a direct impact on the national consciousness and was the result of the minimization of institutional protection for the national 'I' (1999:193).

Hence, he urges people to understand the current policies to revive what had been 'minimised' in the past and hopes that this process would be correctly understood by the people of Kazakhstan (*ibid.*, 194).

4.4.2 Language

Language in multiethnic and multicultural contexts is usually an 'entitlement issue' and a 'symbol of domination' because it 'links political claim to ownership with psychological demands for the affirmation of group worth, and it ties this aggregate matter of group status to outright careerism, thereby binding elite material interests to mass concerns' (Horowitz, 1985:222). In Kazakhstan, as in many other post-Soviet states, there was a strong cultural justification and popular support, mainly from the Kazakh population, for making the indigenous language the state language in place of the established Russian – the Soviet *lingua franca*.

Since the passing of the 1989 Language Law within the Soviet framework, a number of other decrees and laws were put in place to strengthen the status of Kazakh. The Decree on Education passed on 18th January 1992 confirmed Kazakh's status as the state language and indicated that, by 1995, all the state and official communication were to switch to Kazakh. In 1993 the first Kazakhstan Constitution defined Kazakh as the 'state language' (*gosudarstvennyi yazyk*) and Russian as the language of 'interethnic communication' (*yazyk mezhnatsional'nogo obshcheniya*), effectively a *lingua franca*, consistent with the 1989 Language Law. The codification of Kazakh as state language in the Constitution had already elevated its legal and symbolic status, causing considerable angst among Russian-speakers.

Subsequent decrees and directives took a more conciliatory approach towards Russian and offered concessions to Russian-speakers, a category that included a vast number of Kazakhs, especially the youth and urban residents.

In April 1995, Parliament ratified Nazarbaev's proposal that the requirement for all state employees to be proficient in Kazakh be postponed for fifteen years. The first indication of a compromise on the status of Russian came in the 1995 Constitution. Article 7.1 confirmed Kazakh as the state language and Article 7.2 stipulated that the Russian language shall be officially used on a par with the Kazakh language in state institutions and local self-administrative bodies. A year later, the 'Conception of Language Policies of the Republic of Kazakhstan' issued on 4 November 1996 called for 'creating appropriate conditions for developing Kazakh as the state language in order to generate an increase in its demand and functions', while affirming that Russian can be used as an 'official' language. This amounted to a *de facto* recognition of bilingualism, but a *de jure* status as the state language was reserved only for Kazakh.

The adoption of the Law on Languages in July 1997 reiterated that Russian shall be 'officially used' on equal grounds along with Kazakh in state and local administration institutions, and that other national languages are to be used 'side by side' with the state language. Kazakh nationalists had proposed adding the phrase that Russian be used 'only when necessary', but this proposal was deleted. The law further required official bodies to prepare a majority of formal documentation in Kazakh and mentioned that at least 50 per cent of all television and radio broadcasting should be in Kazakh.

The passage of language legislation has allowed Kazakhstan to muffle the limited, albeit intense societal debate on the issue. Its seemingly moderate and pragmatic stance reflects an attempt to depoliticise the language issue, while acquiring the tacit support of the majority group, the Kazakhs. Indeed, as Bhavna Dave aptly noted,

The priority for the Kazakhstani ruling elite was to adopt a language law that accorded at least a symbolic supremacy to Kazakh, without undermining their own position, or disrupting societal equilibrium. The proclamation of Kazakh as the sole state language allowed them to establish the non-negotiability of a Kazakh ethno-cultural orientation of the state and the notion of titular primacy. By dispensing with any rigorous requirements, such as mandatory knowledge of the state language and tests to determine Kazakh language proficiency, the ruling authorities have managed to appease a large stratum of Kazakhs, as well as non-titular groups. The weak and formalistic implementation of the language legislation has considerably reduced the potential for both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflict by allowing individuals to pursue their own preferences, while nominally complying with the language policy (Dave, 2007:116)

4.4.3 Symbols / Iconography

Changing state symbols and renaming streets and towns have also been an important way of transforming national perceptions and converting the country into a national territory in post-Soviet Kazakhstan (Savin, 2001, Karin and Chebotarev, 2002, Masanov, 2002, Kaiser, 2004). Changes of this type, according to Horowitz, usually have little or no ‘direct effect on the distribution of tangible resources among the contending groups, but they usually connote something about future treatment: who will be discriminated against and who will be preferred’ (1985:216). Horowitz adds: ‘Although all political systems must cope with some such claims, in a multiethnic society the size and intensity of the symbolic sector, as a fraction of all demands, constitute an excellent indicator of malintegration’ (*ibid.*, 217).

To create a unified and distinctive nation and impart a sense of unity and common destiny to its members, Kazakh national elites have tried to unearth and exploit the ethnosymbolic material that was available at their disposal, namely toponyms, customs, historical myths and iconography. Specifically, they accorded great meaning to the ideology of unity of the titular ‘core’ group and the strengthening of this identity by the introduction and wide use of official symbols that draw on the culture and traditions of the titular nation. That is, for example, the state flag of Kazakhstan contains graphic images directly connected to the

national culture of the Kazakhs: the steppe eagle and the vertical stripe with the national ornament. The state emblem similarly depicts a *shanyraq* (the smoke hole of the *yurt*, a Kazakh dwelling) and mythic horses. The elites have also launched a campaign of wholesale renaming of Russian and Slavic-sounding place-names and street-names by Kazakh names, even in areas of a preponderance of Slavs (Kolstø, 1999, 2000, Savin, 2001, Masanov, 2002, Karin and Chebotarev, 2002). By doing this the elites have tried to recover the past, symbolize a change in the ownership of the land (Bohr, 1998), and convert the land into national territory (William and Smith, 1983, Kaiser, 2004).

4.4.4 Personnel Policies

An important component of the nationalization process in post-Soviet Kazakhstan has also been the gradual displacement of the Russian and other Russophone non-titular population from leading positions in the public sector (Anderson, 1997, Bohr, 1998, Laitin, 1998, Holm-Hansen, 1999, Kolstoe, 1999, 2000, Savin, 2001, Karin and Chebotarev, 2002). Having circumscribed their social mobility and participation in political life, the practice of concentrating power in the hands of the titular nationality has been a greater source of resentment for the Slavic and Russophone non-titular communities than perhaps any other aspect of nationalization, with the possible exception of language indigenization.

The ‘squeezing out’ of non-titular members from leading positions to make room for members of the titular nationality was the main device for distributing political and economic power well before the advent of independence. To be sure, the Soviet nationality policy ‘did not just shape the cultural salience of nationality, but also turned it into a central criterion for distribution of socioeconomic benefits’ (Dave, 2003:125). That is, one’s attachment to nationality was imbued with ‘perceptions of power and entitlements, the latter shaping access to housing, jobs, and education, as well as career mobility and security of tenure’ (*ibid.*). Yet it was not until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the achievement of independence that the practice, albeit tacit, of according preferential treatment to the titular nation was fully legitimated in the eyes of most titular nationals. The practice of

indigenizing power has been highly visible in the legislature of post-Soviet Kazakhstan, where the ethnic composition of the parliaments is heavily weighted in favour of the titular nationality. The commanding heights of executive as well as legislative power have been indigenized. The vast majority of senior presidential staff, ministers and deputy ministers are members of the titular nation. According to V.N. Khlyupin, the state institutions that have undergone the most extensive Kazakhization include the economically and politically vital ministries of oil and gas, information and press and justice, all of which have become approximately 80% Kazakh (1998:52). Karin and Chebotarev put these figures even higher, estimating that 80 to 90% of the administrative elite are constituted by the representatives of the indigenous nation (2002:52).

As has been discussed above, the indigenization of the public sector is often carried out using ‘tacit’ nationalizing methods. These include, as noted by A Bohr, general lay-offs, after which most of the same positions are reinstated and preference is given to the titular members during the re-hiring process; the practice of issuing official memorandums, stating that the knowledge of a state language is required in order to qualify for employment or promotion; and financial incentives (pay increases) to those who have a knowledge of the state language (Bohr, 1998:142). The language requirements have been particularly instrumental in this process as they ‘effectively eliminat[ed] the overwhelming majority of Slavs and other Russophones from consideration’ for employment (*ibid.*) and ‘enhanced the autonomy and power base of the titular elites as a way to counteract the actual or perceived hold of Russians on the institutions of power’ (Dave, 2003:126).

The situation is further complicated by the deep-seated corruption and both familial and ethnic nepotism that have become particularly rife in Kazakhstani business and government since independence. Karin and Chebotarev assert that the current Kazakh *nomenklatura* usually consists of new arrivals from villages, where ‘family-tribal traditions play a defensive role in the social transformation’ and ‘communal blood ties have become a form of survival and adaptation to contemporary circumstances, serving to extend their powers’ (2002:52). As a result of the close connection between the *nomenklatura* and major state-

directed business interests, the wide-scale personnel cuts and the on-going optimization of the structures of governmental organs, the opportunities for social advancement for non-titular nationals in Kazakhstan have been significantly limited and have entrenched the boundary markers between titular and non-titular groups.

4.4.5 Russian Out-Migration

Probably the most noticeable manifestation of Russian and other non-titular Russian-speakers' dissatisfaction with the new socio-political situation in Kazakhstan has been the tendency of certain sections of community to out-migrate back to their 'historical homelands'. This trend has been especially pronounced amongst educated Russians and amongst Kazakhstan's sizeable community of ethnic Germans. Moreover, significant internal migration has taken place within the boundaries of Kazakhstan, whereby many Russophones have tried to move away from the Kazakh-dominated South to the northern region. Combined with these trends, there has been a dramatic increase in the ethnic Kazakh population of the republic. This was mainly the result of a higher Kazakh birth-rate and substantial in-migration of the Kazakh diaspora from Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Turkey and Afghanistan (Cummings, 1998, Diener, 2004).

At the time of collapse of the Soviet Union Kazakhstani Russians constituted 70 percent of the Russian diaspora outside the Russian Federation. As a state-bearing group of the Soviet Union, they used to view the entire Soviet Union as their home, as a natural continuation of Russia (Melvin, 1995). After the break up of the USSR, they were reduced to a 'beached' minority (Laitin, 1998), amongst perhaps the most disadvantaged groups in the newly independent states. Not only did they not possess institutional channels for articulating their grievances and demands, they also did not have a territorial framework or autonomy – the kind of 'territorialization' that all titular nations had experienced under Soviet nation-building (Melvin, 1995, Brubaker, 1996, Smith, 1998). Dave has noted that those 'minorities in the new post-Soviet states that lacked an existing, that is, a Soviet-established, framework for territorial autonomy have gradually, albeit grudgingly come to

accept the primacy of the titular ethnic group in the new state' (Dave, 2007:127). And this was certainly the case with the Russian community in Kazakhstan.

Kymicka has argued that as the process of nation-building undoubtedly privileges members of the majority culture, this means that members of minority groups have four main options to deal with the situation. They can (1) emigrate *en masse*, (2) accept integration into the majority culture, (3) seek some form of cultural or/ and territorial autonomy, or (4) accept permanent marginalization. This roughly corresponds to Hirschman's 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty' options for minorities when they are faced with a decline of their ethnic status in the changing socio-cultural and political environment. Most Russians in Kazakhstan opted to emigrate *en masse* rather than integrate (Kolstø, 1999). The option of 'voice' or the possibility to seek some sorts of rights and powers of self-government to maintain their own societal culture has been mostly unavailable. The state created institutions of ethnic representation, such as, for example, the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan, which did no more than co-opt the leaders of various non-titular ethnic groups into the Kazakh power structure (Holm-Hansen, 1999, Kolstø, 1999, 2000). The option of out-migration from Kazakhstan, on the other hand, depends on a variety of 'push' and 'pull' factors. As Bhavna Dave noted 'the perception among Russian-speakers of a profound 'civilisational divide' between themselves and the titular Kazakhs made integration into a Kazakh-dominated state an unattractive and undesirable option' (2007:127). Furthermore, 'their reduction from the state-defining people into a beleaguered minority compelled the vast majority of Russians in Kazakhstan to grapple with a wide gap between their historical status, self-perception and their actual condition' (*ibid.*). In total about 2 million Russians out-migrated from Kazakhstan in the first decade of independence. This caused a dramatic drop in the combined European share of the population from over 53% in 1989 to under 40% in 1999.

The factors that 'pushed' Russians to opt for out-migration include the expectation of a decline of their socio-economic, cultural and political status after the institutionalisation of Kazakh as the state language and the attendant fear that their children would be treated as 'second-class citizens' in the state dominated by Kazakh-based power structures. Some

observers have noted that Russians still position themselves as a cultural ‘axis’ around which all other groups used to consolidate and they are still unwilling to accept their new minority status and to protect their interests as such. And yet, the prospects of Russians and other Slavs to consolidate themselves as a ‘counter-hegemony’ to Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, slim to start with, have dwindled. The current Kazakh elites have tried to prevent the development of a common Russian-speaking identity by promoting a linguistic and ethnocultural revival as well as ‘ethnic re-identification’ among the minority groups that share a broad Russophone identity (Dave, *ibid*, Nazarbaev, 1998,1999, 2003, Laitin, 1998, Holm-Hansen, 1999).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed with reference to the original official documents the Kazakhstani national identity project as it developed between 1991 and 2004. We saw that from the start it set out to be a deliberate compromise between ‘civic’ and ‘ethnic’ approaches: the ‘ethnic’ approach because the Kazakhs had a right to their own ‘national’ state and the ‘civic’ approach because of the inescapable fact that Kazakhstan is a multi-ethnic country where the rights of minorities need to be respected (Kadyrzhanov 2007). But the interpretation of this compromise is interesting: Kazakhs are seen as having the right to use their Kazakh culture as the leading core around which a civic ‘Kazakhstani’ multi-cultural structure is built. We have seen that much effort has been spent in developing an ideology to justify these particular policies. This very much recalls the approach of the Soviet national identity project, in which the ethnic Russians were seen as the leading ‘elder brother’ around which the other members of the Soviet family, while retaining their identity, would gradually merge together to form an identity as ‘Soviet people’. However, the ‘elder brother’ role of Russians was only overtly declared in the wartime period under Stalin, and the USSR itself was never seen as the Russian national state (the RSFSR nominally performed that role). But still in many ways it is a very ‘post-Soviet’ project.

Apart from its post-Soviet character, how should one assess the Kazakh national identity project in terms of the key civic and ethnic elements which it claims to combine? We have seen that the balance between these two elements was inherently unstable from the start because of the decision to build a civic identity around an ethnic Kazakh core culture. Does this mean that the civic elements in the project are simply window-dressing as Dave (2007) has argued? Dave takes an extreme position, arguing that no civic project is possible without democratic structures. Since the democratic transition in Kazakhstan never truly materialized, Dave comes to the conclusion that in reality this is a directly ethno-national project, although she argues that the lack of confidence of the elites with regard to attitudes of their own Russian-speaking Kazakhs means that they have not seriously tried to nationalize, what Chatterjee terms the 'inner sphere' of the population as a whole. This position, while close to that of Rogers Brubaker, is not shared by the majority of Western scholars who see the civic elements of the project as being still significant, despite the admitted preponderance of ethno-cultural domination. For example, Sally Cummings (2005) emphasizes the importance of several civic elements for both national and international consumption. The fact is that both the nature of the project and its implementation are highly contradictory and uncertain. We have seen that in several of the nationalizing policies the state appeared to have made concessions and adaptations. However, in other policies, which are more covert and not publicly discussed, such as personnel policies in administration, the ethno-cultural pressure seems to be stronger. The whole process is subject to change both in its content and in its implementation depending both on internal pressures and pressures from the international community.

Yet when the actual implementation of the national identity project is examined, we can see that in terms of key policy areas (symbolic changes, language, re-evaluation of history, personnel policies in public sector and demographic policies) there has been an increasing tendency to pursue policies which, though in a more muted and gradualist form, bear a strong resemblance to the 'retributive' 'nationalising policies' discussed by Brubaker, and indeed are justified in a similar way (restoring Kazakh status after previous injustice, etc.). The more muted, cautious character of the policies is explained, as Dave (1996; 2003,

2007) has pointed out, by the lack of confidence characteristic of many post-Soviet governing elites. But as the confidence of these elites grows with the successful survival and stability of the state and the promise of considerable prosperity derived from oil and gas revenues, so this trend of ‘Kazakhisation’ seems likely to increase.

It is to this situation that ethnic groups in Kazakhstan have reacted as they attempt to consolidate their separate identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan: the Kazakhs have to learn their new role as a ‘nation-forming’ dominant culture and the Russians have to accept a new subordinate role in a Kazakh national state in which the official culture will increasingly be based on Kazakh, rather than Russian language and culture. In my open-ended interviews conducted in 2004 I explicitly asked for reactions from Kazakhs and Russians to the implementation of these policies and their responses were very revealing about the current state of their national/ethnic identities. It is to an analysis of these identities that we now turn in the next two chapters.

5 THE EMERGING DOMINANT IDENTITY: KAZAKH RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL-STATE IDENTITY PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will try to investigate whether Kazakhs – the newly empowered group of Kazakhstan – have developed a coherent (dominant) identity and to look at the factors that contribute to or inhibit its consolidation. The second section will look at how Kazakhs interpret various concepts relating to the nationality issue (e.g. *natsional'nost'* (nationality), *natsiya* (nation), *etnicheskaya gruppа* (ethnic group), *kazakhstantsy* (Kazakhstanis), *titul'naya gruppа* (titular group), *korennoi* (native, indigenous), *natsional'nye men'shinstva* (national minorities)) and at the inconsistency and uncertainty of their interpretations. The third and the fourth parts will focus on the 'external' and 'internal' aspects of Kazakh identity. As noted in Chapter 2, any national identity is formed partly as a result of interaction with and differentiation from an external environment and partly as a result of 'internal' or domestic discussions and institutional arrangements. The external factors that I covered in this chapter include the attitudes of my Kazakh respondents to the creation of independent Kazakhstan and to key foreign states and peoples and the internal factors include the attitudes of Kazakhs to the Soviet past, to the nationalising policies and practices of the new state and to the questions of loyalty, integration and out-migration of the Russian population. This will be followed by a short conclusion.

5.2 Problems of Terminology

As noted in Chapter 2, the post-Soviet concept of *natsional'nost'* does not correspond neatly to the western concept of 'nationality.' During the Soviet period *natsional'nost'* denoted 'an ethnic identity referring to membership of a people' while *grazhdanstvo* (citizenship) was 'a civic identity referring to membership in a state' (Karklins 1989:22). This pattern of sharply distinguished dual identities was inherited by all post-Soviet states,

including Kazakhstan. In the West, on the other hand, ‘nationality’ is generally regarded as a hybrid identity that refers to both ‘a legal relationship involving allegiance on the part of an individual and protection on the part of the state’ and ‘a people having a common origin, tradition, and language and capable of forming or actually constituting a nation-state’ (ibid. 44). Some of my Kazakhs respondents, who had travelled abroad, noted the discrepancy between these terms. Said a 28 year old female lecturer from Petropavlovsk:

A friend of mine went to Italy and tried to explain that her nationality (*natsional’nost’*) was Russian. The locals, however, couldn’t understand it and called her ‘Kazakh’ (*kazashkoi*). Once she got really upset and said: ‘I don’t understand why you call me Kazakh when I am Russian, but please tell me if Africans come to Italy and give birth would their children be Africans?’ And the Italians said, confusing my friend even further: ‘No, they would be Italian.’ (P-2)

Some of my Kazakh respondents similarly noted that ‘westerners couldn’t understand why your nationality could be Russian, Ukrainian, Tatar or German if you were born and lived in Kazakhstan all your life.’ (Alm-3) And this happens, as R. Karklins correctly noted, because nationality in the West refers to the membership of a state and its public culture, while in post-Soviet states it refers to the membership of a people or an ethnic group.

Interestingly, Kazakh respondents admitted that Russians had a lot in common with Kazakhs, but ‘physically’ (Ast-1)²³ and ‘genetically’ (Alm-10) they still belonged to the Russian nationality. ‘They are really Kazakhs, but a different type of Kazakhs’ (Ast-8). And even ‘if they leave Kazakhstan for their national homeland, they will always have some Kazakh culture in them. Of course, it is not ‘their’ culture, but it has become part of them’ (Alm-5). There was also a belief among the respondents that each nationality has a core that even the most dramatic assimilation cannot change.²⁴ One of these permanent elements, as noted above, is the ‘genetic’ make-up of each nationality and another is a

²³ For details of my Kazakh respondents see Appendix 1.

²⁴ For an excellent discussion on how primordialism is constructed by both ethnonationalists and ordinary social actors see Suny 2001, 2004; Laitin 1998:10-19, Khazanov 1995:7-15, Dave 1996, 2003.

cultural and psychological profile of a group that remains supposedly unchangeable. A 24 year-old male TV presenter from Petropavlovsk noted

we are all people and we are all similar in many ways, but there is one ‘but’ here. The very fact that a Russian is a Russian and a German is a German implies that they have certain qualities peculiar to their nationalities only. Everybody notices that Germans are very punctual and honest. We [Kazakhs] are not that punctual, but we are very hospitable and generous. It is in our genes. (P-1)

The above examples show that nationality (*natsional’nost’*) in the post-Soviet context refers to an ethnic identity understood as a fixed essence rather than a fluid and resilient marker. The term does not necessarily give an indication of where the person was born and socialized, although it links him to the putative national homeland, even if he never lived there. In the West, on the other hand, nationality usually points to the state and society where the person was born and of which he holds citizenship.²⁵

It is worth noting that *natsional’nost’* is not the only term that can be used to denote an ethnic identity in the post-Soviet context. Other terms like *natsiya* (nation), *narod* (people), *narodnost’* (an ethnic group evolving into a nation – something like A. Smith’s *ethnie*) and *etnicheskaya gruppya* (ethnic group) can also be used. Despite slight differences in the definitions of these terms, my respondents treated them as synonyms applying equally to Kazakhs, Russians or any other ethnic group. For example, a 25 year old surgeon from Petropavlovsk noted that ‘Kazakhs are united by the same things as all other nationalities (*natsional’nosti*). The very fact that you belong to one nation (*k odnoi natsii*), that you are a

²⁵ This peculiarity of the Soviet and post-Soviet definition of ‘nationality’ partially explains why the term ‘nationalism’ is infused with such negative overtones. It is believed to advocate national (read ethnic) antagonisms, exclusivity and superiority of one’s own nation (ethnic group) and promote chauvinism and xenophobia. There is no positive side to nationalism unless it transcends its limitations and transforms itself into ‘internationalism’. The latter stands for tolerance and respect between nations (ethnic groups) that are capable and willing to live within the boundaries of one state. The above two terms can be equated, although imperfectly, to the western concepts of ethnic and civic nationalism.

Kazakh, keeps you together’ (P-7). Similarly, a 30 year old journalist from Almaty pointed out that

people in Kazakhstan respect traditions of all nations (*natsii*) – be they Koreans, Russians, Germans or Tatars. My friends, for example, invite us to celebrate Christmas, Easter and Shrove Tuesday and I treat these holidays as my own. We invite them for Ait and other Muslim holidays. (Alm-5)

It has to be stressed that the terms ‘*natsional’nost*’, ‘*etnicheskaya gruppa*’ and ‘*narodnost*’ can be used only in an exclusive and ethnic sense, while the terms ‘*natsiya*’ (nation) and ‘*narod*’ (people) can have both exclusive and inclusive connotations. This is partly the legacy of the Soviet time when all inhabitants of the Soviet Union, irrespective of their ethnic origin, were considered to be the Soviet people (*sovetskie lyudi, sovetskii narod*) and partly because these terms are now frequently used in the Kazakhstani media (*kazakhstanskii narod*, and possibly less frequently *kazakhstanskaya natsiya*).

Other terms that my respondents used to denote a civic identity were *kazakhstantsy* (Kazakhstanis), *sootechestvenniki* (compatriots, fellow-countrymen), *zemlyaki* (people who reside on the same land) and *grazhdane* (citizens). The word *kazakhstantsy* (Kazakhstanis) perhaps has the strongest resemblance to the western concept of ‘nationality’. It refers to all the people that reside in Kazakhstan and partake in its public culture. My respondents talked about the ‘Kazakhstani football team’ (*kazakhstanskaya futbol’naya komanda*) of which they were proud (Alm-2, Ch-4), ‘Kazakhstani Olympic champions (*kazakhstanskije olimpiiskije chempiony*) that glorified the new sovereign state (P-1,3, Alm-6,7,9, Ch-1,3) and ‘Kazakhs and Kazakhstanis (*kazakhi i kazakhstantsy*) who feel comfortable abroad because they are not associated with Russia and its problems, but with Kazakhstan.’ (Ast-2) Some of my respondents, however, believed that the idea of Kazakhstaniness had not been sufficiently internalised by the population in general and the non-titular groups in particular. A 28 year-old Kazakh lecturer from Almaty said:

In America people are proud that they are American (*amerikantsy*) and in Kazakhstan people don't even use the word 'Kazakhstanis' (*kazakhstantsy*). When you ask somebody: 'Who are you?' he will say: 'I am a Russian from Kazakhstan' and never 'I am a Kazakhstani'. Our state should do something to change it. People should be proud that they are Kazakhstanis, but what can they be proud of at the moment? Nothing! Our economy is weak and our people live badly. (Alm-9)

A 25 year old male IT programmer from Chimkent similarly said:

Our national anthem should be like the anthem of the Soviet Union. What was it about? It was about the unity of all the people who lived in fifteen republics, the rapprochement of peoples (*sblizhenii narodov*), and the importance of being patriotic. In America all people think that they are American (*amerikantsy*). They don't think that they belong to separate nationalities anymore. We should do something similar in Kazakhstan and teach people that they are Kazakhstanis (*kazakhstantsy*), rather than Kazakhs or Russians as you see in the hymn. The anthem should be written in such a way that all people who live in Kazakhstan would love our country, our language and our culture. (Ch-1)

The term *kazakhstantsy* can be also used in an ethnic sense of the word, as my respondents sometimes did not see the difference between the civic and ethnic meanings of the term. The same can be said about the words *sootechestvenniki* (fellow-countrymen) and *zemlyaki* (people that reside on the same land). The latter may also have a sub-ethnic connotation and refer to co-tribesmen who were traditionally linked to a particular territory.

All the above terms, however, do not explicitly point to the issues of dominance and subordination between ethnic groups. This relationship is reflected in terms like *titul'naya grupp/natsiya* (a titular group/ nation), *korennaya/ nekorennaya grupp/natsiya* (native/ indigenous group/ nationality), *natsional'nye menshinstva* (national minorities) and *diaspory* (diasporas), etc. Interestingly, my respondents did not use the word 'titular' (*titul'nyi*) as much and preferred the word *korennoi* (native, indigenous) to denote themselves. When asked about the term, most of them did not know what it meant:

‘Titular? Who is it?’ When explained that it is a group in whose name the republic is named, they said: ‘Ah... That’s us, then!’ (Alm-3). The term *korennoi* (which means native, indigenous or rooted in a particular territory) was generally understood as a synonym for Kazakhs. A 28 year old lecturer from Petropavlovsk, for example, said that

it would be nice if all people knew the language and culture of the people who are native (*korennye*) to this land. I don’t mean that they have to study in Kazakh, but it would be nice if Russians would learn more about the Kazakh culture and language (P-2).

Some respondents believed that the division into natives and non-natives (*delenie na korennykh i nekorennykh*) should be abandoned as it has a discriminatory overtone: ‘I don’t divide people into ‘indigenous’ and ‘non-indigenous’ said a 30 year old journalist from Almaty. ‘I don’t do this. I cannot say that Kazakhs are indigenous and Russians are not. It is not right. We were all born and lived together’ (Alm-5). A 28 year old marketing director from Almaty similarly imbued the term *korennoi* with a civic rather than a primordial meaning:

I think that not only Kazakhs, but all people who live on the territory of Kazakhstan are indigenous (*korennye*). And non-indigenous are those who came here only recently and usually they don’t adapt well. I have talked to an *oralman* from Mongolia and he could not understand a thing. These people don’t understand anything because they never lived in the Soviet Union. We watched the same films, sang the same songs and listened to the same reports of the CPSU. We understand each other without effort (*s poluslova*). I think they are unhappy people, these *oralmans*. You cannot mix them with the native population for many reasons. They have to live with us for many years, understand many things, and only then they will become truly ‘native’. I will never compare them with the Turks who came to Kazakhstan in the late 1980s or Germans who came in the 1940s. These are different things. (Alm-16)

A 24 year old Kazakh programmer from Chimkent also claimed that only an indigenous resident (*korennoi zhitel’*) can become the President of Kazakhstan: ‘he does not have to be

Kazakh, but he has to be indigenous to the country, to be born here, to speak the language and understand our culture and traditions’ (Ch-1). There is, indeed, a great variety of interpretations of the term *korennoi* which makes it ambiguous and ‘suspect’ for the purposes of any research. This uncertainty is reflected in Masanov’s early survey (1996) where he asked his respondents to identify indigenous and non-indigenous groups in Kazakhstan:

Table 5.1 Who should be regarded as native or indigenous residents of Kazakhstan? (Multiple Answers Possible)

	# of respondents	%	Kazakhs (%)	Russians (%)	Others (%)
1. Kazakhs	101	9.8	24.1	2.1	3.2
2. all people who were born in Kazakhstan	458	44.5	55.2	39.7	37.8
3. there shouldn’t be any division i.e. all citizens are indigenous residents	522	50.7	24.4	64.5	62.8
4. n/a	14	1.4	1.7	1.2	1.3
Total	1095	106.4			

Data derived from CMIR survey, see Masanov 1996, p. 18, 108

As we can see from the Table 5.1, there is a relative congruence between the Kazakh and non-Kazakh views on who is indigenous in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Kazakhs, however, came up with a higher percentage (24%) than Russians (2.1%) and others (3.2%) in their belief that they are native to the republic. In all other respects, the overwhelming majority of Kazakhs attributed considerable value to ‘being born in a place’ as a criterion of indigenousness (55.2%), or believed that the division between the indigenous and non-indigenous population should be abandoned (24.4%). Masanov used these figures to argue that Kazakhs did not position themselves as a dominant group when the state elites launched, what he called, a ‘programme of political ethnocentrism’ (*programmū politicheskogo etnotsentrizma*) (Masanov 1996:18). This question, however, posed as it is by Masanov, asked for a subjective statement of ‘what should be’ and not ‘what is’. It is, therefore, useful only to the extent that both Kazakhs and other ethnic groups attach particular importance to the idea of being ‘born in’ a place but support a ‘Kazakhstani’ or

‘territorial citizenship’ approach.²⁶ Moreover, Masanov used the word combination ‘*korennoi zhitel*’ (indigenous resident), rather than *korennaya grupp*a, *natsiya* or *natsional’nost*’ (indigenous group, nation or nationality) which, if used, could have produced a different result, more geared towards the Kazakh group.

Given the uncertainty of the word *korennoi*, I believe that the best term to denote a Kazakh group and its relationship to Kazakhstan is ‘titular’ or ‘titular nationality’. The word ‘titular’ is a Soviet concept that refers to a nation in whose name the republic is named. This, in many ways, resembles Smith’s concept of an ethnic core or *ethnie* – a pre-national group that usually ‘shapes the boundaries of the nation’ and gives a state ‘a name and a cultural character’ (Smith 1991:39). Moreover, the term ‘titular’ is becoming the accepted label in the current literature on the former Soviet Union (see Laitin 1998, Smith et al 1998, Hagendoorn et al 2001), which makes it an attractive option in itself.

As for the terms that refer to the subordinate groups, there was also a lot of confusion as to whom my respondents should consider national minorities, diasporas, non-titular or non-indigenous groups. ‘I am not sure who belongs to a minority in Kazakhstan’, said a 46 year old civil servant from Almaty, ‘Maybe all these small nationalities? During the Soviet days, we had Chukchas and Eskimos who lived in the Far North and in Kazakhstan we had no minorities. ... Yes, we had different nationalities, but we were all equal’ (Alm-15). There was also an understanding that the term ‘national minority’ has a negative connotation. A 41 year old company director from Astana commented: ‘What is a national minority? We have several Russian specialists in our department. How can I call them ‘minorities’ when they are very respected people?’ (Ast-3).

The confusion and uncertainty of my respondents somewhat echoes the results of Malkova, Kolsto and Melberg’s survey (1999) who asked their respondents to identify minority groups in Kazakhstan:

²⁶ This argument is supported by the findings of Hagendoorn et al. who claimed that 95% of Kazakhs opted for a civic definition of citizenship as opposed to 20% who agreed with an ethnic definition. (Hagendoorn *et al.* 2001:110-111)

Table 5.2 Who are considered to belong to a minority group?

	Total	Kazakhs	Russians
1. All, except Kazakhs	12.3	15.9	15.3
2. All, except Kazakhs and Russians	32.3	42.5	43.8
3. There are no national minorities in Kazakhstan	29.6	40.9	39.3
# of respondents	1000	376	408

Data derived from GI survey, see Malkova, Kolsto and Melberg 1999, 229

As we can see from the table 5.2, only 15.9% of ethnic Kazakhs reserved the category of ‘non-minority’ for themselves. 42.5% in this group believed that they shared this status with Russians, and 40.9% still had the ‘Soviet’ attitude to the nationality issue: ‘We have no national minorities’. Interestingly, the Russian response to the same question was almost identical to the Kazakh response: 15.3% for ‘all except the Kazakhs’, 43% for ‘all except Kazakhs and Russians’ and 39% for ‘no minorities’. According to Malkova, Kolsto and Melberg, these results show that the attempts of the new elites and certain Kazakh intellectuals to raise the Kazakhs to a status of a ‘dominant’ or ‘state-bearing nationality’ were not met positively even among ethnic Kazakhs, let alone the population at large (Malkova et al. 1999:23). These data, however, can also mean that the respondents have not yet internalized the meaning of the concept ‘national minority’ and still resort primarily to the Soviet understanding of the term. The data also represent a good snapshot of how Kazakhs and other ethnic groups attempt to pinpoint and possibly reconsider their national status in the new context of post-Soviet Kazakhstan and their attempts reflect both the still present Soviet status quo and the beginning of a reassessment process.

These issues of terminological confusion and uncertainty and the attempts to reconsider one’s identity will be explored in more detail in the next sections, when we examine first the external aspects, then the internal aspects of identity as reflected in the statements of my respondents.

5.3 External Factors

Ilya Prizel has argued that national identity provides a link not only ‘between the individual and society, but between society and the world’ (1998:19). It has long been known that national identity is usually formed or reinforced by contact with an ‘alien other,’ often a ‘hostile other’, which serves to highlight perceived differences with the ‘core’ or ‘home’ group. This is often brought about by war (this is perhaps the most quick and effective way of engendering a national identity), but can also be developed by the prolonged contact with other cultures, in-migration of foreigners, travel or by international communication through the media or internet or simply by media reports. In this section I will not go into detailed justifications for Kazakh foreign policy orientations, but rather briefly look at the attitudes of my Kazakh respondents to Kazakh (Kazakhstani) independence and to key foreign states and peoples. It has to be noted, however, that these popular opinions (about the ‘other’) must not be equated with official foreign policy pronouncements and actions of the state: while these have an impact on the popular perceptions of foreigners and while governments try to inculcate their attitudes in the population, the responsibilities of state frequently mean that governments have to take realistic and pragmatic decisions when dealing with foreign governments, which differ considerably from popular views about the states and peoples concerned.

5.3.1 The Impact of Independence

The collapse of the Soviet Union and Kazakh independence in 1991 meant that Kazakhs have had to readjust to a new socio-political and cultural environment and to remould their identity in a way that would reflect their status as a new ‘state-bearing’ group. The majority of my Kazakh respondents viewed independence very positively, which is to be expected in a newly empowered titular group trying to establish their distinctiveness and national identity. There was a clear awareness that independence has had a positive impact on their ethnonational status and on interethnic relations in general. Sixty seven per cent of Kazakhs, for example, felt that interethnic relations had improved since independence, 8% said that they remained the same and 26% felt that they deteriorated (Table 5.3)

Table 5.3 Have interethnic relations improved, deteriorated or stayed the same since independence? (%)

	Improved	Deteriorated	Stayed the same	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	17	2	0	6
Astana	15	6	0	0
Almaty	17	13	8	0
Chimkent	17	4	0	0
	67	26	8	6

Some of my respondents equated independence with ‘democratisation’ and ‘freedom of speech’ that enabled Kazakhs (and other non-Russian ethnic groups) to speak their mind, to reassert their national values and to relieve a lot of tensions that accumulated during the Soviet period. A 28 year-old Marketing Director from Almaty explained:

During the Soviet time the national question was a political topic. People tended to hide and avoid it at all costs. They never touched it or discussed it at any levels of society. After the break up of the Soviet Union these questions suddenly resurfaced and it was possible to hear somebody’s opinion on the subject, it has become an inalienable part of human relations. The fact that we have started to talk about interethnic relations, that the national ‘difficult’ question has been dragged from the ‘cellar’ into the open and has become better defined and understandable – just because of this I believe that interethnic relations have improved. It is better to say what you think than to keep it inside. (Alm-16)

Independence was also thought to strengthen Kazakhs’ position in Kazakhstan and to restrain other nationalities and especially Russians and other European groups, from being overtly disrespectful towards Kazakh culture, language and people. Said a 33 year-old female painter from Almaty: ‘After independence all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan started to respect Kazakhs as something special and the discrimination as it used to be is unfeasible now.’ (Alm-1) A 34 year old male teacher from Almaty similarly stressed that ‘people now treat the nationality issue with care because they’ve understood that it is a very dangerous subject (*eto ochen’ opasnaya tema*). They’ve understood that if they want to live and flourish in this country they have to be careful about what they say [about Kazakh culture and people].’ (Alm-2)

There was also some relief that Kazakhstan was no longer part of Russia, but a separate state recognised by the United Nations and the whole international community. Some respondents, mainly from Chimkent and in the age bracket between 18-30, were particularly proud that independence let the whole world know that Kazakhs exist as a separate nation. There was also an appreciation that Kazakhs were now capable of making their own decisions both in the domestic and international spheres. A 23 year-old nurse from Chimkent said: ‘What was Kazakhstan during the Soviet period? A Soviet periphery that nobody knew... But after gaining independence we’ve become a separate state able to determine its own future.’ (Ch-4) A 28 year old civil servant from Astana similarly noted: ‘During the Soviet Union Kazakhs were subordinated to Moscow and all decisions were made for us. But now we are free and we can decide what is better for us’ (Ast-6). Independence in this respect has had a major impact on Kazakh identity in the sense that it enabled Kazakhs, in Clifford Geertz’s terms, ‘to be recognized as responsible agents whose wishes, acts, hopes, and opinions ‘matter’’, to ensure that their ‘identity [is] publicly acknowledged as having import, a social assertion of self as ‘being somebody in the world,’ and beyond that to ‘play[] a part in the larger arena of world politics,’ or ‘exercise[] influence among nations’ (1963:108).

5.3.2 Attitudes to Key Foreign States and Peoples

To probe where my Kazakh respondents’ regional and international preferences were, I asked them to identify a country or countries that Kazakhstan should build its future with and countries that represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan. The results were as follows:

Table 5.4 What country or countries should Kazakhstan build its future with?

	%
Russia and post-Soviet states	53
The West	66
South-East Asia (China, Japan)	20
Non-Soviet Islamic states	11

Table 5.5 What country or countries represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan?

	%
--	---

South-East Asia (China)	69
Non-Soviet Islamic states	64
Russia and post-Soviet states	30
The West (USA)	20

As we can see from the tables, the majority of my Kazakh respondents wanted to see Russia and other post-Soviet states (53% and 62% respectively) and the countries of the West (66%) as the main future partners of Kazakhstan, while only a small minority of respondents thought that Kazakhstan should develop closer links with South-East Asian (20%) and Non-Soviet Islamic (11%) states (Table 5.4). With regard to perceptions of threat, my respondents identified China from the South-East Asian region (69%) and Muslim states (64%) as raising the biggest concern, followed by Central Asian states and Russia from the post-Soviet space (30%) and the USA from the western region (20%) (Table 5.5).

Russia, of course, emerged as a crucial ‘defining other’. There was a clear conflation of attitudes towards Russia, the Soviet Union, the Russian people inside and outside Kazakhstan, the Moscow metropole and the Russian/Soviet ‘empire’ in general. However, the Soviet Union emerged as in general better than contemporary Russia, as we shall see in our discussion of attitudes towards the past in the next section.²⁷ There were some concerns about rising extreme nationalism and xenophobia in Russia and their possible links to the Russian state policy and impact on interethnic relations in Kazakhstan. A 38 year old Marketing Director from Almaty expressed it this way:

Russia is not a totally foreign country to me, but I wouldn’t want to go there at the moment because they have skinheads and xenophobia. I am really concerned that Russians organised nationalist parties under the leadership of Zhirinovskiy and Limonov. We are not the Northern Caucasus, of course, but I am concerned that somebody in Russia can overdo it and we’ll have a major flare up here in Kazakhstan. (Alm -7)

²⁷ This could be partly explained by the fact that a considerable number of Kazakhs, especially the older generation, considered the Soviet Union to be ‘their state’ in the sense that they saw themselves as belonging to the Soviet people (*sovetskii narod*) and benefiting from its policies and system, while post-1991 Russia was treated as a separate, if not completely foreign, state with only tenuous links to Kazakh interests and identity.

A 28 year old male Communications Manager went even further when he suggested that national extremism in Russia was linked to official state policy: 'I am sure that all these skinheads were introduced (*byli zapushcheny*) by the Russian government because they promote, although in a perverted way, the new national idea of the Russian state.' (Alm-16)

There were also some concerns about the 'neo-imperial' behaviour of Russia in Transdnister, Georgia, Ukraine and Chechnya as a possible precedent for future action against Kazakhstan. Said a 41 year old Managing Director from Almaty: 'When you think about what Russia have done in Chechnya and Ukraine, you think that they can do something similar in Kazakhstan and nobody will stop them. And this is really a concern.' (Alm-15) Also there emerged very clearly the negative image that Russia and Russians have for Kazakhs abroad and unfavourable comparisons were made between Russian and Kazakh culture and Russia and Kazakhstan. An 18 year-old student from Astana revealed:

When Kazakhs (*kazakhi*) or Kazakhstanis (*kazakhstantsy*) go to Turkey, they feel very comfortable there. I don't know why, but Turks are suspicious of people from Russia. They ask 'Are you from Russia?' And we say: 'No, we are from Kazakhstan!' And their attitude immediately changes. I don't think it happens because of our ethnicity (*natsional'nost*), but rather because of our belonging to the state. (Ast-2)

Here one can often feel the understandable resentment at the long-standing subordination of Kazakhs by the Russians at last expressed in the circumstances of their newly acquired independence, and the pride in Kazakhstan's newly gained sovereign independence from Russia. But despite numerous negative factors there was also a clear general awareness among my Kazakh respondents of the close symbiosis between Russia and Kazakhs and the desirability and necessity, at least in the short to medium term, of keeping Russia as the main economic and security partner of Kazakhstan. 'I want Kazakhstan to build its future with Russia and all our neighbours,' said a 50 year-old civil servant from Astana, 'but first and foremost I want us to be friends with Russia.' (Ast-1) A 30 year-old civil servant from

Almaty similarly stated: ‘I cannot imagine Kazakhstan without Russia. We’ve always lived together.’ (Alm-5) Some respondents claimed that Russia could be an effective security partner for Kazakhstan, provided it remains moderate and defines its rights and responsibilities.’ (Alm-7) Others stressed that Russia could be useful in protecting Kazakhstan from the Chinese political and economic encroachments: ‘I don’t want to live with the Chinese,’ said a 33 year-old female painter from Almaty, ‘and if China threatens us, we’ll have to hide under the protective ‘wing’ of Russia again’. (Alm-1)

As regards other post-Soviet states the main points of concern seemed to be other Central Asian states. There did not appear to be strong feeling of making Kazakhstan’s Islamic-Turkic neighbours their main economic or security partners, rather several of these states were regarded as threats (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Chechnya), and many negative comparisons were made between the economic and political development of Kazakhstan and its Central Asia and Islamic neighbours and it was stressed that caution was needed in dealing with them. In the words of 28 year old Communications Manager from Almaty:

When you see the slave labour of seasonal workers from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan you suddenly realise how lucky we are in Kazakhstan! I am personally scared of Uzbeks – not as a nation, but on political grounds (*po politicheskim motivam*). They have a small territory, big population and they are cunning (*oni khitrye*). Russians, for example, they are a simple ‘social’ nation (*sotsial’naya natsiya*) – they work as teachers, doctors, builders, etc. And take Chechens, for example. Where do they work? I’ve never seen a Chechen builder or worker. They are all in the market (*na bazare*) and automarket (*avtorynke*). All of them! That’s why I am also afraid of them on political grounds.

At the same time there was a strong awareness of the bond of Islamic values and Turkic languages and the feeling that these countries had much in common. ‘We should cooperate with all our [Central Asian] neighbours,’ said a 28 year old teach of literature and Russian language from Petropavlovsk, ‘we have similar culture, languages and similar traditions. And with the Kyrgyz we are like one nation.’ (P-2)

With regards to the West, there was a clear admiration by my Kazakh respondent of many aspects of western economic achievements, the European Union and the United States and their welfare and human rights policies, although these had negative aspects in extreme libertarianism and dependency culture. There was also considerable respect for national models of certain western states that my respondents thought Kazakhstan should learn from and emulate. Specifically they wanted Kazakhstan to develop its culture and language like France (P-1, Ast-1), to help its kin abroad like Germany and Israel (Alm-6, Ch-1,2,7, P-3) and to encourage all ethnic groups to think of themselves as Kazakhstanians (*kazakhstantsy*) like the United States encourages its people to be Americans (*amerikantsy*). A 25 year-old male IT programmer from Chimkent said: ‘In America all people think of themselves as American (*amerikantsy*). They don’t think that they belong to separate nationalities anymore. We should do something similar and teach our people that they are Kazakhstanians (*kazakhstantsy*) rather than Kazakhs or Russians’ (Ch-1). A 28 year-old teacher of Russian language and literature from Almaty similarly noted: ‘We should try and develop a mini-American idea in the sense that they have a lot of nations in the US, but they are still American (*amerikantsy*). I think we should learn from that and do something similar. (Alm-10)

At the same time my Kazakh respondents expressed some resentful awareness of Westerners’ ignorance and low opinion of Kazakhs and other Asians and Muslims, especially since September 11th, and also expressed the opinion that there is much immorality and social problem behaviour in the West, which means that its way of life should not be slavishly emulated. ‘They think that we are all terrorists and Islamic fundamentalists now,’ said a 28 year-old Secretary from Almaty, ‘I haven’t even planned to go there, but I am sure that they will treat me badly.’ (Alm-9) There was also considerable fear and criticism of American foreign policy and its threatening interference with the sovereignty of other countries and the exploitative behaviour of its corporations all over the world, including Kazakhstan. A 50 year-old civil servant from Astana remarked: ‘America is a threat not only to Kazakhstan, but to all states, including the developed ones, because it

holds a monopoly in many spheres and exerts pressure on foreign and domestic policies of every state'. Said a 24 year old civil servant from Astana: 'The United States is unpredictable and it takes part directly or indirectly in most wars that happen in this world. This makes us very vulnerable to America's encroachments, because Kazakhstan is very rich in mineral resources.' (Ast-8)

With regards to the rest of Asia the overwhelming concern was with Afghanistan, as a real threat in terms of drugs trafficking and religious extremism and with China, as a huge potential threat in terms of economic expansion and military aggression. There was also clear resentment about the large in-migration of Chinese into Kazakhstan and fears about possible instability in China, combined with a deep-seated fear of China's alien culture. A 43 year-old female civil servant from Almaty noted: 'I would single out China as the biggest threat because they have huge overpopulation and because they try to infiltrate Kazakhstan by any possible means. In a couple of years we'll be their extension, a new Zhing Zhiang' (Alm-14). A 28 year-old female teacher of Russian language and literature from Petropavlovsk also expressed a concern:

China wants to take us like hostages without a single shot – they open their businesses, sell their second-class products and undermine our economy. They infiltrate Kazakhstan in huge numbers and create a springboard for conquering our territory. I've even seen Chinese maps, where Kazakh territories were marked as 'China', and this is really worrying' (P-3).

A small minority of my respondents believed that China deserved a certain admiration of its power and ancient culture and there was an awareness of the necessity of working with it as a trading partner. A 18 year old student from Astana said, 'China is so big and powerful that we have to be on good terms with it, otherwise we wouldn't know what they do on our territory.' (Ast-2)

To sum up, what emerged from my Kazakh respondents in general terms is a mixed, although mostly positive differentiation of Kazakh identity and culture from all the main

states and peoples with whom it comes into contact. This, however, was combined with a practical realisation of the necessity of cooperating and doing business with and learning from these states in the economic and security interests of Kazakhstan. What also emerged is no strong desire for a dramatic break with the past in terms of a general re-orientation of the state either in a pro-western or in a pro-Islamic or pro-Turkic direction, but a general acceptance, if with qualifications, of the former 'imperial' power Russia and other post-Soviet states. It is interesting that Brubaker's 'triadic nexus' (1996) has not yet emerged, since the ex-imperial 'homeland state' [of Russians] has not yet become a 'hostile other' in the way he predicted. This is due to the cautious and conciliatory policies pursued by both Russian and Kazakh governments, maintaining the 'exit' [out-migration] option for Russians which has defused Russian resentment. But it also reflects a typical ambivalence of post-colonial states in the early years of independence towards their 'modernising' ex-imperial masters, seen in many ex-British and ex-French colonies. In addition the nature of the transition in Kazakhstan has also had an impact. The fact that competitive democratic politics have not developed in Kazakhstan means that there has been no competitive political 'bidding' between ethnic groups, which would have encouraged consolidation of their identities, and the gradual character of the economic transition has inhibited an ethnic polarisation on class lines, which again would have stimulated identity consolidation. This economic aspect is rapidly changing, but now the Russian minority has been severely weakened through out-migration.

5.4 Internal Factors

In this section I will briefly look at the 'internal' factors, which may be divided into three broad groups: 1) attitudes towards the recent past; 2) responses to 'nationalising' policies and practices; and 3) issues concerning the loyalty, integration and out-migration of the Russian population.

5.4.1 Attitudes towards the Recent, i.e. Soviet Past

One major aspect, which is very revealing about the current identity of Kazakhs, is their attitude to their recent past, their feelings about their ‘colonial’ status in the USSR and about the negative and positive aspects of their pre-independence life. Just as differentiation from an ‘external other’ is an important aspect of the coalescence of national identity, so also in a ‘post-imperial’ situation, is differentiation from a ‘hostile’ or disadvantaged past, from which the gaining of independence has brought liberation and the opportunity for free national self-determination. This is why the re-writing of history tends to become such an important question in the emergent or newly independent states, because, as Reicher and Hopkins correctly noted, it aims not only to ‘supplant one national history with another’, but more importantly, to replace ‘one version of identity with another’ (2001:147). To understand how my Kazakh respondents viewed the historical revisionism of post-independence era I selected, arguably, one of the most controversial points in Kazakh history – the original adhesion (*prisoedinenie*) of the Kazakh steppe region to Russia – and asked my respondents whether they considered it to be a voluntary act or colonisation (Table 5.6)

Table 5.6 Do you think the adhesion of the Kazakh steppe region was voluntary or was it colonisation? (%)

	voluntary	voluntary with a subsequent colonization	colonization	don't know
Petropavlovsk	2 (2.2%)	4 (8.8%)	2 (4.4%)	0
Astana	5 (10.8%)	3 (6.3%)	2 (4.4%)	1 (2.2%)
Almaty	6 (12.6%)	7 (15.2%)	2 (4.4%)	4 (8.8%)
Chimkent	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)	3 (6.2%)	2 (4.4%)
	14 (30.1%)	16 (34.7%)	9 (19.5%)	7 (15.2%)

As we can see from Table 5.6, 30.1% of Kazakhs thought that Kazakh steppe region was joined (*prisoedinen*) to Russia voluntarily, 34.7% believed that that it was done ‘voluntarily, but with a subsequent colonisation’ and 19.5% claimed that it was colonisation. Those respondents who subscribed to the Soviet ‘voluntary adhesion’ narrative (mainly between 28 and 60 years of age) claimed that Kazakhs ‘had China on the one hand and Russia on the other’ and they ‘joined Russia in order to survive’ (Alm-1) ‘We were like between the devil and the blue sea,’ said a 34 year old painter from Almaty, ‘but Russia was better than China,’ (Alm-2). The younger respondents that were schooled and

socialised after the break up of the Soviet Union, on the other hand, tended to view the adhesion either as a voluntary act with subsequent colonisation or as colonisation. ‘I would call it ‘soft colonisation’, said a 28 year old interpreter from Almaty, ‘it wasn’t the will of the Kazakh people, but of the elites who ruled at that time. They wanted to repel the Dzhungar invasion and strengthen their Southern frontiers.’ (Alm-3) An 18 year-old student from Astana similarly noted:

At the beginning it was voluntary, but when Kazakhs signed the documents about the incorporation they did not realise how strong the Russian influence would be and how it would change their traditional way of life. Now we have to come to terms with the consequences that we’ve never expected. (Ast-2)

Indeed, there was a lot of confusion among my Kazakh respondents about how to view the revised historical accounts. Hence, only 28% trusted them, 21% not always trusted them, 21 % did not trust them at all and 30% did not know the answer (Table 5.7). Some of my Kazakh respondents did not trust either Soviet or post-Soviet accounts and believed that ‘the real history hasn’t been written yet’. (Alm-5) ‘Our new history is too fresh to be just,’ said a 28 year old Communications manager from Almaty, ‘When everything comes down in 20-30 years, we’ll see that the truth was somewhere in the middle’. (Alm-16) Other respondents, however, were of another opinion and claimed that they ‘trust[ed] the new historical accounts more because they [were] our historical versions which appeared after Kazakhstan gained independence.’ (P-4)

Table 5.7 Do you trust the revised historical accounts (*pereosmyslennym istoricheskim ocherkam*)?

	Trust	partially trust	don’t trust	don’t know
Petropavlovsk	2 (4.4%)	2 (4.4%)	0	4 (8.8%)
Astana	3 (6.2%)	2 (4.4%)	2 (2.2%)	3 (6.3%)
Almaty	2 (4.4%)	5 (10.8%)	7 (15.2%)	4 (8.8%)
Chimkent	6 (12.6%)	1 (2.2%)	1 (2.2%)	2 (4.4%)
	13 (28.2%)	10 (21.7%)	10 (21.7%)	13 (28.2%)

The above quotes show that the concept of ‘coloniality’ cannot be reduced to objective or subjective criteria, because it is also a social construct closely linked to a particular national

identity and national state project (Beissinger, 1995, Smith 1998). My Kazakh respondents therefore have had to readjust to the revised historical narratives or at least to take them into account and re-evaluate the idea of empire as a continuing Russian project, which indirectly placed them within the ‘colonized’ camp of the ‘colonizers/colonized’ division. A substantial minority of my Kazakh respondents rejected or questioned the revised perspective (these mainly fell into the age bracket between 28-65), others accepted it (mainly from Chimkent and younger respondents under the age of 24), but in either case, their relationship with the official historiography in Kazakhstan and importantly, with the national state project has changed.

The same trend of reassessing one’s position and identity vis-à-vis the new historical narratives can be traced in other questions related to historical revisionism with regard to the Soviet period. Specifically I asked my respondents to identify what was positive and what was negative in Kazakhstan during the Soviet time. The results were as follows:

Table 5.6 What do you think was positive in the Soviet Union? (%)

	%
The economy	
welfare state	84
development of industry and infrastructure	60
Soviet nationality/ cultural issues	
Internationalism, the ideology of friendship of peoples; Soviet patriotism	35
Mutual cultural influences; Kazakh and Russian cultures were enriched;	10
Kazakhstan was part of a great superpower;	31
Russians have had a positive influence on Kazakhs;	10
The Soviet regime and its policies	
the Communist ideology – the unifying role of Lenin, Pioneers, Komsomol and CPSU	10
Kazakhs were sedentarised	8
The indirect impact of deportation – many clever and talented people were deported to Kazakhstan and contributed to its development	2

As we can see from Table 5.6, there was a clear appreciation by my Kazakh respondents of many aspects of the Soviet welfare and economic policies, of the Soviet policy of internationalism and friendship of peoples and to a smaller degree of the Communist ideology, even, by some, of the positive impact of Soviet deportations on Kazakhstan

(Table 5.6). An overwhelming majority of my respondents (84%) claimed that the Soviet Union provided every Soviet citizen with solid education and free healthcare and ensured that all Soviet children were cared for and taken into account. A 28 year-old marketing director from Almaty explained:

I think that education and healthcare system were the best things in the Soviet Union. We've discussed recently with my friends what would be good to retain from the Soviet Union and our response was unanimous – education and the healthcare system. The USSR's socio-political structure meant that I managed to travel around the country free of charge and my worldview was immediately expanded. The Soviet system spared neither effort nor expense on children and their upbringing. All children were included and none of them were left behind – they took part in various competitions and contests. And the most important thing, parents encouraged their children to study and to read – it was very prestigious (Alm-16).

There was also a lot of nostalgia, especially among the older generation, for the socialist system (60%), which ensured 'relative economic equality between people,' (P-3), 'full employment' (Alm-15), 'strong trade union culture and general feeling of economic justice.' (Ch-1). Likewise the Soviet system was praised for the development of industry and infrastructure (53%), which made the life in Kazakhstan, in the words of a 43 year old civil servant from Almaty, 'better and easier.' (Alm-17).

A substantial minority of Kazakhs (35%) commented on the positive role of the Soviet policies of internationalism and friendship between peoples, which helped to depoliticise ethnicity and 'create an atmosphere of trust and unity between people.' (Alm-15). Said a 50 year-old civil servant from Astana: 'In principle it did not matter what your nationality was, we were all Soviet people'. A 25 year-old IT programmer from Chimkent similarly noted that

if the Soviet Union had survived for another seventy years our people would have been truly united and we would have been one nation (*edinoi natsiei*) like the Americans. They

also have a lot of different nations (*natsii*) – English, French... but the main thing is that they are similar now, they are American. May be we would be slightly different, but we would have achieved a real social equality. (Ch-1)

A small minority of Kazakhs (9%), mainly the older generation, also pointed to the unifying role of the Communist ideology, the Pioneers, Komsomol organisations and the CPSU, which together with the policies of internationalism ‘gave people purpose’ (Alm-5), ‘provided [them] with guidance and discipline’ (Ast-3) and ‘fostered patriotism for the Soviet motherland’ (Ch-1). Thirty one per cent of my respondents also noted that Kazakhstan had been part of a great superpower – a ‘country whose decisions and aspirations ‘mattered’ (Alm-8) and 10% believed that Russians and Russian language have had a positive influence on Kazakhs and their culture. ‘If we had not been part of Russia,’ said a 33 year old painter from Almaty, ‘we would be like Afghanistan now. Abai Kunanbaev said: ‘Learn Russian!’ And indeed through Russian we are able to have an open dialogue with the whole world and to show what we have.’ (Alm-1)

With regard to the negative attitudes, my Kazakh respondents were mostly aggrieved by the policy of Russification which resulted in the loss of their national culture (36%), language (34%) and religion (15%) and by the feelings of inadequacy and ethnocultural inferiority that followed (21%) (Table 5.7).

Table 5.7 What was negative in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period? (%)

	%
The Soviet regime and its policies	
Communist ideology, all spheres of life were ideologically tinged	8
people lived behind the ‘iron curtain’, there was a complete denial of the outside world	6
there was no freedom of speech, all political issues were discussed ‘in the kitchens’	3
repressions, purges, collectivisation, sedentarisation, famine	47
all decisions were made in Moscow	19
Nationalities/ cultural issues	
Russification, Kazakh culture and language were forgotten	85
Kazakhs were culturally and linguistically discriminated and lost self-respect	21
Children learnt more about the history of Russia, than about the history of Kazakhstan	4
Economic factors	
economy of shortages, queues;	8

A 28 year old Managing director from Almaty explained, for example, that there was a state-sponsored discrimination against Kazakh schools and Kazakh-speaking children which resulted in a degradation of Kazakh language and Kazakh-medium education:

I participated in the physics competition at school (*v shkol'noi olimpiade po fizike*) first at the town-level and then at the oblast level and I was reading up on Moscow textbooks while the children from Kazakh schools prepared themselves on simple textbooks. And I remember that I was ashamed. It was clear that rural Kazakhs would never be able to approach our level of preparation because we had a state-sponsored discrimination against Kazakh schools. (Alm-16)

He also commented very eloquently that his parents lost their command of the Kazakh language because it did not open up career opportunities in Soviet Kazakhstan:

My granddad was illiterate, but he understood that if his son (my father) didn't know Russian, he would never achieve anything. Therefore, he enrolled him in the Russian kindergarten and then in a Russian school that were very far from our home. And only because of that my dad, the only person in the family, has become somebody. My granddad was very wise because he identified the right path for his child. He knew that if you knew Russian you would get a good job and be successful in life. My mum is also a case in point. She finished a Kazakh school, but couldn't complete her university degree because she struggled to take notes in Russian. She translated them at home into Kazakh and learnt them and suffered like that for two years. (Alm-16).

Some of my younger respondents recounted from the words of their parents that that the knowledge of Russian was linked to the 'basic means of survival' during the Soviet days and it forced millions of Kazakhs to learn Russian:

I have nothing against the Russian language. I agree that it is great and I myself like it... but at the same time to force people learn Russian as it used to be during the Soviet time....

If you had not known Russian, you would not have been able to survive and wouldn't earn your daily bread (*kuska hleba ne zarabotaesh*). It all happened to us - my mum and dad told me about it (P-1)

Twenty one per cent of my Kazakh respondents expressed a concern that the loss of Kazakh language and culture has led to an 'inferiority complex' (*kompleks nepolnotsennosti*) among Kazakhs and to a profound identity crisis. Said a 34 year-old male teacher and painter from Almaty: 'Prior to the Soviet period the Kazakhs were proud that they were Kazakhs. They loved their motherland, their language and now they developed this 'inferiority complex'. (Alm-2) 'These feeling of inadequacy are so deeply ingrained in our people that they try to be all assertive and pompous (*napyschennye*) to compensate for it. And the roots are in the Soviet time'. (Alm-1)

There was also a considerable resentment of the Soviet state-sponsored policies of collectivisation, sedentarisation, purges and repressions (47%), which affected the Kazakh nation both physically and mentally and reduced them to a minority in their national homeland. 'My grandma told me,' said a 28 year old Secretary from Almaty

that our Kazakh intellectual and political elite was purged in the 1930s and that in 1933 there was a terrible famine during which one million of Kazakhs died. And let's take the December events of 1986 – we still don't know all the truth. And people came out (*vystupili*) so that our Kazakhstanis were respected. The students were treated so badly at that time, they were humiliated and denigrated and this pain is still here with me. I still remember that anxiety when for the first time in my life I felt my nationality (*natsional'nost'*). I was told that I was Kazakh and previously we were all Soviet children. The Moscow ideologues called Kazakhs 'nationalists', although their protests was directed against the Moscow dictat. It's a shame that our students were treated like that (Alm-9)

There was also some resentment against numerous drawbacks of the Soviet regime such as censorship (15%), lack of freedom of speech (6%), the Soviet insularity from the rest of the world (6%), and importantly the 'imperial' set up between Kazakhstan and Russia whereby

all important decisions related to the republic were made in Moscow. A 24 year old TV and Radio presenter from Petropavlovsk commented:

The biggest minus, I believe, was that Moscow did not coordinate their actions with our republic. If they wanted to carry out nuclear tests in the Aral Sea – they did, if they wanted to open uranium mines – they opened them, if they wanted to build the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground – they built it. Why didn't they do it in Moscow? Now we are reaping the consequences, but I wish everything were different (P-1)

The economic problems that my respondents mentioned only briefly included the resentment that Kazakhstan was a 'raw material appendage' of Russia (*syr'evoi pridatok Rossii*) (15%) and the economy of shortages. Said a female secretary from Almaty:

It is possible to understand the distribution of plants and factories from the position of one owner, but after the break up of the Soviet Union it has become apparent that we had only mining industries. We were left in a situation when we had an incomplete production cycle (Alm-13).

It has to be noted that a considerable number of my Kazakh respondents, mainly between 28 and 60 years of age, considered the Soviet Union to be 'their state' in the sense that they saw themselves as belonging to the Soviet people (*sovetskii narod*) and benefiting from its policies and system. They also considered the Russian language and culture to be positive agents of modernisation and remained strongly influenced by and attached to the Soviet values and experiences. In this they strongly correlated with my Russian respondents in the same age range in Almaty, Astana and Petropavlovsk but less so in Chimkent. As for the negative assessment of the Soviet past my Kazakh respondents differed considerably from Russians in the sense that they tended to 'dwell' on the national grievances and link them again and again to the regime set up and economic arrangements, while Russians disproportionately focused on the regime and economic factors and mentioned the national issues only briefly. This lack of insight or insufficient insight into the national problems of the Soviet era indicates, as G. Schopflin suggested, that Russians were the dominant and

state-bearing group of the Soviet Union, and similarly, Kazakhs' excessive preoccupation with the national question points to their ex-minority status (see also Brubaker 1996, Doane, 1997).

It could also be argued that the way my Kazakh respondents presented and phrased their responses reveals a lot about their contemporary identities. A considerable majority of Kazakhs did not feel the need to 'explain' or justify the Soviet policies as much, although the older generation sometimes drew on the Soviet ideological clichés pertaining to the benefits of the Soviet rule in Kazakhstan, and in general they felt more confident in assessing the negative elements of the Soviet past, especially on the nationality question. The younger Kazakhs (in the age bracket between 18-25) were perhaps, the most critical of the Soviet period partly because they were influenced by the historical revisionism of the post-independence era and because, unlike their parents, they did not grow up in a context where the nationality problems and Kazakh national grievances in particular were considered a taboo subject. As a 24 year old TV and radio presenter from Petropavlovsk noted:

What I've realised as a grown-up person at the time of independence is that I don't have to hide anything, and our parents always had to hide their real feelings. As Vysotsky sang: 'All political issues we discuss in the kitchens'. I know that if somebody asks me about anything, I wouldn't be able to hide what I really think about it. I will tell you honestly what was positive and what was negative in our Soviet past. (P-1)

All the above points indicate that Kazakhs are undergoing considerable changes in their identity in the sense that they feel that the state 'helps' them to re-evaluate the past and makes them more comfortable and confident in the new political and socio-cultural environment and at the same time provides them with a protective context where they can express their past and present grievances and channel their energies into building a new positive identity.

5.4.2 Responses to ‘Nationalising’ Policies

a) Restructuring of Public Space – Re-naming Streets, Changing State Symbols

Changing state symbols and renaming streets and towns have been an important mechanism of transforming national perceptions and converting country into national territory in post-Soviet Kazakhstan (Kaiser, 2004, Karin and Chebotarev, 2002). The process had had a very mixed reaction from the Kazakhstani population in general, but Kazakhs perhaps have had the most positive, if with qualifications, response to this development. A survey in 2001 found out that 60.6% of Kazakhs viewed this process positively, 14.8% negatively and 17% indifferently (Kurganskaya and Dunaev, 2002:233). My survey confirms these findings. Fifty seven per cent of my Kazakh respondents were in favour of the renaming, 35.5% agreed that some re-naming should be done, but it should not be pushed to the extreme and only 8.8% were against it (Table 5.8)

Table 5.8 How do you view the renaming of streets and towns after the break up o the Soviet Union?

	Positively	Do not mind some renaming, but it should not go into extremes	Negatively	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	6 (12.5%)	2 (4.4%)	1 (2.2%)	1 (2.2%)
Astana	5 (15.2%)	4 (8.8%)	1 (2.2%)	0
Almaty	6 (12.6%)	9 (19.5%)	2 (4.4%)	0
Chimkent	9 (19.5%)	1 (2.2%)	0	0
Total	26 (57%)	16 (35.5%)	4 (8.8%)	1 (2%)

Those respondents who supported the renaming noted that it was ‘absolutely’ (Alm-1) and ‘vitally important’ (P-1) and that ‘the new time required new heroes and new street names.’ (P-7) Some of my respondents viewed the renaming as a ‘tribute to [Kazakh] ancestors (Alm-15), while others equated it with a post-Soviet transformation of Kazakhstan after independence.’ (Ch-5,7). The respondents from Chimkent were perhaps the most unanimous in their support for the renaming as well as the younger respondents between 18 and 25 years of age. The latter claimed that they were able to ‘relate to the new names more easily’ because they ‘[did] not remember the previous names’ (Ast-2) and because they ‘learnt about the new people at school.’ (Ch-2)

Those respondents who were both ‘for’ and ‘against’ the renaming usually supported the trend as such, but they expressed the concern that authorities pushed it to the extreme at time and renamed some Soviet street names unnecessarily. A 28 year old female teacher of Russian literature and language from Almaty explained:

I think it is positive, but I also think that it was not necessary to rename Kovalevskaya Street into Zeinshash. Sofia Kovalevskaya was a very good woman. On the other hand it was fine to re-name Komsomol’skaya Street because there is no Komsomol anymore. Even Rakhmaninov Street should not have been renamed and Tchaikovsky Street! (Alm-10)

A 43 year old female civil servant from Almaty similarly noted:

It would be good to retain some historical names. It is our history after all! Lenin could’ve been spared because we have a strong connection with him. No matter what they say now, but we lived according to his system. Then, all the monuments were demolished and I was also against it. This is just my opinion. They could’ve been preserved so that we could tell our children: ‘Many years ago we lived here and we had Lenin!’ I can say the same about Dzerzhinsky. He has done so much for us. And now they wiped them out in one moment and said that they were nobodies. How come? I’ve read so many books about them – I have selected works of Stalin and Brezhnev and Kunaev. (Alm-17)

Some of my respondents claimed that renaming was a very subjective process and for some people who lived in certain streets for decades the renaming was painful, even though the names no longer correspond to the post-Soviet reality: Said a 28 year old Marketing Director from Almaty:

It is a very subjective thing. Unfortunately it is not the people (*narod*) who decide it, but a narrow circle of people. Recently I’ve been to a small town and they haven’t renamed their streets yet. There were Lenin Street, Street of Young Communards and it looked really weird. Young Communards? Who remembers them now? I was walking there as if it were a national park of old relics – everything was close to me and everything was recognisable (*vse bylo blizko i znakomo*). But today it doesn’t look natural – it was like pictures from the

old life. Of course, if the person lived on the Communist Avenue and he got used to it, then he is of course offended that his favourite street was renamed. A friend of mine with advanced outlook on life thinks that Kosmonavtov (Cosmonauts) Street shouldn't have been renamed into Baitursynova Koshesi. She remembers 1961 when Yuri Gagarin went into the open space for the first time. How happy she was! But Baitursynov also deserves to have a street named after him. As I said, it is all very subjective. (Alm-16)

The above points indicate, as Reicher and Hopkins have pointed out, that 'people are not a blank slate upon whom new pasts and new futures may be written at will' (2002:149) and that '[t]he powerful... have to pay attention to the understanding, which people hold and the mundane structure of their lives' (*ibid.*). Indeed, a substantial minority of my Kazakh respondents (35.5%), mainly in the age bracket between 25-60, indicated that the re-naming of streets and towns was confusing, expensive, corrupt and disrespectful of some elements of the Soviet past, and a small minority of Kazakhs (8.8%) rejected this process altogether. This shows that the re-naming campaign was not straightforward and it did not resonate with all or most of my Kazakh respondents. But on the whole it could be argued that the authorities demonstrated a wit – or rather 'witcraft' (Billig, 1985) through which their symbolic construction of public space corresponded with the interests and concerns of a substantial majority of Kazakhs. It should also be said that, unlike Russians, none of my Kazakh respondents, who complained about certain aspects of the re-naming campaign, perceived it as a direct threat to their existing and future status and the majority of them actually thought of it in a positive way. In this they differ considerably from my Russian respondents and other non-titular groups, who view the re-naming campaign, *inter alia*, as an effort to nationalise the state and enhance the new dominant status of the Kazakh nation.

b) Language

Some observers have noted that language in Kazakhstan has been perhaps the most contentious issue since independence because it affected not only various aspects of national identity, economic opportunities, conflict over resources, but, most importantly,

divided titular and non-titular groups and the titular group itself (Savin, 2001, Kurganskaya and Dunaev, 2002, Masanov, 1996, 2002, Dave, 2003, 2007). One of the key and the most divisive questions relating to the language problem in Kazakhstan has been the legal status of the two languages. The status of Kazakh is clear – it is the official state language, while the status of Russian is anomalous. At present it is an official language, but not the state language. The survey in 2001 found out that only a quarter of Kazakhs wanted Russian to be the second state language, while 62% of them were against it (Kurganskaya and Dunaev, 2002:242). My small-scale survey has shown that 48% of Kazakhs were in favour of the introduction of Russian as a second state language and 48% were against it (Table 5.9) It has to be said that my survey was based on urban areas in which the majority of Kazakhs had attended Russian schools and whose use of Russian was therefore significantly higher than in rural areas and hence the difference in the results of my survey.

Table 5.9 Do you think Russian should be the second state language in Kazakhstan (alongside Kazakh?)

	yes	no	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	3 (6.3%)	5 (10.8%)	2 (4.4%)
Astana	6 (12.6%)	3 (6.3%)	0
Almaty	13 (28.2%)	4 (8.8%)	1 (2.2%)
Chimkent	0	9 (19.5%)	1 (2.2%)
Total	22 (48%)	22 (48%)	4 (8.8%)

Those of my respondents who were in favour of Russian as a second state language argued that Kazakhstan ‘has no other option, but to do it’ (Alm-1) and that ‘Russian is now a state language *de facto*’, and it would be good to make it a state language *de jure*’ (Alm-16). Some also noted that ‘the majority of the population knows Russian’ (P-4) and ‘half of the population is Russian and it will make their life easier’. (Ast-3) Those respondents who were against granting Russian the status of the second state language were concerned that Kazakh would be completely ‘swamped’ by Russian and there would be no restoration of justice. A 28 year old female lecturer of Russian language and literature from Petropavlovsk explained:

If Russian became the second state language on a par with Kazakh then there would be no restoration of justice that I was talking about. That is, Russian language ‘swamps’

(*pogloshchaet*) Kazakh anyway, that is why it is good that Kazakh has become the state language. (P-2)

A 46 year old female civil servant from Almaty similarly said:

[If Russian becomes the second state language] Kazakh will disappear completely because it is easier to say something in Russian than in Kazakh. We have a law – people should consciously speak Kazakh (*soznatel'no govorit' na kazakhskom*), and not by force (*a ne prinuditel'no*). Our business correspondence is gradually switching to the Kazakh language and [authorities] check us and complement us on that. If you live in the country, you have to respect traditions of its people. (Alm-17)

Some of my respondents claimed that the status of Kazakh as the only state language is justified because it aids the development of the Kazakh nation and has the ethnic cohesion-building capacity. Said a 24 year old female civil servant from Astana:

I thought about it and know that in some countries there are two state languages. I think in 20-30 years we'll be able to approach this question, but at the moment of nation-formation (*v moment stanovleniya natsii*)... We are all so to say victims of the fact that Russian language was forcefully imposed on us. I cannot say that I have a perfect command of Kazakh (*v sovershenstve vladeyu kazakhskim*), I know only the basics. If I marry a Southern Kazakh I won't be able to adapt easily in that milieu. But I look at our people and I feel such pain that I don't know my native tongue and that it does not get the sufficient development. Therefore, there should be some alternative measure. And in 20-30 years we'll return to this question, but when the state is developing – it is not only politics and economics that matter, but patriotism as well! And the knowledge of Kazakh in this matter is not of small importance!

Indeed, Donald Horowitz has argued that rising or insecure groups insist on official or state status for their native language because without this determined measure neither the people nor the language could adapt to the competitive milieu and people would not regain their national dignity and group worth. In this respect, language becomes a 'quintessential

entitlement issue’, a ‘symbol of newfound group dignity’ and a ‘symbol of [cultural] domination, which aids group development and confirms its special status in a particular society’ (1985:219-224).

Perhaps even more significant is the question of education in these languages. Here there were some very interesting changes in people’s attitudes. 58% of my Kazakh respondents were educated in Russian-language schools, although some of the younger respondents admitted that they changed from Russian to Kazakh schools half way through. Of the 58% over a third (36%) have started sending their children to Kazakh schools, though these parents come from Petropavlovsk, Astana and Almaty, while in Chimkent there was very little change in that most parents attended Kazakh-language schools and sent their children to Kazakh schools. One interesting finding was that there was a slight increase of 8% amongst parents who were educated in Kazakh-schools, but have sent their children to Russian-language schools. However, most of these were from more Russified Almaty and Petropavlovsk and the parents indicated that they saw a knowledge of Russian as an advantage in terms of higher education and job prospects, especially as this did not threaten their fluent command of Kazakh.

Table 5.10 What was the main language of instruction at your school and at the school of your children (those who are younger than you in your family? (Kazakhs only)**

	respondent’s school (Kazakh-medium)	Respondent children’s school (Kazakh-medium)	Respondent’s school (Russian-medium)	Respondent’s child’s school (Russian-medium)
Petropavlovsk	1+2* (2.2%+4.4%)	4 (8.8%)	6 (12.6%)	5 (10.8%)
Astana	2 (4.4%)	4 (8.8%)	8 (17.3%)	6 (12.6%)
Almaty	5+1* (10.8%+2.2%)	8 (17.3%)	12 (26.2%)	10 (21.7%)
Chimkent	8+2* (17.3%+4.4%)	10 (21.7%)	0	0
	21 (45.6%)	26 (56.5%)	26 (56.5%)	21 (45.6%)

*respondent switched from a Russian to a Kazakh school half-way through

** none of my Russian respondents went to Kazakh-medium schools and none of them sent their children to Kazakh schools

With regard to higher education the controversial issue is whether Kazakh should be the normal language of instruction. The majority of Kazakhs (80%) felt that there should not a Kazakh language monopoly in higher education and that Russian-speakers should not be

compelled to study in Kazakh. My respondents admitted that at the moment there was a great lack of advanced educational material in Kazakh such as textbooks and also a lack of experienced teachers at that level. As in other areas, Kazakhs can be seen to be very realistic and tolerant in their understanding of the language status issue.

One of the questions of my survey concerned what language would be predominantly spoken in Kazakhstan in 50 years time. Significantly, only a small number (11%) of Kazakhs thought that Kazakh would be the overwhelmingly predominant language, while the overwhelming majority of them (84%) felt that both Kazakh and Russian would continue to be spoken in Kazakhstan (Table 5.11). But these percentages conceal considerable uncertainty particularly among Kazakh respondents, especially from the Russianised Petropavlovsk, Astana and Almaty areas about the extent of the Russian language use in the future, if the current decline of the Russian population through emigration continues.

Table 5.11 What language will be predominantly spoken in Kazakhstan in 50 years?

	Kazakh	Russian	Both Kazakh and Russian	Other languages
Petropavlovsk	2 (4.4%)	0	7 (15.2%)	7 (15.2%)
Astana	0	1 (2.2%)	8 (17.3%)	1 (2.2%)
Almaty	3 (6.3%)	0	14 (30.1%)	8 (17.3%)
Chimkent	0	0	9 (19.5%)	4 (8.8%)
Total	5 (11%)	1 (2%)	38 (84%)	20 (41.2%)

c) Economic and Social Issues

With regard to economic and personnel issues (job prospects), a substantial minority of Kazakhs (42%) admitted that ethnicity was important in career advancement, although some (17%) felt that this was only in certain sectors as government administration and crucially important industries such as oil and gas (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12 Is nationality important for one's career advancement?

	Yes	No	Only in certain sectors	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	5 (10.8%)	4 (8.8%)	0	2 (4.4%)
Astana	5 (10.8%)	4 (8.8%)	0	0
Almaty	4 (8.8%)	5 (10.8%)	8 (17.3%)	3 (6.3%)

Chimkent	5 (10.8%)	3 (6.3%)	0	0
Total	19 (41%)	16 (36.7)	8 (17%)	5 (10.8%)

With regard to the perception of which group has most benefited economically in independent Kazakhstan, I posed the question of which nationality has the highest percentage of wealthy people in the country. Overwhelmingly (73%) Kazakhs felt that the Kazakhs had benefited most. However, over a third of them (35%) felt that Russians could also achieve economic success, particularly in areas, which did not compete with Kazakhs. Most Kazakhs (77%) thought that other non-titular groups still have an opportunity of economic success (Table 5.13).

Table 5.13 What nationality does have the highest percentage of wealthy people in Kazakhstan?

	Kazakhs	Russians	Others
Petropavlovsk	6 (12.6%)	3 (6.3%)	5 (10.8%)
Astana	9 (19.5%)	5 (10.8%)	9 (19.5%)
Almaty	12 (26.1%)	4 (8.8%)	12 (26.1%)
Chimkent	6 (12.6%)	4 (8.8%)	9 (19.5%)
Total	33 (73%)	16 (35%)	35 (77%)

These data indicate that while Kazakhs feel more confident that their ethnic identity has become very important for their job prospects, Russians reluctantly accept this situation as representing the right of the titular group to operate in their own interests, but they resent the fact that Kazakh ethnicity and language make a difference in this way and that this is a fundamental obstacle preventing them from achieving career advancement in accordance with their skills. These two factors, ethnicity and language, associated with economic success, could be the most important factors consolidating identities at present and in the future.

5.4.3 Issues Relating to Loyalty, Integration and Out-Migration of the Russian Population

With regard to my third category of group loyalty and integration of Russians within Kazakhstan, this also produced an interesting mixture of responses. One question was fairly clear-cut. Virtually all Kazakhs (91.3%) thought that the borders of Russia should not be

expanded to include ethnic Russians living in Kazakhstan (Table 5.14). But in contrast to this my question about whether Russians of Kazakhstan are culturally and mentally closer to Kazakhs or to the Russians of Russia produced much more ambivalent responses. My Kazakh respondents clearly thought that Kazakhstani Russians had more in common with themselves (57%) than with Russians in Russia (26%), while a substantial minority of them (17%) felt that the Russians had a lot in common with both groups (Table 5.15)

Table 5.14 Do you think the borders of Russia should be expanded to include all ethnic Russians living in the near abroad?

	Kazakhs	Kazakhs	Kazakhs
Petropavlovsk	9 (19.5%)	0	1 (2.2%)
Astana	9 (19.5%)	0	1 (2.2%)
Almaty	16 (35.5%)	0	2 (4.4%)
Chimkent	10 (21.7%)	0	0
Total	42 (91.3%)	0	4 (8%)

Table 5.15 Do you think Russians of Kazakhstan are culturally and mentally closer to Kazakhs or to Russians of Russia?

	To Russians of Russia	To Kazakhs	In between
Petropavlovsk	4 (8.8%)	2 (4.4%)	2 (4.4%)
Astana	3 (6.3%)	5 (10.8%)	2 (4.4%)
Almaty	4 (8.8%)	11 (23.6%)	3 (6.3%)
Chimkent	1 (2.2%)	8 (17.3%)	1 (2.2%)
Total	12 (26%)	26 (56.5%)	8 (17.3%)

In response to my question whether Kazakhstani Russians should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they hold citizenship or to Russia, their historical homeland, naturally the overwhelming majority of Kazakhs (75%) felt that they should be loyal to Kazakhstan, a significant minority (20%) thought that people should make up their minds about where their primary loyalty lies, and small number of Kazakhs (4%) felt that it was possible for Russians to be loyal to both countries (Table 5.16). What these data show is that my respondents agreed that the primary loyalty of Kazakhstani Russians should be to Kazakhstan, but they also showed some understanding of the problems that Russians have had following the collapse of the Soviet Union with establishing their new loyalties and were prepared to give them some leeway in deciding this question.

Table 5.16 Do you think Russians of Kazakhstan should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they hold citizenship or to Russia, their historical homeland?

	To Kazakhstan	To Russia	To both Kazakhstan and Russia	People should decide themselves
Petropavlovsk	6 (12.6%)	0	0	2 (4.4%)
Astana	9 (19.5%)	0	1 (2.2%)	0
Almaty	9 (19.5%)	0	1 (2.2%)	1 (2.2%)
Chimkent	10 (21.7%)	0	0	0
Total	34 (73.9%)	0	2 (4%)	9 (19.5%)

There still remains the question of how much influence the Russian government should have in protecting the rights and freedoms of Russians in Kazakhstan in their role as 'the homeland' state, in Brubaker's terms (1996). This question produced an ambivalent series of responses. A clear majority of Kazakhs (52.1%) thought that the Russian government should play no role in this area. However a significant minority of Kazakhs (21.7%) felt that the Russian government should protect Russian rights and freedoms in Kazakhstan, and a further 19.5% felt that there should be such a role, but only at a minimal level. But in both cases the Kazakhs in these groups were motivated by a strong, almost primordial ethnic feeling that each national group should in some way look after their co-nationals abroad. What comes out of the responses to this question is, once again, the divided loyalties of the Russian population, but at the same time the extensive Kazakh understanding of their position, although with the implication that Russians should make up their minds on this issue and the Russian government should still have some responsibility in helping their co-nationals in ways that do not undermine the sovereignty of Kazakhstan.

Table 5. Do you think the Russian government should protect the rights and freedoms of the Russian diaspora in Kazakhstan or should they stay away and not interfere?

	Yes	Yes, but the involvement should be minimal	No	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	2 (4.4%)	2 (4.4%)	4 (8.8%)	1 (2.2%)
Astana	3 (6.3%)	3 (6.3%)	4 (8.8%)	0
Almaty	4 (8.8%)	3 (6.3%)	9 (19.5%)	2 (4.4%)
Chimkent	1 (2.2%)	1 (2.2%)	7 (15.2%)	1 (2.2%)
Total	10 (21.7%)	9 (19.5%)	24 (52.1%)	3 (6%)

One major question, which vitally concerns both Russians and Kazakhs is that of Russian out-migration to the Russian Federation. While I did not have any direct question on the reasons for this out-migration, there was extensive material in my responses, which cast

much light on this issue. Most Kazakhs understood that with the emergence of independence of Kazakhstan from the break up of the Soviet Union, there was a status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians as the national homeland concept predominated in the organisation of the new successor states. Kazakhs believed that most Russians emigrated in the hopes of achieving greater economic prosperity in Russia or to be reunited with family members. Some Kazakhs drew attention to problems Russians faced in dealing with the nationalising policies, which we have discussed, and even admitted that Kazakhs in rural areas and in the South put a lot of pressure on Russians to leave, although they also drew attention to the number of Russian returnees.

5.5 Conclusion

To try to summarise the implications of external and internal factors for Kazakh identity, we can say that my responses show a continued ambivalence about this identity, but at the same time there is evidence amongst the younger generation and in the less Russified areas of Kazakhstan of a greater self-confidence and self-assertion, which could lead to significant change in the coming years.

In general at the moment the majority of adult Kazakhs in the main cities remain strongly influenced by and attached to the values and experiences of the Soviet period, in which Russian language and culture were seen as positive agents of modernisation and internationalisation. So Russia and the Russian-dominated Soviet past do not yet serve as a real 'hostile other' against which the Kazakhs could strongly react and thus establish a strong independent identity for themselves. This trend has been strengthened by the cautious and conciliatory policies pursued by both Russian and Kazakh governments, which meant that conflict-generating 'triadic nexus' (nationalising state, homeland state and national minority) predicted by Brubaker has not so far materialised. Many Kazakhs still show some understanding of the feelings of Russians in the new state and are even prepared to admit a general responsibility of the 'homeland state' to look after their co-

nationals abroad, while not approving of the direct political intervention or alteration of borders. Nevertheless the considerable and continuing 'exit' of out-migrating Russians does arouse suspicions about the continued commitment and 'loyalty' of those who remain. Russia as an external force and Russians as an internal sector of the population still remain a very important 'defining other', but not yet a wholly negative 'hostile other' for Kazakh identity.

In addition the characteristics of Kazakhstan's internal and economic transition have also strengthened the provisional and ambivalent character of the contemporary Kazakh identity. The fact that a true democratic transition has not taken place in Kazakhstan means that Kazakhs have not had to defend and assert their distinctive identity in an open, contested and ethnicised political system which would undoubtedly have led to rapid coalescence and hardening of their identity in relation to competing ethnic 'others'. The nationalising policies which have been put into operation, for example in career opportunities, language and economic control, have mainly been a 'nationalisation by stealth' (Bohr, 1998), while maintaining an apparently 'civic' framework, which has avoided contentious, and thus differentiating, discussion and political 'bidding'. Likewise, the largely gradualist approach to economic transition has avoided a strong economic polarisation which would probably have become ethnicised. Nazarbaev's careful 'guiding' of the political and economic transitions of his country have avoided major external and internal conflicts, but this has meant that a distinct Kazakh, let alone Kazakhstani, national identity has been slower and more uncertain and ambivalent in its development.

Nevertheless there are signs of a strengthening of a distinctive Kazakh national identity based on both external and internal factors as they gradually differentiate their values and culture from those of other groups. My respondents showed a nuanced approach to evaluating both Russia, including the Soviet past, and the West, as the other important 'defining other' (again neither wholly positive nor wholly negative), in which a real pride in the distinctiveness and merits of Kazakh culture in relation to other major cultures was evident. China emerged much more clearly as an increasingly important 'hostile other', and

this could have a real future impact, reinforcing, as some of my respondents indicated, traditional ties with Russia. Particularly interesting is the ambivalent attitude towards other Islamic states, both within and outside the Soviet orbit. While feeling a real bond with their religious and Turkic-language brethren in Central Asia, Kazakhs have no desire to emulate their political systems and feel clearly superior in terms of their economic, political and cultural development to their neighbours, (these attitudes could be compared to South Africa's distanced solidarity towards the other African states). Towards non-Soviet Islamic states there is an even greater feeling of suspicion and alienation and an anxiety not to be identified with a global 'Islamic fundamentalism'. These essential orientations, stressing Kazakh distinctiveness and pride in their unique culture and values, will perhaps form a core of a future developing Kazakh identity, which will become more confident and assertive as Kazakhstan's international importance as a potentially oil-rich and geopolitically and strategically vital state develops in the years to come.

6 EMERGING MINORITY IDENTITY: RUSSIAN RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL-STATE IDENTITY PROJECT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at whether a coherent identity is coalescing among Russians – the largest ethnic minority in Kazakhstan – and at the factors that contribute to or inhibit its consolidation. The chapter will follow the same structure as Chapter 5 (emergence of new identity; response to the nation-state identity project of the Republic of Kazakhstan) and will be divided into five parts (it has to be noted, though, that any division will be somewhat artificial and there will be some overlaps between different sections). After the introduction, the second part will consider the problems of terminology in my respondents' statements. In particular I will look at how Russians interpret various terms that relate to the nationality issue (e.g. *natsiya* (nation), *natsional'nost'* (nationality), *kazakhstantsy* (Kazakhstanis), *titul'naya gruppa* (titular group), *korennoi* (native, indigenous), *natsional'nye men'shinstva* (national minorities), *etnos*, etc.) and at the inconsistency and uncertainty of their interpretations. In the third and fourth sections I will examine the different ways in which a new Russian national identity may develop in Kazakhstan. Specifically, I will look at how Russians react to the creation of an independent Kazakhstan and its new position in the world (6.3 External aspects) and at how they view various nationalising policies – linguistic, cultural, economic and demographic (6.4 Internal identity). This will be followed by a short conclusion.

6.2 Problems of Terminology

As noted in Chapter 2, most terms in post-Soviet nationality discourse, both popular and academic, have been influenced by the Soviet 'primordial' understanding of nationality. This approach has had a strong impact on my Russian respondents and they drew on Soviet and post-Soviet vocabulary to make sense of post-Soviet transformations. Specifically, my

respondents used the terms ‘nationality’ (*natsional’nost’*), ‘nation’ (*natsiya*) and ‘people’ (*narod*) to refer to an ethnic identity of a group. These words were usually preceded by the adjectives ‘Kazakh’ (*kazakhskii*), ‘Russian’ (*russkii*), ‘native, indigenous’ (*korennoi*), ‘titular’ (*titul’nyi*) or were used as synonyms for the words ‘Kazakhs’, ‘Russians’, ‘Tatar’, etc. It has to be noted that the term ‘nationality’ was used only to denote ethnicity understood as a fixed and immutable essence (as opposed to ‘*grazhdanstvo*’ (citizenship), indicating official membership of a state). A welder from Almaty, for example, explained that

every nationality, Russians, for example, live like Russians and Kazakhs live like Kazakhs. I cannot say that we are similar. We are friends, yes, but otherwise we have little in common. They eat horse-meat and we eat fish. It is just a different life style (Alm-2,r).

The above quotation shows that there is a clear link with the Soviet nationality policy where ‘nationality’ was defined as membership of an ethnic group or people rather than membership of a state and its citizenry, as is the case in the West. The terms ‘people’ and ‘nation’, however, were used to denote both ethnic and civic concepts, which is also a Soviet legacy. If paired with the adjectives ‘Soviet’ (*sovetskii*) or ‘Kazakhstani’ (*kazakhstanskii*) these terms acquired a civic and inclusive dimension. A businesswoman from Astana, for example, observed that

all people in Kazakhstan are still united by a community (*obshchnost’*) that was developed during the Soviet time – the Soviet people (*sovetskii narod*). Many still belong to this entity and it is our axis. Everything was threaded onto it – our culture, economy, etc. But when we gained independence, they [Kazakhs] have made a rapid turn towards their culture (Ast-2,r).

The terms ‘Kazakhstani people’ (*kazakhstanskii narod*), ‘Kazakhstani nation’ (*kazakhstanskaya natsiya*) and Kazakhstanis (*kazakhstantsy*) were similarly used in a civic sense and had the strongest resemblance to the Western concept of ‘nationality’. My

Russian respondents also used the terms ‘Asians’ (*aziaty*), ‘Oriental people’ (*vostochnye lyudi*), ‘Muslims’ (*musul’mane*) and ‘them’ (*oni*) to label Kazakhs and the words ‘us’ (*my*), ‘Europeans’ (*evropeitsy*), ‘Christians’ (*khrist’yane*), and Russians-speakers’ (*russkoyazychnye*) to label themselves. The above terms, however, do not explicitly point to the issues of dominance and subordination between the groups. This relationship was reflected in concepts like titular – non-titular group/nation/nationality (*titul’naya – netitul’naya gruppa/ natsiya/ natsional’nost’*), indigenous – non-indigenous group/nation/nationality (*korennaya – nekorennaya gruppa/ natsiya/ natsional’nost’*), hosts – guests (*khozyaeva – gosti*), dominant nation – national minorities/ethnic diasporas/foreigners (*glavnaya natsiya – natsional’nye men’shinstva, etnicheskie diaspori, inostrantsy*).

The terms ‘titular – non-titular nation’, ‘indigenous – non-indigenous nation’, ‘dominant nation – national minorities’ were usually understood as synonyms for Kazakhs and non-Kazakhs and their ranked position in Kazakhstan. A civil servant from Astana explained that

the titular nation (*titul’naya natsiya*) and now national minorities (*natsional’nye men’shinstva*) are going through a rapid transformation in their relations. Russians were the Big Brother (*starshii brat*) and we also had the indigenous nation (*korennaya natsiya*) in Kazakhstan. That is, there was such a pyramid of interethnic relations during the Soviet time. Now everything has changed – we have a titular nation which is our main/ dominant nation (*glavnaya natsiya*) and all other citizens – constitute a non-titular nation (*netitul’naya natsiya*). Those who accepted this new formula – stayed in Kazakhstan. And those who rejected it, left our country forever because they had the ambitions of the Big Brother. And we, those who stayed and who see our future in Kazakhstan have accepted *a priori* that we, Russians, have our historical motherland – Russia! We have it! And if I don’t like something here in Kazakhstan, I can leave for Russia. But if Kazakhstan suits me, I *a priori* accept that Kazakhstan is a land of Kazakhs in which I invested a lot of labour and which owes me something as well (Ast-8,r).

Another civil servant from Astana similarly stressed that

Russians understand that they [Kazakhs] are a titular nation (*titul'naya natsiya*) and that they have the full right to do with their country what they want. We are, if not temporary people here, nevertheless we are a national minority (*natsional'noe men'shinstvo*). We celebrate our national culture, our traditions, we keep our connections and take care of each other. And they [Kazakhs]... they have made a rapid turn towards their own culture (Alm-1,r).

It has to be noted that the terms 'titular' and 'non-titular' were not understood uniformly by all respondents. Some of them had never heard of these concepts, others occasionally used them in class rather than ethnic terms. A pensioner from Petropavlovsk, for example, said that

the titular group [i.e. the elite] is not loved by the people. No matter what your nationality (*natsional'nost'*) is... whether you are Russian, Kazakh, German or Ukrainian, people don't like the new rich, oligarchs, they have nothing but negative feelings towards them. Tell me, how can a normal person earn millions in ten years? You can do this only by stealing! (P-2,r).

The incidents of such misunderstandings, however, were relatively low (6%). To avoid them my respondents used a clear and straightforward terminology like 'hosts – guests' (*khozyaeva – gosti*) or 'dominant group – foreigners' (*glavnaya gruppa – inostrantsy*) to pinpoint the power relations between the groups. An accountant from Chimkent, for example, noted that 'people in Kazakhstan are divided into two groups – hosts and guests. If your nationality is 'correct' you are the host of the country (*khozyain strany*), but if not, you have to put up with it or leave' (Ch-7).

As we can see from the above, my respondents drew on the Soviet 'primordial' understanding of ethnicity and nationhood to explain the Kazakhs' dominant and their subordinate positions. They somewhat accepted the moral principle that only the

indigenous nation could lay a legitimate claim to the territory of Kazakhstan and used this as a justification for their new subordinate status. In this respect, the importance of 'primordialism' in the post-Soviet context lies not in the fact that it is a 'false' or 'declining' paradigm discredited in the West (Eller & Coughlan, 1993, Tishkov, 1997), but that it structures the beliefs and world-outlook of post-Soviet elites and their populations (Suny, 2001). What is important here is that elites and people draw on this framework, explain the reality around them and act upon their beliefs. This point will be taken into account when I look at how my respondents view the external and internal transformation of Kazakhstan to which I now turn.

6.3 External Factors

6.3.1 The Break-Up of the Soviet Union and Impact of Independence

The collapse of the Soviet Union and independence in 1991 turned Russians in Kazakhstan from a state-bearing people in a multi-national empire into a beleaguered minority in a new, potentially foreign state. As a result of these changes Russians have had to readjust to a new socio-political environment and experience a gradual transformation of their ethnonational identity that was no longer constructed and reproduced under the circumstances and for the purposes of the Soviet state. Some of my Russian respondents have noted that the 'break-up of the Soviet Union has had a profound impact on everything, including the social model [*sotsial'nyyu model'*], the economy, the socio-political regime and the ideology' (Alm-9,r). Others believed that it has 'exposed the interethnic problems and contradictions that existed during the Soviet time and emancipated Kazakh national consciousness and self-assertiveness. This, in its turn, has provoked certain conflicts that never existed before' (Ast-8,r).

Indeed, the majority of my Russian respondents – 78% – believed that interethnic relations have deteriorated in Kazakhstan as compared with the Soviet time and a much smaller percentage thought that they had either improved or stayed that same (2% and 20%

respectively). Kazakhs, on the other hand, as we have seen in chapter 5, were more positive about these changes. They thought that interethnic relations had either improved or stayed the same (64% and 8% respectively) and only 27% said that they had become worse (Table 6.1). Thus we can see that each group interprets ‘interethnic relations’ in terms of its own interests and experiences.

Table 6.1 Have interethnic relations in Kazakhstan deteriorated, improved or stayed the same as compared with the Soviet period? (%)

	Kazakhs	Russians
Improved	64	2
Deteriorated	27	78
Stayed the same	8	20
Total	47/100	40/100

Notably, most of my Russian respondents tried to reject or somehow explain this process by projecting it onto other post-Soviet states or the Soviet period in general. As one engineer from Almaty put it:

During the Soviet time interethnic relations were controlled by Moscow and the federal laws while after independence the titular nation has started to actively reassert itself and establish a dominant position over other nations. In fact all titular nations in the post-Soviet space are trying to do the same – they assert themselves, assume a leading position in all spheres of life and promote their culture ... which is understandable. It would be nice, however, if this did not affect other nationalities as much (Alm-5,r).

Independence, in this respect, can be viewed as an important instrument that transformed interethnic relations and laid the foundations of a new order that is built around the culture and interests of the newly-dominant group. Hence, the majority of Kazakhs tend to identify with the state and its policies (although with qualifications), while Russians have more difficulties in doing so. The most obvious example of this is that my Russian respondents felt uncomfortable about the language, cultural and cadres policies²⁸ implemented by the new regime and believed that they contributed to the deterioration of interethnic relations

²⁸ These will be discussed in more detail in Section 6.4.

and alienation of Russians and other Russian-speaking minorities. In the words of Igor Savin, Russians thought that ‘the state no longer existed for them’ (Savin, 2002:3).

To sum up, independence made status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians possible, turned Russians into a political minority, and made them readjust to the new nationalising project that promotes the values and interests of the new state-defining group. The external (international) aspects of this process will be looked at in more detail in the next section.

6.3.2 Attitudes to Key Foreign States and Peoples

After gaining independence the Kazakh elites had to establish a new sovereign state and make foreign policy choices and alliances that would inevitably highlight the emerging national identity of Kazakhstan and its people. Arguably, in terms of its main international orientation, there have been four main options available to Kazakhstan, which are Russia and the post-Soviet states (or the Near Abroad), the West, the Islamic states and East and South-East Asia. In this section I will not go into detailed justifications for Kazakh foreign policy orientations, but rather briefly look at how the real choices made by the government correspond to the national identity as reflected in my Russian respondents (and compare it with my Kazakh respondents). I will also consider the relationship between my Russian respondents and Russia which has been increasingly portrayed as their official external homeland (Savin, 2002).

To probe where my Russian respondents’ regional and international preferences lay, I asked them to identify a country or countries that Kazakhstan should build its future with and countries that represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan. The results were as follows:

Table 6.2 What country or countries, in your opinion, should Kazakhstan build its future with? (Russians)

1	Russia and Post-Soviet states	Russia (32) Ukraine (2); Belorussia (3); Kyrgyzstan (3); Uzbekistan (2)	46
2	The West	USA (6), UK (2); France (1); Germany (3); Poland (1); Europe, EC, the West (12)	28
3	East/ South-East Asia	China (4); Japan (1); India (1)	6

4	Non-Soviet Islamic states	Turkey (1); Iran (1)	2
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Table 6.3 What country or countries, in your opinion, represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan? (Russians)

1	Islamic states	Afghanistan (15); Iran (4); Iraq (2); Turkey (1); Islamic states (7)	30
2	East Asia	China (14)	14
3	Russia and Post-Soviet states	Tajikistan (5); Uzbekistan (5); Chechnya (1), Russia (1)	12
4	The West	USA (6)	6

As we can see from the tables, the post-Soviet states (45) (particularly Russia) and the countries of the West (28) were clearly preferred by my Russian respondents, while the East, South-East Asian and Muslim states had less appeal (6 and 2 respectively). The Muslim states (30) and China from the East Asian region (14) were thought to represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan, followed by Central Asian states from the post-Soviet space (12) and the United States from the West (6).

If we look at the results more closely, we can see that the overwhelming majority of Russians (82%) believed that Russia could and should be the closest ally of Kazakhstan in the future and only 2% thought of it as a threat. Some respondents tried to emphasize that the link with Russia was ‘absolutely’ (P-4, r) and ‘vitaly important’ (Ast-3, r) and that it was ‘possible to name many countries, but Russia should always be the first’ (P-7, r). In stark contrast to the Kazakhs, my Russian respondents did not equate Russia with tsarist and Soviet colonialism or refer to the rise of Russian nationalism and xenophobia. They did not invidiously compare Russia with Kazakhstan and generally held favourable opinions of Russia. There was, however, some concern that ‘Russian politicians, like Zhirinovskiy, incite ethnic prejudice among Russians and that this could make the life [of Russians in Kazakhstan] more difficult’ (Alm-6,r).

As for the Western states, my respondents generally viewed them very positively with the partial exception of the United States. Specifically, the European Union and West European states were considered to be a ‘model and a target to move towards’ (Ast-8), while the USA was both admired for its ‘achievements in the economic and technological spheres’ and

resented for the ‘aggressive policies around the world’ (P-2, Alm-5). Non ex-Soviet Islamic states, on the other hand, were usually associated with ‘backwardness’ (*otstalost’*), drugs, arms and international terrorism and the overwhelming majority of Russians – 75% - thought that Kazakhstan should distance itself from this region. As one civil servant from Astana put it,

I don’t want to say this, but I think that Islamic states and the Asian part of the world in general are associated with such a thing as ‘backwardness’. By this I mean that these states have a lot of ‘dark’ moments in their development and they try to cling onto some ‘dark’ religious things that go back into the past. Both Kazakhs and Russian Kazakhstanis (*i kazakhi, i russkie kazakhstantsy*) are concerned about it and don’t want to put up with it. And this very fact makes Kazakhstan a more predictable state that differs from all other Asian, Muslim and religion-orientated states (Ast-8,r).

As for the East and South-East Asian regions, my respondents expressed some limited interest in Japan, China and India, but this was overshadowed by a strong concern that China could pose a significant demographic, economic, political, and military threat to the country. ‘We have thousands of them [Chinese] already’, said a teacher of Russian literature from Almaty, ‘A few more and Kazakhstan will be a province of China, a new Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (Alm-9,r).

In this respect, there is much in common between my Russian and Kazakh respondents and their external perception of the world. Kazakhs, however, had a more ambiguous view of Russia, particularly in the light of the rise of ethnic nationalism and xenophobia, while Russians mostly did not ‘notice’ these processes. There were several references to the activity of the ultra-right nationalist parties, but they were invariably linked to the reactions of Kazakhs and possible subsequent deterioration in Kazakh-Russian relations. Notably, my Russian respondents were not affected by the ‘Asian’ and ‘Muslim’ factors, when talking about Russia or the West, although some of them admitted (those who had been to the West) that they were indirectly associated with these issues because of their belonging

to Kazakhstan. They were more concerned about the ‘Russian’ factor (i.e. close association with Russia) and its negative perception in the West as it adversely affected their ethnic identification. Kazakhs, on the other hand, tried to both disengage themselves from and embrace their ‘Asianness’ and ‘Islamic identity’, while the ‘Russian’ factor was less of an issue for them because, possibly, it represented a superficial rather than a fundamental part of their ethnonational identity.

We can conclude, therefore, that although both Russians and Kazakhs have fairly similar external orientations at the moment, these attitudes may change in the future because both groups have different elements in their identity that may affect the attitudinal trajectories through internal (within Kazakhstan) and external interaction. The status reversal between the groups, the Russian policies towards Russians abroad and the real choices of the Kazakhstani elites (including their rhetoric) will play an important part in this process. And these responses related to foreign policy were not shaped by socioeconomic factors.

6.3.3 Russia as an External Homeland

After the break up of the Soviet Union Russians in Kazakhstan have been exposed to the ‘nationalising’ nationalism of Kazakhstan, ‘homeland’ nationalism of Russia, and moderating effects of the transnational political institutions (TPIs) that have pressured both ‘nationalising’ and ‘homeland’ states to comply with the Western norms of the citizen-homeland (Brubaker, 1996, G. Smith, 1999). All these influences have had a strong impact on the re-territorialization of Russian ethnonational identity.

In Kazakhstan, partially as a result of pressure from the TPIs and partly as a result of the Soviet institutional legacy and partly, also, as a result of Nazarbaev’s deliberately cautious and consensual state-building approach, the nationalising process has involved a peculiar hybrid between ‘nationalising’ and ‘citizen-homeland’ models. Arguably, this process has so far consisted of three distinctive strategies. The first has sought to create a civic identity wherein all ethnic groups would transcend their ethnic differences and merge into one

Kazakhstani nation. The second has encouraged each citizen of Kazakhstan to be a representative of its ethnonational community whose core identity is legitimized within the territorial affiliation of Kazakhstan (i.e. Kazakhstani-Russian, Kazakhstani-German, etc.). And the third can be seen as an elaboration of the second track which Jørn Holm-Hansen labelled as ‘multiple re-ethnification’ (1999). This strategy has tried to ensure that ethnicity remains a primary identity, while territorial attachments are channeled to remote ethno-national homelands away from Kazakhstan. The latter strategy, in the opinion of Alexander C. Diener, has ‘diminish[ed] the likelihood of assimilation to a patriotic ideal and enhance[d] the propensity for transnationalism to generate from ethno-national identities’ (2004:4). It has also led to disempowerment of minorities and reduced the possibility of ethnic bidding and violence (Kolstø, 1999, Holm-Hansen, 1999, Dave, 2007).

Re-territorialization of Russian ethno-national identity has been further aided by Russia’s ‘homeland’ nationalism, in that Russian elites in the Russian Federation made the Russian diaspora in the Near Abroad a central concept in defining Russian national identity. In particular, since 1992 the settler issue has been used to ‘consolidate a new political elite around a self-image of Russia as the historical ‘homeland’ for the Russian-speaking communities outside Russia (the diaspora) with Russia directly responsible for their well-being’ (Melvin, 1995:23). It has also helped to ‘establish and legitimize extraterritorial influence and control, as Russia has sought to do in the near abroad’ (Brubaker, 1996:140). Thus, the Russian minority in Kazakhstan has been exposed to various conflicting policies and practices that made Russian loyalties, in the words of one respondent, ‘divided and contradictory’ (Ast-8,r). These ‘divisions’ and ‘contradictions’ can be also partly explained by the Soviet-style primordial understanding of ethnicity and nationhood on which the participants of the ‘triadic nexus’ heavily drew.

Specifically, the majority of my Russian respondents were ‘split’ both culturally and politically between the two states. Indeed, 40% of them thought that the Russians of Kazakhstan were culturally and mentally closer (*blizhe v kul’turnom i mirovozzrencheskom*

plane) to the Russians of Russia, 20% claimed that they were closer to Kazakhs, and 40% said that they were ‘somewhere in between’ (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Do you think that Russians of Kazakhstan are culturally and mentally closer to the Kazakh population of Kazakhstan or to the Russian population of Russia? (Russians)

	To Russians of Russia	to Kazakhs	In between
Petropavlovsk	5	2	1
Astana	3	1	7
Almaty	3	1	7
Chimkent	5	4	1
Total	16 (40%)	8 (20%)	16 (40%)

Some Russians claimed that they were closer to Russia because they ‘[did] not speak Kazakh, but read Russian literature, watched Russian TV and [their] life was based on Russian traditions’ (Alm-1,r). Others stressed that there had been a lot of assimilation between Russians and Kazakhs, but ‘a Russian is still closer to another Russian because they are of the same nationality’ (Alm-5). Interestingly, those respondents who have been to Russia said that ‘Kazakh’ Russians (*kazakhskie russkie*) were ‘kinder, softer and more open to other nationalities than ‘pure’ Russians’ (*chistye rossiyane*) (Alm-3,6,7,r, Ast-5,r). The latter were described as more ‘racist’ (Alm-6,r), ‘chauvinist’ (Alm-7,9,r) and ‘rude’ (Alm-7,8,r) despite the fact that they ‘looked the same, spoke the same language and were close in other respects’ (Alm-9,r).

In the political sphere my Russian respondents were similarly split between the two states, although this division was not as dramatic as in the cultural sphere. Fifty four per cent of my respondents thought that Russians in Kazakhstan should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they hold citizenship and only 2% said that they should be loyal to Russia. Twelve percent, however, claimed that Russians could be attached to both states and 32% said that it was ‘each person’s private business/ affair’ (*lichnoe delo kazhdogo*) (Alm-8,r) (Table 6.3).

Table 6.4 Do you think that the Russians of Kazakhstan should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they hold citizenship or to their historical homeland? (Russians)

	to Kazakhstan	To Russia	To both Kazakhstan and Russia	up to them
Petropavlovsk	6	0	0	4
Astana	5	0	3	2

Almaty	6	0	2	2
Chimkent	5	1	0	3
Total	22 (54%)	1 (2%)	5 (12%)	12 (32%)

Although not strictly comparable, these findings are not dissimilar to those of Hagendoorn, Linssen and Tumanov who argued that 61% of Russians identified with Kazakhstan and only 12% identified with Russia (2001:40). If compared with the results of the early survey by Nurbulat Masanov (1996), one can argue that there has been an increase in identification with the republic among Russians by approximately 20-30%.²⁹ This increase can be partly related to continuing out-migration of Russians that stripped the community of its most nationalistic members and left those most willing to accommodate to the new state. At the same time, the fact that more than 40% of Russians opted for a ‘divided loyalty’ or for a ‘personal choice of loyalty’ is an indication that they are still confused about their position in Kazakhstan and have too much to lose by making an outspoken choice. In other words, they are still unsure ‘whether titulars will let them ‘pass’ as titulars, whether they will have rights as equal citizens and whether Russia will protect their interests’ (Hagendoorn, Linssen, and Tumanov, 2001:134). The ‘split’ loyalty can be also explained by the difficulty of disentangling the cultural and political attachments and make a clear-cut distinction between them. The complexity of this task is well-illustrated by one civil servant from Astana:

Our ethnic roots (*etnicheskie korni*) impose a great deal of responsibility on us. That’s why we have to strengthen these roots and our links with our historical motherland. But these are different things! I think that every Russian should remember that he is a citizen of Kazakhstan and that his civic loyalty (*grazhdanskaya priverzhennost’*) should be to this country. God, what a difficult question! I can see now that it can be quite divisive. If we assume, for example, that there will be a war between Kazakhstan and Russia, how would you behave? I don’t even want to think about it. That’s why, I believe, our officials should think about these things and not put us into a situation where we have to choose between states (Ast-8,r).

²⁹ Masanov found that 31.3% of Russians identified themselves as citizens of Kazakhstan, 27% did not, and 39% had difficulty in answering the question (Masanov, 1996:50,108).

Russian political attachment to Russia or Kazakhstan can be also seen from how my respondents view Russian political intervention in Kazakhstan. Hagendoorn, Linssen and Tumanov have argued that while for the titular group Russian intervention is a threat, for Russians it is not as clear-cut. For those Russians who have little faith in the titular policies and practices of the titular group, Russian influence may be a comfort, while for those who identify as citizens of Kazakhstan it may be a threat (2001:127-129). Drawing on this insight we can assume that most of my Russian respondents (let alone Kazakhs) should view Russian political intervention as a threat given their high level of identification with Kazakhstan (54%) and low identification with Russia (2%). In reality, however, the reaction of my respondents was varied, depending on the level and aims of possible involvement. Notably, the majority of my Russian respondents (72%) rejected the idea of Russian border expansion, claiming that it would provoke ‘long-term conflicts’ (Ast-8,r), ‘bloodshed’ (Ast-3,r) and ‘interethnic tensions’ (P-4,r) (Table 6.6). At the same time, however, they supported a more limited Russian involvement that would ‘benefit everybody, but above all the people who do not live on their historical territories’ (Alm-5,r) (Tables 6.7):

Table 6.6 Do you think the borders of Russia should be expanded to include all ethnic Russians living in the near abroad? (Russians)

	No	Yes	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	5	4	1
Astana	9	0	1
Almaty	9	1	0
Chimkent	6	4	0
Total	29 (72%)	9 (22%)	2 (5%)

Table 6.7 Do you think that the Russian government should protect the rights and freedoms of the Russian diaspora in Kazakhstan or should they stay away and not interfere? (Russians)

	Yes	Yes, but this involvement should be limited	No	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	7	0	0	3
Astana	3	2	4	1
Almaty	5	2	3	0
Chimkent	3	2	3	2
Total	18 (45%)	6 (15%)	10 (25%)	6 (15%)

Some of my Russian respondents drew on the Russian (*rossiiskaya*) and Kazakhstani ‘homeland’ and ‘nationalising’ rhetoric as well as on the primordial understanding of ethnicity and nationhood to substantiate their claims for continuing Russian support. Others, however, were against any Russian involvement. The negative consequences of such relationship were emphasized by one high-ranking civil servant from Astana:

I remember we had a delegation from the Russian Duma who had to collect some information on the Russian diaspora in Kazakhstan. At that point we had Desyatnik as the Akim of the East-Kazakhstan oblast and he tried to earn points with his ‘storytelling’ (*rosskaznyami*). Indeed, if you collect some nonsense at a grass root level and raise it to the highest level it will result in some investigations, won’t it? At the same time all these Russian delegations have a minimal effect on our society and it makes me really angry when politicians try to take advantage of it. Don’t take me wrong, I don’t want to hide or silence these problems, but at least not to use them for the wrong political purposes (Ast-8,r).

The fact that a quarter of my Russian respondents were against Russian political or military intervention and 15% favoured limited or ‘civilized’ form of involvement is an indication that they ‘are careful not to do anything that may bring on retaliation [of the dominant group]’ (Shibutani & Kwan, 1965:302-303, Hagendoorn and Poppe, 2004).³⁰ This is, possibly, a sign that Russians are gradually developing a minority identity or mentality³¹ whereby they try to hide that they could be a threat to the titular group. At the same time, however, this process is still complicated by the Russian tendency to look towards ‘their’ government and to lack self-reliance, which is typical of the declining former dominant group (Wright, 2004:37-38). Indeed, more than 50% of my Russian respondents favoured Russian involvement in one form or another, which supports the above argument. Interestingly, the trend to resort to one’s ethnic government can be attributed to the

³⁰ (It is quite interesting that a considerable number of my respondents did not want Russian involvement. It could be that they are developing a minority identity, but at the same time they could still strongly identify with Kazakhstan and it may happen so that they haven’t radicalized yet, they haven’t encountered the nationalising policies and practices directly. And hence they are more committed to Kazakhstan.

³¹ On the minority mentality see Shibutani and Kwan, 1965, Van den Berghe, 1978, and Wright, 2004.

‘primordial link’ between the ethnic group and its historical motherland which is believed to be legitimate by most ethnic groups in Kazakhstan. This possibly clarifies why 39% of Kazakhs thought that Russia should have a limited involvement in Kazakh internal affairs if Russians’ rights are violated.

To sum up, the Russian link with their external homeland is an important identity-generating factor for Russians in Kazakhstan. It makes them feel Russian and therefore different from Kazakhs, but at the same time they are not Russian in the sense of belonging to a Russian state. They are no longer Russians as part of Russia and increasingly as people’s life experiences change they would feel different from Russians who live in Russia proper. The ‘minority-homeland’ link, in this respect, has been instrumental in deconstructing Russian ex-dominant identity and making it external for the national-state project of the Republic of Kazakhstan. It has also helped to legitimate the newly dominant Kazakh identity and to act as a testing device for a political and cultural loyalty towards Kazakhs and Kazakhstan. At the same time, because of the restraint shown by both Russian and Kazakh governments and because of the ‘exit’ safety-valve for Russians agreed by them, Brubaker’s conflictual ‘triadic nexus’ has not (yet) developed.

6.4 Internal Factors

In this section I will look at how Russians view various nationalising policies – cultural, linguistic, economic and demographic – and at the impact they have had on their ethno-national self-conception.

In the Soviet period Russian identity was almost entirely fused with the Russian-Imperial and the Soviet structures of power which resulted in Russian ethnicity being blurred, as a distinct ethnic category, with other identities, and particularly with a supra-national Soviet identity (Melvin, 1995, Laitin, 1998, Hosking, 2004). Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the increasing ethnic and national identification of the titular populations many

Russians in the near abroad have, for the first time, begun to consider themselves as members of the Russian nation (Melvin, 1995, Tolz, 1998, Eschment, 1999). This Russian identity has been formulated not on the basis of explicit ethnic criteria, but rather in political, socio-economic or cultural-linguistic terms (Melvin, 1995:126-127). In other words, Russians have come to identify themselves in ethnic terms and as a political minority as a result of their interaction with the nationalising projects of the post-Soviet states.

As argued in Chapter 4, following the radical status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians, Kazakh ethnonational identity has been placed at the centre of the national-state identity project of Kazakhstan, while Russian ethnonational identity was ‘demoted’ to a secondary level. To create a unified and distinctive nation, the new Kazakhstani elites have tried to unearth, appropriate and exploit the ethno-symbolic resources at their disposal (e.g. customs, language, toponyms and ethnonyms, heroes, myths and state iconography, as we saw in chapter 4). This process has been justified in terms of fostering the ‘cultural-spiritual’ rebirth of the Kazakh people and creating a new Kazakhstani identity for all citizens of Kazakhstan irrespective of their nationality (Nazarbaev, 1999). The last two justifications were controversially reconciled by stating that the whole citizenry of Kazakhstan would ultimately identify with (or at least relate to) Kazakh culture and language and this link would hold the new political community together (*ibid.*). Thus, the civil element of the national idea of Kazakhstan has had to co-exist with nationalising policies and practices which are manifested, *inter alia*, in the ‘revised histories, the iconography of the new regime, the privileged status accorded to the titular language and the exclusion of members of non-eponymous groups from the echelons of power’ (Bohr, 1998:139). These policies and Russian reaction towards them will be looked at in more detail in the next sections.

6.4.1 The Past as a Hostile Other – Reassessment of the Soviet Legacy

Some observers have argued that the main reasons behind the revision of history in post-Soviet Kazakhstan have been the need to restore the pride and dignity of the indigenous Kazakh nation (Aimaganbetova, 2003) and to provide the legitimacy for its dominance in its own homeland (Bohr, 1998, Masanov, 2002, Diener, 2004). These objectives have been tackled by numerous contemporary historiographers who tried to find ‘blank spots’ in Kazakhstan’s history, reappraise the policies of Russification, collectivisation and sedentarisation and establish the ancient origins of Kazakh ethnogenesis and statehood (Masanov, 2002). Some of these ideas have been championed by President Nazarbaev himself who sponsored a six-volume series of the revised Kazakh history (1996-1998) and published, among other things, a book ‘In the Current of History’ (1999).

To understand how my Russian respondents viewed this historical revisionism, I selected, arguably, one of the most controversial points in Kazakh history – the original adhesion (*prisoedinenie*) of Kazakh steppe region to Russia and asked my respondents whether they considered it to be a voluntary act or colonization (Table 6.8):

Table 6.8 Do you think the adhesion of the Kazakh steppe region to Russia was voluntary or was it colonization?

	Voluntary	Both voluntary and by force	Colonisation	Don’t know
Petropavlovsk	8	0	2	0
Astana	7	3	0	0
Almaty	5	4	0	1
Chimkent	9	1	0	0
Total	29 (72%)	8 (20%)	2 (6%)	1 (2%)

The majority of my respondents – 72% – thought that the Kazakh steppe region joined Russia voluntarily, 20% stressed that it happened both voluntarily and by force and only 6% used the word ‘colonisation’. These results can be partly explained by the age of my respondents most of whom were socialized during the Soviet time and found it difficult to ‘change their point of view’ (Alm-1,r). It could also be a reaction to the word ‘colonisation’ which has had a very negative connotation during the post-Soviet period and could potentially damage the Russian position in Kazakhstan (if it had not already affected it).

Hence, 38% did not trust the revised accounts, 32% ‘did not always trust them’ and only 10% were comfortable with the revision (Table 6.9):

Table 6.9 Do you trust the revised historical accounts (*pereosmyslennye istoricheskie ocherki*)? (Russians)

	No	Not always	Yes	Don't know
Petropavlovsk	4	0	1	5
Astana	1	7	1	1
Almaty	5	4	0	1
Chimkent	5	2	2	1
Total	15 (38%)	13 (32%)	4 (10%)	8 (20%)

Notably, some of my respondents did not trust ‘either Soviet or post-Soviet accounts’ (Alm-6,r, Ast-8,r) and believed that historians would ‘serve anybody who is in power’ (Alm-7.9,r). A designer from Almaty explained:

I myself did a historical degree and I know well how our professors had to re-write our history and adjust it to the new state idea. I think our elites (*vlasti*) are not interested in researching it professionally at the moment. May be they will be in the future, I don't know. And Russia doesn't care about it either. That's why I decided to do another degree because suddenly I felt bored and hurt. I've understood that it was all meaningless. It was stupid to listen to the old fairy-tales of our professors and repeat them. I didn't like it and started questioning everything (Alm-8,r).

A civil servant from Astana similarly said that historical revisions were started by somebody who could benefit from them:

We all know that Kazakh Khans asked Anna Ioanovna to join Russia and protect them from the Dzhungar invasion. If in doubt you can have a look at the documents in the archives. That's why, I think, somebody wanted to portray it as colonization and benefit by it (Ast-1,r)

The above quotations show that the notion of ‘coloniality’ cannot be reduced to objective or subjective criteria, because it is also a social construct closely linked to the very nature of national identity and national state project (Beissinger, 1995, Smith, G, 1998). My Russian

respondents, therefore, have had to readjust to the revised historical narratives and re-evaluate the idea of empire as a continuing Russian project. This indirectly placed them within the ‘colonizers’ camp of the ‘colonizers/colonized’ division and loosely defined them as an ‘out-group’ against whom a disunited titular group could potentially unite and on whom they could blame their failures and frustrations.³² Some of my respondents rejected the revised perspective (these mainly fell into the age bracket between 28 -70), others accepted it (mostly under the age 21), but in either case their relationship with the official historiography in Kazakhstan and, more importantly, with the national state identity project has changed. The same trend of reassessing one’s position and identity vis-à-vis the new historical narrative can be traced in other questions related to historical revisionism. Specifically, I asked my respondents to identify what was positive and what was negative in Kazakhstan during the Soviet time. The results were as follows:

Table 6.10 What was positive in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period? (Russians)

	The Soviet economy and social policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare provisions – free education, healthcare services, housing, support for single mothers and disabled, free children and youth organisations, full employment, no division between rich and poor (36); - Development of industry and infrastructure (17) 	53
	The Soviet nationality policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internationalism, ideology of friendship of peoples, the Soviet people, national equality, people did not notice nationality; all-human values (<i>obschechelovecheskie tsennosti</i>) were promoted by the state (10) (25%) - Mutual cultural influence (10) (25%); - Deportations – many clever and talented people were sent to Kazakhstan and contributed to the development of the republic (2) (5%) - Kazakhstan owes its sovereignty to the Soviet Union, Kazakhs have become a more homogenous modern nation (2) (5%) 	28
	The totalitarian political system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Communist ideology – the unifying role of Lenin, Pioneers, Komsomol, and CPSU; Soviet patriotism (2) (5%); - Kazakhstan was part of the Soviet Union – a great superpower (2) (5%); - Kazakhs were sedentarised (4) (9%) 	8
	Total	89

Table 6.11 What, in your opinion, was negative in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period? (Kazakhs)

1	The Soviet political system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there was a complete denial of the outside world (3); 	
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³² For a useful discussion of the concepts ‘enemy’ and ‘hostile other’ see Greenfeld, 1992 (Ch.1), Prizel, 1998 (Ch. 1,2.), Spencer & Wollman, 2002 (Ch. 3), Waller and Linklater, 2003.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was no freedom of speech, all political issues were discussed ‘in the kitchens’ (3); - Communist ideology (4) - The regime encouraged people to be passive and dependent on the state, individuality was suppressed and censored (2) (6%); - Repressions, purges, collectivisation, sedentarisation, hunger – all nationalities, including Kazakhs were affected (3) - all decisions were made in Moscow (1) - education was ideologically tinged (1) 	17
	<p>The Soviet nationalities policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kazakh language and culture were forgotten, Russification (3) - Nobody knew Kazakhstan and Kazakhs in the world (as if they never existed) (1) - Loss of national dignity (1) - Cultural discrimination of Kazakhs (1) - children learnt more about the history of Russia and the world than about the history Kazakhstan (1) 	7
8	<p>The Soviet economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kazakhstan was a ‘raw material appendage’ of Russia (3) (15%); - Economy of shortages, queues (5) 	8
	Total	22

As we can see from the tables, my Russian respondents viewed the Soviet system in a three-dimensional way (politics, economics, and culture (national issues)), with ‘national issues’ being mostly a positive dimension. Unlike Kazakhs, they did not ‘dwell on’ the nationality issue – which is a testimony to their ex-dominant status in the Soviet Union (Schöpflin, 2000:243) – but rather enumerated the national grievances of Kazakhs as constructed by the new nation-builders. These grievances were usually filtered through the eyes of the elites or Kazakhs which placed my respondents outside the new narratives and sometimes in the role of ‘aggressors’ that caused Kazakhs to suffer. As a pensioner from Chimkent put it: ‘Now they say that the Russian language was imposed on them [Kazakhs] and that we destroyed their culture and language. It’s all very difficult to come to terms with’ (Ch-1,r).

Indeed, as Bhavna Dave put it, ‘the dissolution of the Soviet Union led the new nationalizing states and their elites to conflate Russian ethnonational and imperial identities, whereas ordinary Russians outside Russia found themselves grappling with the contradictory legacy of the imperial, national and regional elements of their identity’ (2007:127). This fusion or conflation of Russian and imperial identities has been instrumental in de-legitimizing Russian identity in Kazakhstan and placing it outside the core of the national-state identity project.

6.4.2 Restructuring of the ‘Public Space’: Renaming Streets, Changing State Symbols

Changing state symbols and renaming streets and towns have been an equally important mechanism of transforming national perceptions and converting land into national territory (Melvin, 1995, Masanov, 2002, Karin & Chebotarev, 2002, Kaiser, 2002). This process has had a very mixed reaction from the population in general, but Russians were particularly sensitive that ‘their’ history was going. A survey in 2001 found out that 71.8% of Russians viewed this process negatively, 16% indifferently and only 5.2% positively (Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002:233). My small-scale survey confirms these findings. 52% of my respondents were against re-naming, 20% said that they agreed with some changes, but thought that the authorities pushed it too far at time and only 15% were comfortable with the revision (Table 6.12)

Table 6.12 How do you view the renaming of streets and towns after the break-up of the Soviet Union?

	negatively	do not mind some renaming but it shouldn't go into extremes	Positively	do not care
Petropavlovsk	6	3	1	0
Astana	5	4	1	0
Almaty	5	2	1	2
Chimkent	5	1	3	1
	21 (52%)	10 (20%)	6 (15%)	3 (7%)

Interestingly, the symbolic cultural sphere was the only section where my respondents expressed themselves quite feely and openly within the boundaries of a set question. This usually did not happen in other sections (related, for example, to the upwards mobility or access to power in Kazakhstan) where I had to use extensive probing or search for clues in other sections of the interviews. This was possibly the case because symbolic sphere is an abstract area that maps all participants and allows them to transfer their feelings onto a symbol or symbols without being politically incorrect or openly nationalistic.

Specifically, my respondents thought that ‘renaming’ of streets and towns was a ‘waste of money’ and that ‘authorities should have increased pensions, improved roads and helped

the poor instead' (Alm-3,r). Some were also concerned that the Soviet history was going and that the authorities could have saved at least some names to remember the past. 'This is a policy of fear', said a historian from Almaty, 'as if people say to themselves: 'This did not happen to us!' How come it did not happen when it did?' (Alm-8,r). There was also some appreciation that the re-naming process was undemocratic and corrupt. A doctor from Astana explained:

When we found out that our streets were re-named, not only me, but many people were shocked. This is possibly a natural psychological reaction. The impression was as if somebody deliberately marked it: 'This is now ours, Kazakhs!' Let's take, for example, Cosmonauts' Street... Why was it renamed? We have so many heroes that we don't know. Even Kazakhs don't know these so-called 'prominent' people. This is true nationalization [*natsionalizatsiya*]! To put it simply, it is nationalism and it hurts! (Ast-7).

Other respondents similarly stressed that they did not like the changes, but they 'could not do anything about it and had to submit to it' [*dolzhny byli podchinit'sya*]. 'After all we live in Kazakhstan', explained a businesswoman from Astana, 'and Kazakhstan gained independence' (Ast-2,r).

It has to be mentioned that many Kazakh respondents viewed the process of renaming streets and towns negatively and claimed that it was financially costly, corrupt and disrespectful of the Soviet past. They, however, did not perceive this process as being a direct threat to their existing and future status, and a considerable number of Kazakhs thought of it in a positive way. Russians, on the other hand, were concerned not only that their history was going, but their status as well. This process was very pronounced in the older generation and respondents from the North (Petropavlovsk) and less noticeable in respondents under the age 21.

Robert J. Kaiser has argued that the process of binding nation to homeland or 'blood' to 'soil' is critical to nation-making, in that it delimits not only those people and places that

belong within the nation, but also and perhaps more importantly marks of ethnonational Others that do not' (2004:232). In this respect the official invocation of national symbols is an 'other'-forming process and it plays an important role in the construction of Us and Them. My Russian respondents, and especially the older generation and respondents from the North, were particularly concerned that elements of their identity had been gradually removed from the public space and the on-going national state project.

6.4.3 Language Policy

Some observers have argued that language in Kazakhstan has been a particularly contentious issue not only because it affected various aspects of national identity, state capacity, economic opportunities and conflict over resources, but because it divided titular and non-titular groups, especially the European ones (Savin, 2001, Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002, Dave, 2003, 2007). As one engineer from Almaty put it:

In Kazakhstan people speak many languages, but two of them prevail. One is our state language (Kazakh) and another is a language of interethnic communication (Russian). This separates people because we have two options, but we cannot do with one of them because Kazakhs don't want to abandon their language... and they are right. At the same time, the majority of the population, the absolute majority speaks Russian. And this divides us (Alm-5,r)

Some of my Russian respondents claimed that the language policy has affected their upwards mobility, disrupted the common educational space with Russia and generally contributed to ethnic tensions and Russian out-migration from Kazakhstan. 'People are not confident that their children will master Kazakh', said a civil servant from Astana, 'that's why they think that there is no future here' (Ast-8,r).

Some, however, believed that the introduction of Russian as a second state language could improve the situation and 'give a glimpse of hope that Russian [would] definitely stay (Ast-1,r). 90% of my respondents held this view and only 10% thought that 'Kazakh should be

the only state language' (Ch-6,r). The latter were mainly in the age bracket 18-21 or were planning to out-migrate in the nearest future. These trends concur with those cited by Kurganskaya and Dunaev who argued that 81% of Russians favoured the introduction of Russian as a second state language and only 5% supported the option of Kazakh as the only state language (2002:242). This suggests that Russians in Kazakhstan are anxious to 'properly' institutionalize Russian and ensure its continuing reproduction. As a result, any concessions made by the government have been insufficient to 'satisfy them as to their deeper existential fears' (Schöpflin, 2000:250). This explains, among other things, that none of my Russian respondents supported a Kazakh-medium school or university education and started sending their children to Kazakh schools.³³ Ninety four per cent of them, however, viewed Kazakh as a useful asset that could help them and their children to 'improve career chances and life in general' (Alm-5,r).

In this respect, my Russian respondents partially supported linguistic Kazakhization while practically undermining the programme. Indeed, only 4% of them were studying Kazakh on a regular basis, all of whom were from Chimkent. This indecisiveness and lack of initiative as regards learning and speaking Kazakh can be related, *inter alia*, to the following factors: Firstly, some of my respondents were concerned that the Russian-speaking context was shrinking and that Kazakh was increasingly used by the state institutions and individuals as a device to check Russians' loyalty to Kazakhs and Kazakhstan. Secondly, the language issue was believed to be closely related to career prospects, especially where access to power and resources was concerned. Some of my respondents thought that this link was illegitimate given the poor facilities for learning the Kazakh language. Thirdly, the language issue was seen as having a loose connection to the colonial discourse where Russians were indirectly implicated in undermining Kazakh culture and language. This put additional pressure on my Russian respondents who had to be the carriers of the ex-dominant identity while at the same time adopting a minority stance. Moreover, the wide

³³ Pal Kolstø in his early survey of 1996 has shown that almost no non-Kazakhs had started sending their children to Kazakh schools. Among Russians there was a negligible increase from 0.7% in the previous generation to 3.2 in 1996, whereas the share of Kazakh children attending Kazakh schools increased from 57% in the past generation to some 66% in 1996 (Malkova, Kolstø, Melberg, 1999:247).

cultural divide between Kazakhs and Russians, lack of democratic practices and considerable out-migration of Russians from Kazakhstan further alienated Russians from learning the language. All the above factors made Russians less secure in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and some of them transferred their negative feelings onto the state language as a protest against the situation.

6.4.4 Economic and Career Issues

The economic transition from a Soviet command economy to the market economy has similarly generated a lot of anxiety, upheaval and dislocation for the Kazakhstani population. It has contributed not only to the rapid division of society into rich and poor, but also to the gradual growth of nationalism between different ethnic groups.

It has to be noted that during the early days of independence (1991-1998) economic and nationality issues were not usually conflated by the Russian and other minority groups. This is well reflected in the earlier survey (1996) of Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg who argued that there was only a small correlation between ethnicity and economic success in Kazakhstan (1999:232-233). In particular, they argued that their respondents viewed 'property and income' (coefficient 1.62³⁴), 'education' (1.70), 'individual qualities' (1.77) and 'profession' (1.86) as more important attributes for attaining material well-being than 'religious faith' (2.62), 'ethnicity' (2.97), and 'gender' (3.26). These findings were indirectly borne out by the data related to the distribution of wealth in Kazakhstan. Specifically, 48.8% of Russians and 46.5% of Kazakhs believed that wealth in Kazakhstan was distributed 'independently of nationality', while 41.6% of Russians and 27.9 % of Kazakhs claimed that Kazakhs were the richest group in the republic (ibid. 235). In this respect, Malkova et al's findings are a good snapshot of the transitional phase where Russians viewed the changing economic situation both in 'naked class' terms (Weber, 1991) and as an emerging ethno-social hierarchy with Kazakhs at the top. These trends

³⁴ A low coefficient indicates strong agreement with the statement. Complete agreement among all members of the group gives coefficient 1, and complete disagreement gives the coefficient 4. For more on the use of coefficients in this survey, see Malkova et al 1999:233, 275-280.

remain open even fifteen years after independence although the conflation of economic and national issues has intensified in recent years.

Specifically, 90% of my Russian respondents believed that Kazakhs had the highest percentage of rich people in Kazakhstan, followed by Russians (45%), Koreans (25%), Jews (17%), Uzbeks (17%), and other small (*malochislennye*) nationalities (Table 6.13).

Table 6.13 Which nationality has the highest percentage of rich people in Kazakhstan? (%)

	Petropavlovsk	Astana	Almaty	Chimkent	Total
Kazakhs	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	90
Russians	10	15	10	10	45
Koreans	2.5	5	7.5	10	25
Jews	2.5	7.5	5	2.5	17
Uzbeks	0	2.5	2.5	12.5	17
Chechens	5	2.5	2.5	5	15
Germans	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	10
Tatars	0	0	0	10	10
Ukrainians	2.5	5	0	0	7.5
Belorussians	0	2.5	0	0	2.5
Independent of nationality	2.5	0	5	0	7.3

This indicates that economic opportunities are still open to Russians and other non-titular groups ‘as long as they do not cut across the Kazakh interests’ (P-5,r). Indeed, some of my Russian respondents made a conscious distinction between the ability to earn money by whatever means possible and the ability to have a well-paid job in the government or oil-related business. The latter route, in the opinion of a designer from Almaty, ‘was largely closed to Russians’ (Alm-6,r).

This trend was somewhat visible in the early survey of Nurbulat Masanov who claimed that 38.2% of Russians viewed their nationality as an obstacle to their career advancement and only 30.7% thought that it did not affect their chances (Masanov, 1996:18,48). My small scale survey confirms these findings and registers an increase in ethnicisation of the career opportunity perceptions. Notably, 80% of my Russian respondents believed that nationality was important for one’s career advancement in Kazakhstan as opposed to 10% who said that it was not. Five per cent, however, were convinced that nationality was ‘very important

in the political, military or resource-rich economic spheres, while in technical or ‘middle’ business areas it [was] less important’ (Alm-6,r) (Table 6.14).

Table 6.14 Is nationality important for one’s career advancement in Kazakhstan? (%)

	Yes	No	Only in certain spheres	don’t know
Petropavlovsk	20	2.5	0	2.5
Astana	22.5	2.5	0	0
Almaty	17.5	2.5	5	0
Chimkent	20	2.5	0	2.5
	80	10	5	5

These data indirectly correspond with the findings of V.N Khlyupin who pointed out that the ministries with the most extensive Kazakhisation have been the economically and politically vital ministries of oil and gas, foreign affairs, information and press, and justice, all of which had become about 80% Kazakh (Khlyupin, 1998:52). Erlan Karin and Andrei Chebotarev similarly stressed that ‘representatives of the indigenous population constitute 80 to 90% of the administrative elites’ (2002:52). This possibly explains why some of my respondents felt that their cause was ‘lost’ and that they had little legitimacy in these structures. A civil servant from Astana explains:

I myself worked for one of the ministries several years ago. When I went to other state institutions with different tasks what struck me most was that everybody was Kazakh. I didn’t care whether they were Kazakh or Kyrgyz or Russian or Uzbek, but what impressed me was a picture of very big open space offices with mono-ethnic Kazakh clerical workers. When you hear statistics or dry words that ‘state institutions and central elite are monopolized by Kazakhs’, it doesn’t impress you because it has nothing to do with your daily life. But when you witness it with your own eyes, it strikes you, it makes you think. I remember myself as part of a very colorful and vibrant society. In Almaty, where I was born, I was always surrounded by Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Koreans, etc. And now this ‘vibrancy’ is not reflected in our institutions anymore. I think that something should be done about it, but at the same time I know that most people who work in these institutions do not necessarily ‘hate’ me or other Russians or Germans, they just try to help their relatives in a time of hardship (Ast-10,r).

A civil servant from Almaty similarly stressed that ‘all employment decisions in Kazakhstan are now in the hands of our titular nation. It would be nice, however, if people were hired and promoted irrespective of their nationality, but I don’t know whether Kazakhs are ready to give us this opportunity’ (Alm-10,r). In this respect, my Russian respondents have had a dual attitude towards the ethnicisation of political and economic structures in Kazakhstan. On the one hand, they thought that Kazakhs had the right to make certain recruitment decisions given their special status in Kazakhstan, but on the other hand, they believed that some of these decisions were unjust or badly made (although not intentionally and initially anti-Russian or anti-minorities) and that Kazakhs could have done more to include other ethnic groups in the political and economic structures.

This dual or ambiguous attitude of Russians is well captured by V.D. Kurganskaya and V. Y. Dunaev who argued that the insufficient representation of non-Kazakhs in the power structures is a result of tension between the democratic and ethnocratic strands of the national-state project of Kazakhstan. Specifically they stressed that integration of various ethnic groups into the Kazakhstani society was achieved through the nationally-neutral ‘market organisation’ model (*model’ rynochnoi samoorganizatsii*) and the ethnically-infused ‘state-communal, traditional’ model (*etatistski-obshchinnaya, traditsionalistskaya model’*). These models were applied to the multiethnic Kazakhstani society in such a way that they contributed to increased ethnic polarization between groups rather than interethnic and societal compromise (Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002: 43-45). In other words, the initial advent of capitalism divided the Kazakhstani society into rich and poor, but at the same time it activated ethnicity as people started to cope with such division. Twenty five per cent of my Russian respondents, for example, claimed that ‘all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan try to help their own nationalities – Kazakhs help Kazakhs, Russian support Russians, Ukrainians and Belorussians, etc – and all this creates an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust between people’ (Alm-3,r). Fifty five per cent also noted that Kazakhs more than Russians and other European groups tend to take care of their relatives and promote them once they assume a position of power. ‘When a Kazakh comes to power,’ said an artist from Almaty, ‘he brings along his whole team of relatives, compatriots (*zemlyaki*) and

representatives of his clan or *zhuz*. That's how they survive and protect each other' (Alm-7,r). All this was thought to contribute to Kazakhisation of power structures as Russians and other non-titulars are usually excluded from ethnic and sub-ethnic divisions of Kazakhs (see Panarin, 1999, Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002, Masanov, 2002)

Thus, one can argue that the economic transition from the command to the market economy in Kazakhstan has interacted with the political and national transitions and divided the Kazakhstani population both along the class and ethnic lines. And the group that has access to power and resources is ultimately better positioned to compete in this situation by blocking the upward mobility of other groups.

6.4.5 Demographic Issues

In the last section I will briefly look at how my respondents interpret various choices they have had after Kazakhstan gained independence, namely exit, voice and loyalty (Hirschman, 1981) and at how these choices affect their ethno-national understanding.

Will Kymlicka has argued that minorities have four basic options: (1) emigrate *en masse*, (2) accept integration into the majority culture, (3) seek some form of self-government to maintain their own societal culture, and (4) accept permanent marginalization (Kymlicka, 2001:22). Some commentators have pointed out that a considerable number of Russians in Kazakhstan chose the first option of emigration over integration (Sadovskaya, 1998, Panarin, 1999, Dave, 2007). Indeed, the overall share of the Russian population has dropped from 6,227,549 in 1989 to 3,945,116 in 2007 or from 37.8% to 25.6% (Chinn & Kaiser, 1996:189, Shokamanov & Musabek, 2007:44). Some explained this shift by the difficulty of the Russian-speaking population to 'adapt to the unpredictable forces of the market economy, while feeling a tremendous psychological discomfort caused by the need to adjust to the ethnocentric pressure of the new regime' (Masanov, 1999:145). Others saw the that the out-migration was caused by the 'anticipation of a deterioration of the [Russian] political and cultural status following the elevation of Kazakh as the state

language and the accompanying belief that their children would grow up as ‘second class citizens’ in the new Kazakh-dominated state’ (Dave, 2007:128).

My small-scale survey confirms these findings. Specifically, my Russian respondents claimed that various nationalising policies and practices (72%) and economic issues (50%) were the main factors that pushed Russians to take the exit route. These were followed by the changes in size and concentration of the Russian group in Kazakhstan (20%), the negative attitudes of the newly-empowered Kazakhs to minorities (20%), the favourable attitudes of Russia’s Russians towards Russian migrants (17%) and the regime factor (authoritarianism) that fosters *korenizatsyia* and discrimination against the non-titular population (Table 6.16):

Table 6.16 Factors that foster out-migration (or exit) from Kazakhstan (%)³⁵

1. Nationalising policies and practices	(72%)
a) language policy (37.5%)	
b) employment policy (25%)	
c) rewriting of history (2.5%)	
d) changing street names (2.5%)	
e) status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians – some Russians could not put up with it and left (2.5%)	
f) nationalist rhetoric of the elites/ Kazakh intelligentsia (2.5%)	
2. Economic issues	(50%)
a) unemployment and poverty (20%)	
b) professionals and rich Russians leave for Russia and America because they want the ‘ready-made’ comforts of the developed states, in Kazakhstan they have to develop these (2.5%)	
c) every ethnic group tries to support their own nationality which means that minorities have fewer opportunities because they don’t have access to power and resources (12.5%)	
d) Russians and Russian-speaking non-titular minorities encounter blocked mobility in the state and resource-rich economic spheres – that’s why they have or will have a lower socio-economic status than Kazakhs (12.5%)	
e) Kazakhs are tempted to marginalize all non-titular groups, force them out of the country, raise the status of the indigenous citizen (as in the Arab countries) and redistribute oil money among ethnic Kazakhs (2.5%)	
3. Size, concentration or rootedness of Russians in Kazakhstan	(20%)
a) the Russian genetic pool is diminishing in Kazakhstan as all talented, beautiful, well off and strong Russians are leaving or have left (7.5%)	
b) it is quite uncomfortable when you have only a few Russians around when you were used to many – you feel alienated and marginalized (5%)	
c) Kazakhs tend to marry within their own ethnic group which means that Russians have fewer possibilities to	

³⁵ This table was loosely structured according to Brubaker’s suggestion on how to analyse Russian out-migration after the break up of the Soviet Union. Brubaker identified four main factors that might affect migration: (1) ethnodemographic variables such as the size, concentration and rootedness of the Russian population, (2) the terms of membership (nationalising policies) and the texture of everyday life for Russians (the attitudes of the titular group) in the new nation-state, (3) prospective economic and political advantages, and (4) the orientation and policies of the Russian state towards the various communities of diaspora Russians (Brubaker, 1996: 173-178).

merge, mix and share in their identity, power and access to resources (5%) d) Russians have a high mortality and low birth rate which means that they will be quickly swamped by Kazakhs (2.5%)	
4. Attitude of the newly empowered titular group to the new minorities a) Kazakhs have become more aggressive and assertive after independence. They have understood that they have power and access to resources and this gives them bigger leverage over all other ethnic groups, including Russians (5%) b) a section of the Kazakh intelligentsia and the majority of Kazakh youth have become increasingly radicalised, intolerant and nationalistic (5%) c) occasionally Kazakhs pick on Russians and other Europeans in the streets and tell them to go to their historical homelands (this happened mainly in Chimkent) (7.5%) d) some Kazakhs have been radicalised by Russians' insecurity and complains about nationalising policies that promote Kazakh interests (2.5%)	(20%)
5. Interaction with Russia and Russia's Russians a) Russia is an ethnic homeland where Russians can go and have a reasonably normal life (7.5%) b) Russia's Russians are close to 'Kazakh' Russians because they are of the same nationality, speak the same language and share in the same pain and humiliation that was brought on by the break up of the Soviet Union (10%)	(17%)
6. Regime type a) authoritarianism stimulates corruption, nepotism, 'korenizatsiya' of state institutions and discrimination against non-titular groups (2.5%) c) authoritarianism has generally undermined the position of Russians in Kazakhstan as they have not had any official 'voice' options to challenge their position (this was the case especially at the beginning of independence when the Russian group was big) (2.5%)	(5%)

These findings are again borne out by other surveys. A survey in 2001 found that 51.6% of Russians thought that emigration was linked to the language question, followed by unemployment (44.8%), lack of future opportunities for their children (36.7%) and lack of personal opportunities in Kazakhstan (30.6%). The wish to live in one's own historical homeland (3.6%) and with one's relatives (1.6%), however, scored low in the overall list of reasons which is possibly an indication that political and economic factors were the primary factors behind Russian emigration (Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002:186-187).

Notably, some observers have treated the lack of voice among Russians as a factor that contributes to out-migration from Kazakhstan. Elena Sadovskaya, for example, pointed out that the general social apathy of the Kazakhstani population, the lack of Russian leadership and the lack of democratic traditions in protecting one's interests and rights forced Russians to address their new situation at the individual rather than group level (i.e. through emigration) (Sadovskaya, 1998:82-83, see also Panarin, 1999, Kolstø, 1999). My Russian respondents similarly raised a lot of concerns about their present and future situation in Kazakhstan, but none of them were planning to voice these concerns at the public or state

level. Some believed that their ‘personal opinion [would] not change anything’ and that their ‘efforts would be wasted’ (Alm-5,r). Others said that they did not want to antagonize the ‘security and power structures (*silovye struktury*) and endanger the future of their children’ (Alm-7,r). ‘Look at what happened to Sarsembaev and Duvanov’, said a civil servant from Astana, ‘I can’t afford this type of behaviour. I’ve got a family to feed’ (Alm-10,r). That’s why many thought that it would be better to either leave Kazakhstan for Russia or stay in Kazakhstan as long as the situation is still tolerable. In this respect my Russian respondents continued the Soviet tradition of ‘kitchen talks’ (*kukhonnye razgovory*) and ‘private analysis of events’ (*obsuzhdenie problem v uzkom krugu*) and channeled their discontent either to the possibility of out-migration or loyalty to the state, however imperfect.

It has to be noted that the ‘loyalty’ option as understood and explained by my respondents should not be seen as an attempt to integrate into Kazakhstani society on new terms, but rather to find common points of reference with the new state and the empowered titular group and to continue the Soviet status quo. By the ‘Soviet status quo’ I mean the possibility to use Russian in all spheres of life, to be able to work and earn a living and not to be picked on by the empowered titular group. Specifically, 52% of my Russian respondents claimed that the warm and positive attitude of Kazakhs made them stay in (or loyal to) Kazakhstan. This was followed by the feeling of attachment (or rootedness) to Kazakhstan (42%), unfavourable perceptions of Russia as a foreign state (32%), relatively inclusive nationalising policies (30%) and the ability to earn a good living in Kazakhstan (25%) (Table 6.17):

Table 6. Factors that foster ‘loyalty’ options (%)

1. Attitude of the newly empowered titular group to the new minorities	(52%)
a) Kazakhs lived with Russians and other ethnic groups for many decades, if not centuries, and they got used to each other, became tolerant, although may be accumulated some prejudices (37.5%)	
b) Kazakhs are hospitable, inclusive and treat all nationalities well (15%)	
2. Size, concentration or rootedness of Russians in Kazakhstan	(42%)
a) Kazakhstan is a motherland for Russians that they love dearly (42.5%)	
3. Interaction with Russia and ethnic Russians	(32%)
a) Russia is a foreign country (7.5%)	
b) It is very difficult to change a place of residence where you know everything and go somewhere where you’ve never been, but which is supposedly your ‘ethnic homeland’ (5%)	

c) Russia's Russians are more racist, xenophobic, rude and assertive than 'Kazakh' Russians (20%)	
4. Nationalising policies and practices	(30%)
a) official rhetoric – the elites usually call for tolerance and interethnic peace and accord (7.5%)	
b) the authorities promote culture of all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, organise 'days of ethnic culture' (5%)	
c) status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians (primordial understanding) - Russians believe that the status reversal and nationalising policies are partially legitimate because it is a Kazakh land and Kazakhs can do whatever they want with it (17.5%)	
5. Economic issues	(25%)
a) Russians can still earn a good living in Kazakhstan and lead a relatively normal life (7.5%)	
b) improvement in the economy will hopefully improve interethnic relations in the country (12.5%)	
c) although the divisions between rich and poor are there, the socio-economic divisions between Kazakhs and Russians are yet not as pronounced (5%)	
6. Regime type	(2.5%)
a) authoritarianism paradoxically serves the interests of Russians in Kazakhstan because the regime suppresses the growing ethno-nationalist interests of the Kazakh-speaking counter-elites and Kazakh-speaking section of the Kazakh population. And given Russian diminishing numbers in Kazakhstan democracy will mean increasing Kazakhization of the public spheres (2.5%)	

Interestingly, the economic factor was relegated to the fifth position whereas all other factors can be loosely grouped as 'political'. This possibly indicates that although the economic issue is of great importance to minorities, the political factor is even more important as it affects not only their pursuit of economic interests, but their ability to pursue any interests. It is not surprising, then, that my respondents placed such a strong emphasis on the political and cultural context because it makes their life tolerable in the new sovereign Kazakhstan.

6.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to find out whether some coherent identity is coalescing among Russians – the largest minority in Kazakhstan – and to analyse the factors that promote or inhibit its consolidation. As we can see from the sections above, most of my Russian respondents were in a state of confusion and none of them have developed a stable minority identity. That is, my respondents have had to come to terms with their Soviet, imperial, Russian, Kazakhstani and minority identities, internalize their meanings and implications and re-evaluate their position with regard to the new state and the empowered titular group. All this has had to be achieved in a very short time-span and it is no wonder that elements of different identities have mixed and fused in a contradictory way. This process was

particularly prominent in the respondents aged between twenty five and thirty five who did not stand firmly either in the Soviet past, or in the post-Soviet Kazakhstani period. The older generation (40-70) and the younger generation (under 21) were more consistent and stable in their senses of belonging and they anchored most of their attitudes, explanations and perceptions in the era in which they were socialized.

The inability to quickly ‘switch’ from the Soviet imperial to the Kazakhstani Russian minority identity is not totally unexpected, though. As we argued in Chapter 2, the political, economic and national transitions are lengthy processes (especially in multiethnic states) and it is only natural that people’s identities interact with these transitions and are also in a state of transition. The incomplete character of the democratic transition means that Russians have lacked an effective mechanism for expressing the ‘voice’ of their community in competitive politics, which has probably inhibited the development of their new identity, while at the same time the continued ‘exit’ option of outmigration to Russia has reinforced the provisional character of their position. In the same way the gradualist character of the economic transition has not yet produced an ethnicised class polarization which would have focused Russians on identity choices. At the same time, however, one can also discern certain trends that are strengthening, but have not been realised yet. These are the general ethnicisation of Russian consciousness and a hardening of subordination and status ranking between Kazakhs and Russians.

George Schöpflin has argued that

the ethnicisation of the state [implies] that only members of the ethnic majority have any chance to access to power, that political power is monopolized by the ethnic majority for its own purposes, that the symbolic and liturgical aspects of the state are appropriated by the majority and that the cultural reproduction of the majority becomes the overriding concern of the state, now permeated by majority interests, while ethnic minorities are marginalized by all the means available to the state apparatus, legal, administrative, political, economic, and so on (2000:252).

My Russian respondents have experienced some elements of ethnicisation of sovereign Kazakhstan and their Russian, Soviet-imperial and Kazakhstani-minority identities were highlighted against this background. These trends will probably continue to grow given the changing demographic situation in the country, the out-migration of the Russian-speaking population, and increased confidence of the Kazakh elites associated with the rapid influx of oil revenues.

7 MAPPING ETHNONATIONAL INTERACTION BETWEEN KAZAKHS AND RUSSIANS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at patterns of ethnic stratification and ethnonational interaction between Kazakhs and Russians during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. In particular I shall try to ‘map’ or schematize ethnic stratification in Kazakhstan by drawing on the model devised by D. Horowitz (1985) and elaborated by A. Juska (1999) and by extrapolating two additional models from it that will attempt to capture the dynamics of ethnic re-stratification between the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. I shall also supplement and clarify the developments in ethnic stratification by ‘mapping’ ethnonational relations between Kazakhs and Russians and locating their type in a generalized scheme of types of ethnic interaction developed by R.A. Schermerhorn (1970), which I discussed in chapter two. This will help to indicate changes in status over time by locating the status position in the Soviet period and the likely future position towards which the status relations are moving. Finally, I shall consider the usefulness of the explanatory variables suggested by Horowitz and Schermerhorn in determining the patterns of ethnic interaction.

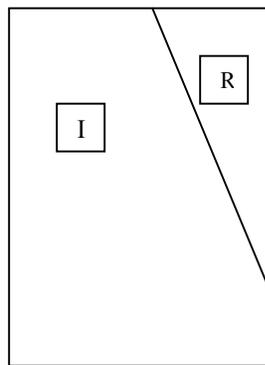
7.2 Mapping ethnonational interaction between Kazakhs and Russians

7.2.1 Structures of Ethnic Stratification in Kazakhstan

As discussed in chapter two, the methods and models elaborated by Donald Horowitz (1985) and R.A. Schermerhorn (1970) were not designed to map the interaction between ethnonational identities. Horowitz, for example, was primarily concerned with the sources and patterns of ethnic conflicts and how they can be ameliorated, while Schermerhorn was interested in developing a research framework for investigating problems of integration in multi-ethnic societies. Nevertheless, the diagrammatic schemas of Horowitz and Schermerhorn can be usefully adapted to map the ethnonational identities and to trace the

changes in these identities over time. D. Horowitz (1985, chapters 1,5) has presented a detailed analysis and graphic representation of ranked and unranked ethnic systems as well as factors that lead to conflict under both circumstances. Drawing on this discussion, Arunas Juska (1999) argued that ethnic stratification³⁶ in late Soviet Kazakhstan was characterized by a rigid-competitive type (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1 Patterns of ethnic stratification in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period



Late Soviet era

R – Russian Population
 I – Indigenous (Kazakh) Population
 Source: Juska 1999:530

It has to be noted that Juska’s scheme does not reflect the ‘dual power’ situation very accurately because power in the Soviet period was exercised differently in different sectors. Thus in the key sectors of fundamental policy-making (political, economic, military and socio-ideological) power lay with the Slavic-dominated centre and the Slavic-dominated political elite, while for purely Kazakhstan-related affairs effective power was wielded increasingly by Kazakhs, the nominally dominant nationality of the Kazakh SSR, and all the parameters of this power were set from the centre and then applied by Kazakhs to the best possible advantage of their people and republic. This was particularly true during the Brezhnev period when Kazakhs had accumulated considerable power in the administrative structures of the republic, but at the same time their identity was still rooted in and

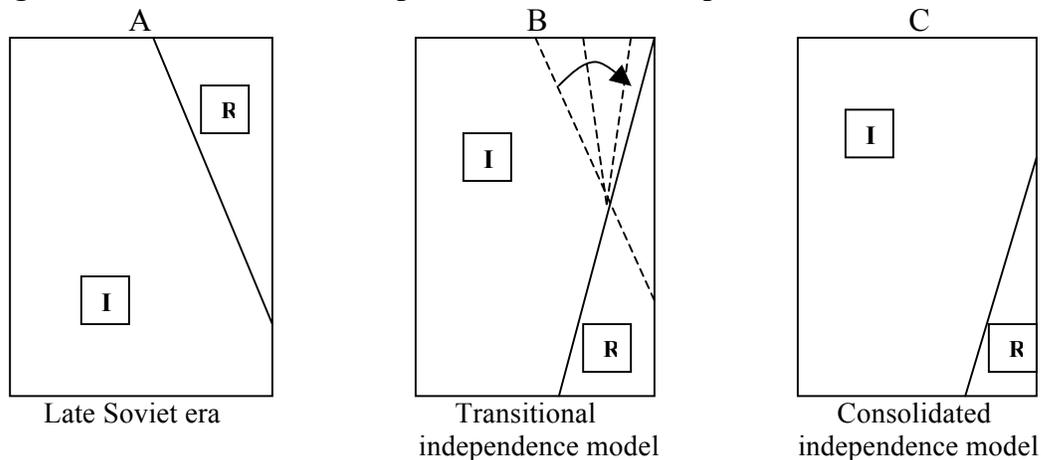
³⁶ Juska defined ethnic stratification as ‘unequal access to power, resources and status among individuals of different ethnic origins... which is achieved through and stabilized by, institutions, laws, norms and values’ (ibid. 547).

hierarchically subordinated to the overall structure of the Soviet state (Olcott, 1995, Cummings, 2005, Dave, 2007). Hence the scheme from Juska indicating an apparently equal sharing of power at the top is not strictly accurate, though it is clear that no diagrammatic schema can adequately reflect all the complexities of the Soviet and post-Soviet ethnic situation in Kazakhstan, but what they can do is highlight key aspects of this situation, which can help to trace the trends of change between one situation and another.

Juska has pointed out that the ‘rigid-competitive’ type of ethnic stratification in late Soviet Kazakhstan was partly an outcome of conquest and incorporation of Kazakh territories into the Russian empire and later into the Soviet Union and partly a result of the Soviet nationality policy that institutionalised a dual power system in the republic (see also Willerton, 1992, Olcott, 1995, Brubaker, 1996, Smith, 1998, Cummings, 2005). Willerton, for example, has noted that a ‘policy of diarchy’ in Kazakhstan had emerged in the 1950s as an extension of *korenizatsiya* policies, in which the first secretary was typically of the titular nationality, while the second secretary was Russian or of other Slavic origin. The first secretary served as a link between the Centre and the local population, while the second exercised real power. This power distribution ensured that by the end of the Soviet period the Russians had established their status as ‘first among equals’ in the Soviet Union as a whole, but at the same time they were increasingly challenged by the Kazakh titular group, who had become more urbanized, educated and upwardly mobile over time (Karklins, 1989, Chinn & Kaiser, 1996, Brubaker, 1996). The Soviet nationality policy, therefore, had been instrumental in triggering, in the words of Frederic Barth (1969:20), a ‘niche overlap’ between Kazakhs and Russians and leading to the increase in inter-ethnic competition between them for elite positions in the republic (Chinn & Kaiser, 1996). It has to be stressed, however, that despite the pressure and competition from Kazakhs in the political and socio-economic spheres, the ethnic stratification pattern between Kazakhs and Russians was still relatively ‘unranked’ in the sense that the Soviet state artificially supported the ‘dual power’ structure both by force and compromise. This situation changed dramatically when the Soviet Union collapsed and the central Soviet power structures were removed from the republic.

To illustrate the post-Soviet dynamics and to map the gradual re-stratification and the emergence of majority/ minority and dominant/ subordinate identities and the role reversal that post-Soviet and nation-building brings, I have adapted Juska's original model (Figure 7.2, Sector A) and extrapolated from it my own two additional models – a transitional independence model (Sector B) and a consolidated independence model (Sector C). The purpose of these schemas is to make a graphic representation of the general power relationships between the indigenous and non-indigenous groups in Kazakhstan and how these have changed between the late Soviet era and the period of my research in 2003/2004. It has to be stressed that these graphic representations are not exactly proportionate, but instead they are intended to illustrate the general interrelationship between Kazakhs and Russians (both at the elite and grassroots' level) and convey the very rough proportions of power wielded by both groups during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods (the elites are being at the top of the diagrams and the masses down below).

Figure 1. Ethnic stratification patterns in Soviet and post-Soviet Kazakhstan



R – Russian Population
 I – Indigenous (Kazakh) Population
 Sector A: Juska 1999:530,
 Sectors B and C: my own extrapolation

The transitional independence model (Sector B, Figure 7.2) illustrates the gradual re-stratification process in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and it is characterised by a mix of the

Soviet stratification patterns and the new emerging stratification with ethnic Kazakhs at the top. That is, as one section of the dual power system that was dominated by Russians and Slavs was gradually destroyed along with much of the influence, which its members wielded, the way became clear for the previously local Kazakh networks to assume control of the national and local administration. Some observers have noted, that gradual Kazakhisation of the state and government structures, while showing elements of disempowerment on an ethnic basis, has resulted not from virulent Kazakh nationalism and the desire to establish an ethnic hierarchy in the country, but from the deep seated rivalries within the new *nomenklatura* of Kazakhstan (Edmunds, 1998, Masanov, 2002). This trend was accompanied by the apathy of the general population towards political activity in general and towards the ideological tenets of ethnic nationalism in particular and there was a low level of social support shown for all the ethnically oriented parties. As a result ethnic tension in the 1990s remained low key, despite some discontent among Russians in the northern oblasts.

The above argument links well with the findings of Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg (1999) who argued that in the early to mid 1990s there was, to use Weber's terms, a 'naked class situation'³⁷ in the economic sector of Kazakhstan with only limited stratification by ethnic status. Specifically, they claimed that their respondents viewed ethnicity as a 'not very important' (26.1%) or 'not important at all' (39.5%) factor to succeed in Kazakhstan. By contrast, 'property and income' (57.9%), 'education' (53.3%), 'individual qualities' (45.2%) and 'profession' (47%) were seen as more important qualities to obtain material well-being. These trends were also indirectly reflected in the question on the distribution of wealth in post-Soviet Kazakhstan (Table 7.1).

³⁷ Weber noted that 'epochs and countries in which the *naked class situation* is of predominant significance are regularly the periods of technical and economic transformations. And every slowing down of the shifting of economic stratifications leads, in due course, to the growth of status structures and makes for a resuscitation of the important role of social honour'. This usually happens when the bases of acquisition and distribution of goods become relatively stable (Weber, 1991:194-195, emphasis added).

Table 7.1 In which ethnic group do we find the richest people? % (multiple answers possible)

	Kazakhs	Russians
Kazakhs	27.9	41.6
Russians	9.3	11.2
Jews	11.7	5.4
Others	6.1	8.3
Foreigners	8.5	3.7
Independent	46.5	48.4
D/K	7.4	4.2
A/F	376	409

Data derived from GI survey, see Malkova, Kolstø and Melberg;1999, 235

As we can see from the table, almost half of the respondents believed that wealth in post-Soviet Kazakhstan was distributed independently of nationality. The ‘naked class situation’, however, had a parallel stratification by ethnic status as most respondents were able to identify some nationalities as wealthier than others. Specifically, both Kazakhs and Russians believed that opulence could be found among the Kazakhs (27% and 41.6% respectively) and to a lesser extent among the Russians (9.3% and 11.2%) and others (17.8% and 13.7%). Malkova *et al.* have claimed that these results might reveal either actual differences in the distribution of wealth in society or perceived differences produced by ethnic stereotypes and other circumstances (1999:234). These data, however, may also point to the ambivalence and flux in people’s minds that were still influenced by the Soviet patterns of ethnic stratification and by the emerging ethnonational trends. In particular, one can see the impact of the Soviet ‘dual power’ system, which manifests in the ‘sharing’ of two lead positions by Kazakhs and Russians (although this ‘sharing’ is somewhat skewed towards Kazakhs which points to the development of a new stratification pattern), and the impact of the Soviet nationalities policy and Soviet culture, which used to stabilize interethnic competition and provide people with a context within which they could compete and pursue their economic interests - hence the perception that wealth in Kazakhstan was distributed independently of nationality.

My small-scale survey indicates that there has been a small qualitative shift since Malkova *et al.* survey was carried out in 1996 (Table 7.2):

Table 7.2 What nationality (*natsional'nost'*) has the highest percentage of wealthy people in Kazakhstan? (2004)

	Kazakhs	Russians
Kazakhs	33 (70%)	37 (85%)
Russians	16 (34%)	16 (34%)
Koreans	9	5
Jews	9	4
Chechens	4	5
Uzbeks	6	2
Germans	3	3

Specifically, unlike the Malkova et al. respondents, my respondents rarely, if at all, believed that wealth in Kazakhstan was distributed independently of nationality. Instead they preferred to identify one or several ethnic groups that they considered ‘wealthy’. The overwhelming majority of Russians (85%) and to a lesser extent Kazakhs (70%) believed that the Kazakhs benefited the most. Some Kazakhs, however, were quick to point out that ‘only a very small group of Kazakhs [were] extremely rich, but the majority [were] extremely poor’ (Alm-6), and that ‘the majority of wealthy Kazakhs [were] from the South or Almaty because that’s where all the money [was] circulating’ (P-1). Other Kazakhs pointed to a special link between Kazakhs and Kazakhstan and linked it to their economic achievement’ (Ast-2). Said an 18 year old student from Astana: ‘Kazakhs now hold the whole state structure – that’s why they are the first. In other states it may be quite different’ (Ast-2). By contrast, my Russian respondents believed that Kazakhs were better off because ‘they [had] access to all good jobs and high positions in the country and this [gave] them access to big money’ (Ast-10). Some also stressed that Kazakhs ‘[had] it all because ‘the President [was] a Kazakh’ (Alm-9) and because ‘Kazakhs [were] now the numerical majority in the country’ (P-4). Interestingly, over a third of Kazakhs (35%) and rather fewer Russians (25%) felt that Russians could also achieve economic success, particularly in areas which did not compete with Kazakhs; and most Kazakhs (77%) and to a lesser extent Russians (55%) thought that other non-titular groups have an opportunity of economic success.

The above data indicate that my Russian respondents associate changes in wealth distribution with the nationalizing policies and practices that disproportionately benefit the

titular population, while Kazakhs, being naturally more defensive on this matter, believe that these changes are ‘natural’ and ‘legitimate’ given that they are the titular group and they have the right to operate in their own economic interests. It has to be noted that the impact of the Soviet ‘dual power’ system is still discernible in my data, although the distance between Kazakhs and Russians has become more pronounced now (as compared to the Malkova et al’ findings). My results also suggest that a new stratification pattern is emerging given that both my Kazakh and Russian respondents believed that non-titular access to power and resources was limited and that Russians and other non-titular groups were able to pursue economic success provided they did not directly compete with Kazakhs and cut across their economic interests.

Turning next to the political sphere in the early to mid 1990s, the new regime represented a mix of ethnocratic and consociational elements, which allowed Russians and Slavs to participate in government structures while ensuring that the state and its institutions remained under tight titular group control (Juska, 1999, Olcott, 2002). The consociational arrangements were influenced, *inter alia*, by the size of the Russian population and its important role in the economy, the high Russification level among Kazakhs, the original civic orientation of the national-state project of Kazakhstan and the cautious approach of the Kazakh elites to the gradual removal of the Soviet dual power system, given Kazakhstan’s political and economic dependence on the Russian Federation (Juska, 1999:542).

Although not strictly comparable, the above argument is not dissimilar to that of S. Cummings who looked at the social origins of the Kazakhstani elites during the first decade of independence (2005, Chapter 3). She argued that the case of Kazakhstan fits the agglutination model rather than the independence model. The agglutination model, as defined by Harold D. Lasswell (1965), suggests that there is a strong link between an individual’s place in the political, economic and ethno-cultural hierarchies so that the economically and culturally privileged group appropriates political leadership. By contrast, the independence model posits only an insignificant correlation between political status and

socio-economic status and there is no discrimination on the basis of education, occupation, family background, age, sex, religion and ethnicity. S. Cummings has maintained that there was no strong correlation between most demographic attributes and particular career patterns in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, apart from ethnicity and gender. Being an ethnic Kazakh and a male, in her opinion, ‘[gave] an individual a considerably better chance of becoming a member of the political elite than would being non-Kazakh or female or both’ (2005:75). At the same time, however, she stressed that if a non-Kazakh male had strong connections from the Soviet time as well as particular educational and occupational attributes he could also survive in power (*ibid.*).

In this respect it can be argued that during the first ten years of independence the political stratification pattern in Kazakhstan contained elements of both the Soviet policy of ‘diarchy’, whose effects have been gradually waning and the emerging stratification system with ethnic Kazakhs at the top. This hybrid pattern can be well illustrated by the Kazakhization of regional appointments (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Ethnicity and the Regional elite

	1991	1992	1995	2000	% of ethnic Kazakhs 1999*
	1 st Sec/ Dep	Governor/Dep	Akim/ 1 st Dep	Akim	
Aktyubinsk	R/K**	K/R	R/K	K	70.7
Almaty	K/R	K/R	K/R	K	59.5
East Kazakhstan	R/K	K/R	R/R	G	48.5
Atyrau	K/R	K/R	K/K	K	89.0
Zhambyl	K/K	K/K	K/K	K	65.5
Zhezkazgan	R/K	R/K	K/K	Abolished	
Karaganda	R/K	R/K	R/K	K	37.6
Kzylorda	K/K	K/K	K/K	K	94.2
Kokshetau	K/R	K/R	K/K	Abolished	
Kostanai	R/K	K/R	K/R	K	31.1
Mangystau	R/K	R/K	K/K	K	78.7
Pavlodar	R/K	K/K	K/K	K	38.2
North Kazakhstan	R/K	G/K	G/K	K	29.5
Semey	K/R	K/R	K/R	Abolished	
Taldykorgan	K/R	K/R	K/R	Abolished	
Turgai	K/R	K/R	K/R	Abolished	
West Kazakhstan	K/R	K/K	K/K	K	64.8
Akmola	G/K	G/K	G/K	K	37.4

South Kazakhstan	R/K	K/K	K/R	K	67.6
Almaty City	K/K	K/R	K/R	R	38.5
Leninsk Town	R/K	R/R	R/R		
Astana City	N/A	N/A	N/A		40.9

Source: *Itogi perepisi naseleniya 1999 goda v Respublike Kazakhstan*. 1999. Almaty: Agentstvo respubliki Kazakhstan po statistike.

G = German; K = Kazakh; R = Russian

Derived from Cummings (2005:70-80)

As we can see from the table, 60% of regional First Secretaries in 1991 were Kazakh, 70% of *akims* were Kazakh in 1995 and 88% were Kazakh by 2000. Of the 54 *akims* between 1991 and 2001 78% were Kazakh, 12% were Russian and 10% were other. Notably, by 2000 the Soviet ‘dual power’ system whereby a Kazakh head would be normally deputied by a Russian and *vice versa*, was no longer the rule. These findings concur with those of Kurganskaya and Dunaev who argued that by 2001 in all of Kazakhstan’s regions the non-titular population was under-represented in regional state bureaucracies (2002:86). They also claimed that this trend was likely to grow as the number of non-titular representatives in the under-30 age group had decreased from 34.4% in 1998 to 29.1% in 1999 (*ibid.*: 84). The evidence here suggests that there has been a gradual shift from a Soviet pattern of ethnic stratification to a more straightforward ranking with one ethnic group at the top. This transformation, however, is still in progress and its results are less revealing than they are likely to be in the coming years when mobility slows down and political institutions consolidate.

To map ethnic stratification in post-Soviet Kazakhstan I employed in my own work Pineo’s scales of social standing of ethnic groups (1977). Social standing or social prestige, according to some observers, depends on the position of a group in three coexisting systems of social stratification: class, ethnicity (Shibutani and Kwan, 1965, Greer 1974) and access to political power and social honour (Horowitz, 1985, Weber, 1991). To elicit a ranking of ethnic groups I asked my respondents to put a card with the name of the most ‘prestigious’ group at the top, with the name of the least ‘prestigious’ group at the bottom, and to arrange all other groups according to their ‘social standing’ in Kazakhstani society³⁸ (Table 7.4).

³⁸ During my research I used 18 cards with the names of the following groups: Azeri, Belorussians,

Table 7.4 Social ranking of Kazakhs and Russians in post-Soviet Kazakhstan (2003/2004) %

	Kazakhs	Russians
<i>Petropavlovsk</i>		
the respondent placed 'Kazakhs' at the top	2	4
'Russians' at the top	2	1
both 'Kazakhs' and 'Russians' at the top	3	2
<i>Astana</i>		
the respondent placed 'Kazakhs' at the top	7	9
'Russians' at the top	0	0
both 'Kazakhs' and 'Russians' at the top	3	1
<i>Almaty</i>		
the respondent placed 'Kazakhs' at the top	12	9
'Russians' at the top	0	0
both 'Kazakhs' and 'Russians' at the top	5	1
<i>Chimkent</i>		
the respondent placed 'Kazakhs' at the top	10	10
'Russians' at the top	0	0
both 'Kazakhs' and 'Russians' at the top	0	0
<i>Total</i>		
the respondent placed 'Kazakhs' at the top	31/42 (71%)	32/39 (82%)
'Russians' at the top	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
both 'Kazakhs' and 'Russians' at the top	11 (26 %)	4 (12%)

As we can see from the table, the overwhelming majority of Kazakhs and Russians – 71% and 82% respectively – believed that Kazakhs had the highest social standing in Kazakhstan. These results, however, were less decisive in the North than in the South. In Petropavlovsk, for example, both my Kazakh and Russian respondents (4% and 2% respectively) put a card with the 'Russian' group at the top. This did not happen in Astana, Almaty or Chimkent. Remarkably, a considerable number of Kazakhs (26%) and Russians (12%) opted for a double card, placing both Kazakhs and Russians at the top.³⁹ Russians, however, were less inclined to think that they shared the most prestigious social position with Kazakhs. This possibly reflects their anticipation of a diminished role in the new

Chechens, Chinese, Germans, Gypsies, Jews, Kazakhs, Koreans, Kyrgyz, Poles, Russians, Tatars, Tajiks, Turkmens, Turks, Uigurs, Ukrainians. For the purposes of this chapter I will focus on two groups – Kazakhs and Russians.

³⁹ During my pilot study I did not have this option, but after several instances I allowed people to arrange the cards as they saw fit. It has to be also mentioned that a considerable number of my Kazakh and Russian respondents lumped in Russians, Belorussians, Ukrainians and sometimes Germans and Poles as one category. In Chimkent these groups were frequently called 'Europeans' (*evropeitsy*), and in Petropavlovsk they were labeled 'Slavs' (*slavyane*).

sovereign Kazakhstan. Kazakhs, on the contrary, believed that the Russian position was still relatively strong and that they had not stepped down to the level where all other 'secondary' groups were. Interestingly, in Chimkent there was unanimous agreement that Kazakhs carried the most prestige as a group. This, perhaps, indicates that Chimkent is a Kazakh-dominated town where 'Russians don't play a noticeable role and won't have a big chance' (Ch-3).

The findings here do not substantially differ from those of other surveys (Malkova *et al.* 1999, Kurganskaya and Dunaev 2002, Cummings 2005) as again we can see the continuing effect of Soviet institutions, but the emerging ethno-national trends are more clearly pronounced. There is some indication, however, that Kazakhs and Russians are gradually reconsidering the Soviet structure of superordination/ subordination and are moving towards a new ethnic hierarchy. This process is still largely in flux in Petropavlovsk, Astana and Almaty and can be approximated to the transitional independence model (Figure 7.2, sector B) and is virtually complete in Chimkent where it can be mapped somewhere between the transitional and consolidated independence models (Figure 7.2, sectors B and C).

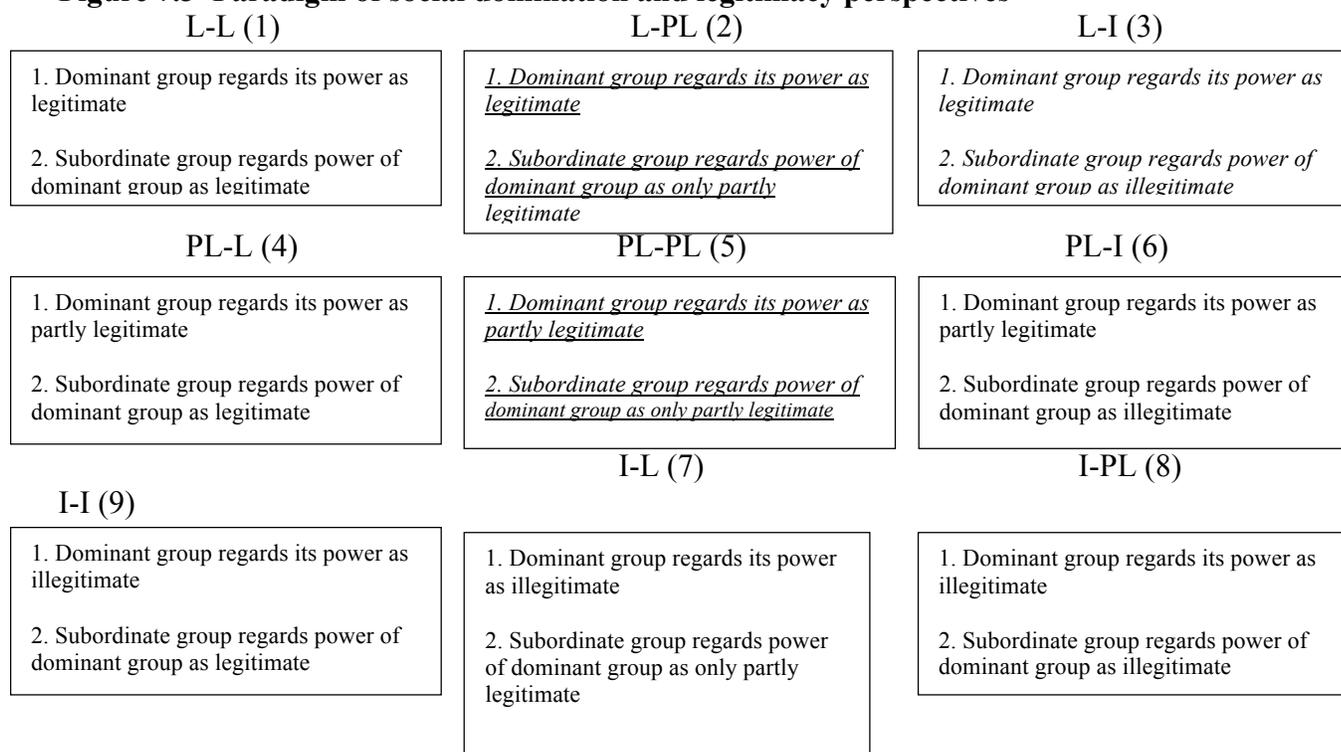
7.2.2 Patterns and Trends of Ethnic Interaction

To trace patterns of change in the interaction between Kazakhs and Russians and to map the developments in their identities, Horowitz's model of ranked and unranked ethnic systems can be usefully supplemented by Schermerhorn's models that specify detailed patterns of integration between ethnic groups in multi-ethnic societies. Schermerhorn, as noted in chapter two, does not talk about identity formation as such, but his theory and models can be usefully applied to probe the identities of both dominant and subordinate groups and sketch the trends in their development. As with the Horowitz-Juska model, Schermerhorn's models do not accurately account for the dual character of the Soviet power/ legitimacy system, which continued to have an influence on ethnic groups and their interaction after Kazakhstan gained independence. Therefore, for the purposes of this

research I have to assume that Russians were the dominant ethnic group in the overall Soviet power structure, while Kazakhs were the subordinate group, but with special rights and privileges in their ‘own’ republic, which is, of course, an oversimplification of the actual situation. This will have to be taken into account when mapping Kazakh and Russian ethnonational identities over time.

The first model of Schermerhorn looks at the patterns of social domination and legitimacy perspectives (Figure 7.3)

Figure 7.3 Paradigm of social domination and legitimacy perspectives



L- legitimate; PL – partly legitimate; I – illegitimate.

Source: Schermerhorn 1970:7040, my underlining

Legitimacy, as noted by Coser (1956:37), is a ‘crucial intervening variable without which it is impossible to predict whether feelings of hostility arising out of an unequal distribution

⁴⁰ For a detailed description of this paradigm see Chapter 2.

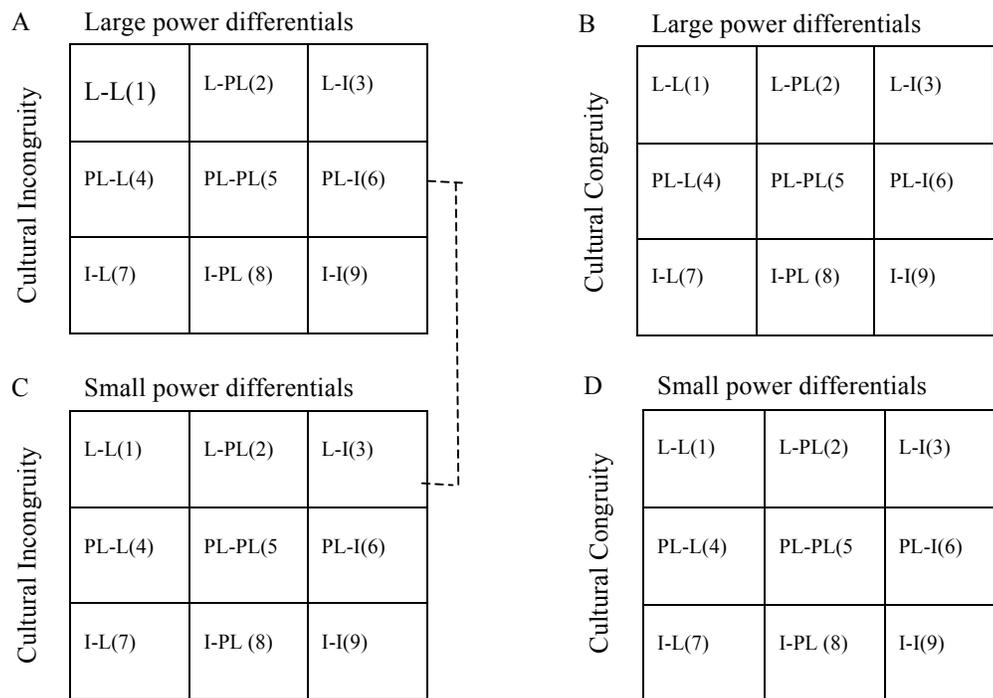
of privileges and rights actually lead to conflict'. Therefore, the more the groups view their power relationship as legitimate, the less their identities will be pronounced and politicized and *vice versa*. To reflect the views of Kazakhs and Russians on the legitimacy of their power relations in a longitudinal perspective, I arranged the cells 5, 2 and (3) in a sequence. That is, the Soviet period can be best characterised by cell 5, whereby both subordinate and dominant groups showed some form of compromise, making an imperfect accommodation possible. Kazakhs, for example, viewed the Soviet regime and the special position of Russians in the Soviet power structure as only partly legitimate because, unlike Russians and other Slavs, they were limited in their career opportunities outside the Kazakh SSR and could realise themselves mainly as 'subalterns' under Russian supervision in their own republic (Laitin, 1998, Juska, 1999). This situation was, however, compensated for by the policies of *korenizatsiya*, which provided preferential treatment for members of the eponymous nation living in their 'own' republic, as well as by the welfare provisions, modernisation policies and internationalist ideology, which partly contributed to the legitimacy of the Soviet (and by extension of the Russian) rule in Kazakhstan. Russians, by contrast, tended to resent *korenizatsiya* policies that furthered the interests of the titular nation, but at the same time, paradoxically, they viewed this arrangement as at least partly legitimate because Kazakhstan, as devised by the Soviet nationality policy, was thought to 'belong' to the titular or indigenous group in the primordial sense of the term (Karklins, 1989). Thus, there was some imperfect accommodation and integration between Kazakhs and Russians during the Soviet period, which was encouraged and sustained by the Soviet regime both by force and compromise. This helped to depoliticise Kazakh and Russian ethnonational identities, but at the same time to increase the latent competition and conflict between the groups over time.

After the break up of the Soviet Union and the gaining of independence there has been a shift in Kazakh-Russian relations from cell 5 to cell 2 or to somewhere between cell 2 and 3. Kazakhs, as argued in Chapter 5, tended to view their newly acquired power and the right to nationalise the state as 'natural' and 'legitimate' while Russians found it difficult to come to terms with their new minority status and protect their interests as such. Instead they

still positioned themselves as an alternative axis or core around which all other ethnic groups used to integrate (Kurganskaya & Dunaev, 2002, 2003). Thus, although Russians understood and accepted the Kazakhs' right to nationalise the state in principle, they have been very sensitive to any real or perceived nationalising policies and practices. It could be also argued that as some Russians were unable or unwilling to cope with the pressures of the nationalising regime and opted for outmigration or 'exit', the position of these Russians can be mapped somewhere between sector 2 and sector 3 as they perceive the nationalising state as discriminatory.

Schermerhorn's second model looks at the patterns of cultural congruence between ethnic groups in contexts where power differentials are involved (Fig. 7.4).

Figure 7.4 Paradigm representing legitimacy definitions of unequal power distributions where cultural variations occur



Source: Schermerhorn 1970:75⁴¹

⁴¹ For a detailed explanation of this paradigm, see Chapter 2.

Again, as explained in chapter 2, Schermerhorn's main concern here is with social integration, but clearly cultural congruence or the lack of it has a strong impact on the development of national identity, which is the subject of my research. Thus, a high degree of cultural congruence⁴² will tend, in the right circumstances, to produce less distinctive identities, whereas strong cultural divergence will tend to strengthen identities. In particular, as Schermerhorn points out, that large power differentials can reinforce cultural divergence in the formation of identity.

During the Soviet period, Kazakh-Russian relations can be mapped somewhere between sector A and sector C. The complexity of the mapping is determined by the dual power structure between Kazakhs and Russians, i.e., Kazakh-Russian power differentials were relatively small at the republican level where the two groups 'shared' the political, economic and cultural domains, but at the same time they were large at the all-Union level where Russians had an obvious advantage. Coupled with relative cultural incongruity between the groups, the unequal power distribution made the dual power system (and by extension Kazakh-Russian relations) inherently unstable in the long-run. This became evident when the Soviet Union collapsed, the 'dual power system' broke down and nationalising policies were put in place to re-establish the titular group's dominant position in the republic.

After the break up of the Soviet Union there has been a shift in Kazakh-Russian power differentials from sectors A and C to sector A. That is, there has been a shift from the Soviet dual power structure where Kazakhs and Russians had large power differentials at the all-Union level and small power differentials at the republican level to the post-Soviet single power structure where Kazakhs have gradually come to dominate in all spheres of economy and polity. Schermerhorn has argued that all the above combinations apart from sector B (large power differentials and relative cultural congruity) tend to produce conflict between groups. This does not necessarily imply violent conflict, but we can assume that

⁴² By cultural congruence is meant a high degree of commonality/ shared cultural norms and practices; in particular a shared language, but also common religious, moral and political values, shared historical experience and even shared beliefs about the physical characteristics of the group.

the sudden and dramatic shift from the Soviet to post-Soviet pattern of power differentials has caused a considerable dislocation and anxiety among the groups, expressed in the Russian case in out-migration, while the new pattern of power differentials coupled with a relative cultural incongruity between Kazakhs and Russians has suggested a lengthy and difficult process of integration of Russians into the Kazakhstani society (Kolstø, 1999, Kurganskaya and Dunaev, 2002). As a result, this could potentially lead to the strengthening of both identities in the long-term as the groups can become differentiated and mutually alienated from each other through the interaction process. Indeed, the fact that the Kazakhstani elites are not settling for a serious integration of Russians into the Kazakhstani culture, but rather fostering some kind of apartheid system in which Russians are allowed to keep quietly in their zone, mainly the economic niche, indicates that economic growth and inclusive citizenship have not worked and that the two main ethnic groups are treading separate paths. In other words, instead of being integrated, the conflict between Kazakhs and Russians could take the form of not actual antagonism, but just leading separate lives and agreeing to differ.

Schermerhorn's last typology looks at the reciprocal goal definition between the dominant and subordinate groups and links their combined choices to integration or conflict (Fig. 7.5).

Figure 7.5 Congruent and incongruent orientations toward centripetal and centrifugal trends of subordinates as viewed by themselves and superordinates

	A		B	
Superordinates	Cp		Cf	Tending toward integration
Subordinates	Cp		Cf	
	Assimilation Incorporation		Cultural Pluralism Autonomy	
	C		D	
Superordinates	Cf		Cp	Tending toward conflict
Subordinates	Cf		Cp	
	Forced segregation with resistance		Forced assimilation with resistance	

Cp – Centripetal trends; Cf – Centrifugal trends
Source: Schermerhorn 1970:83

Again, we can assume that if the goals of both dominant and subordinate groups converge, this will lead to integration and less pronounced and politicized identities, but if the goals are incompatible, conflict will arise and identities will be strengthened through interaction. Using the above typology, the Kazakh-Russian reciprocal goal definition pattern during the Soviet period can be mapped somewhere between sectors B and C (Figure 7.5). That is, both Kazakhs and Russians tended to support, although to various extents and in different ways, pluralist and multicultural solutions to the national question. This manifested itself in the virtually endogamous marriage patterns between Kazakhs and Russians and in the support for the federal structure of the Soviet Union and *korenizatsiya* policies that provided Kazakhs with relative cultural and political autonomy (Karklins, 1989, Edmunds, 1998). At the same time, Kazakhs, as the nominally titular or dominant nationality in Kazakhstan, were frustrated by their inability to nationalize their republic as they saw fit and by the need to share the political and socio-economic space with Russians (Brubaker, 1996). Their career mobility in the wider Soviet Union was also cut short by their relative cultural incongruity with Russians and by the partial and weak integration in the broader Soviet system (Laitin, 1998, Seidimbek, 2001, Gali, 2002) (Sector C).

After the break up of the Soviet system there has been a change in Kazakh and Russian views on reciprocal goal definition which can be mapped somewhere between sectors B and C, but now the dominant role has become performed by the Kazakh group. The pattern of cultural pluralism and autonomy (Sector B) can be illustrated by the general unwillingness of Russians to ‘jump over the cultural divide’ (Kolstø, 1999), even if the attitudes they are met with among the Kazakh population are fairly encouraging and sympathetic. Indeed, as Kurganskaya and Dunaev (2002, 2003) have pointed out Russians still position themselves as the cultural axis around which all other groups used to integrate and they are still struggling to accept their minority status and to protect their interests as such. The pattern of forced segregation with resistance (Sector C) can be illustrated by the

controversy and tension that have arisen over the political integration which Russians are being denied and by the increasing pressure from the nationalizing state and nationalistically-minded members of the titular nation who urge non-Kazakhs to learn Kazakh and be 'loyal' to the new state (Gali 2002, Eschment 2001)

7.3 Explaining Ethnic Interaction

The question now arises why a particular group or groups occupy a place in the above taxonomies and why their status changes over time. Both Horowitz and Schermerhorn presented a number of causative variables which attempted to explain the pattern of ethnonational interactions. Although the variables they use are designed to map and explain the patterns of integration in multi-ethnic society (in Schermerhorn's case) and the patterns of ethnic conflict (in Horowitz's case), some of them can be usefully applied to the ethnonational situation in Kazakhstan. Schermerhorn draws attention to four salient factors: 1) cultural congruence, 2) social exclusion of subordinate groups 3) the degree of legitimacy of the dominant group and 4) influence of comparisons with other culturally similar societies. As discussed in chapter two, some of these factors were later applied by Horowitz in his classic analysis of post-colonial ethnic problems.

With regard to the question of the degree of cultural congruence as a factor promoting integration and inclusiveness we have seen that in the Soviet period, particularly in the Brezhnev period, a degree of shared values of commitment to the Soviet state had been achieved, which to some extent overcame the natural historical dissonance between Kazakh and Russian cultures. But at the same time the *korenizatsiya* policies which formed part of the Soviet quasi-federal system greatly increased Kazakh control of the running of their republic and thereby of their natural 'ownership' of the state, leading to a greater awareness of the distinctiveness and value of their own culture. So when the Soviet Union collapsed these shared Soviet values rapidly declined which meant that the difference and incompatibility between Kazakh and Russian cultures and values became more obvious. The nation-building project of the independent Kazakh state and its nationalizing policies

removed the limitations inherent in the *korenizatsiya* policy and elevated Kazakh ownership of the state to a central principle. The symbolic reorientation of the state and its practical personnel policies emphasized the cultural and social subordination of the ex-dominant Russians. It was clear from the expressed attitudes of my respondents that they were becoming more aware of the political and social differences which made up their identities.

In terms of the second factor, namely the social exclusion of subordinate groups, we have seen that Russians are increasingly excluded from the career structure of the central administration of the state. In the national state project Russians are allocated a subordinate and limited role in the same way that the Kazakhs had a subordinate and limited role within the Soviet state. They are viewed as the diaspora of an external state and therefore are excluded from a defining role in the character of the state. This leads us on to the third factor, namely the degree of legitimacy which the dominant group enjoys. We have seen that in the Soviet period both Russians within the Soviet state as a whole and the Kazakhs within Kazakhstan enjoyed a partial legitimacy. With independence Kazakhs started view their ownership of the state as completely legitimate whereas Russians find it difficult to come to terms with this delegitimation of their dominance within the state. This status reversal has necessitated a re-structuring of the identities of both groups.

And finally, Schermerhorn draws attention, as an intervening variable, to the influence of culturally similar societies in this process. In the Soviet Union Kazakhstan had little contact with the outside world and its main cultural comparisons were within the Soviet Union itself. In the independence period a feeling of solidarity with other Islamic societies on the one hand, and with other post-colonial states in general on the other, has started to develop. But this does not substantially affect their acceptance of the political and economic power of the West combined with continued cooperation with post-Soviet states, so as an intervening variable this factor has yet to have a major importance.

As we shall see in the conclusion, a range of other long-term and short-term factors are also important in the explanation of this very complex phenomenon, including transition theories and international factors. But Schermerhorn and Horowitz offered a very useful framework for analyzing the internal factors which determine changes in ethnic stratification.

7.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have tried to map the trends of interaction between Kazakh and Russian identities from the Soviet period to the post-independence period, terminating with my research in 2003/2004. In my view, the clearest graphic illustration of the fundamental changes in ethnic stratification is provided by the adaptation, which I have made to Juska's model, which is derived from the classic study of ranked ethnic systems and ethnic conflict by Horowitz. I then tried to apply the more elaborated models of ethnic interaction presented in Schermerhorn's study to the situation reflected by my respondents in Kazakhstan. While the ethnic situation in both Soviet and post-Soviet Kazakhstan was not exactly reflected in Schermerhorn's taxonomies, the application of this broader research framework revealed many factors which found an echo with my respondents. Finally, I offered some preliminary explanation of the trends in ethnic stratification derived from the explanatory variables suggested by Schermerhorn and Horowitz, however, this is only a partial explanation of this interaction and we will return to the question of how to explain ethnic interaction in terms of other theories in the conclusion.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

In this conclusion I shall first summarise and explain the main findings of my research chapters (chapters 4-7) in relation to my three research questions, in each case with an initial statement of theory and then summary of the findings indicating how they relate to the theory, highlighting the main findings in the text; in the second section I shall summarise the main scholarly contributions which I believe my research makes, and finally in the third section suggest ways in which my research can be developed and supplemented in further research projects. In general terms I shall argue that while my research findings show continued uncertainty and provisionality in both Kazakh and Russian identities, which confirms the broad trend of previous surveys, they also indicate signs of change in the emergence of more consolidated dominant and subordinate identities in the less Russified areas like Chimkent and among the younger generation, while by contrast the older generations of Russians, particularly in the more Russified areas, find it difficult to accept the delegitimation of their dominant status as reflected in the nationalizing policies pursued by the new state. In theoretical terms these findings confirm the importance of the study of ethnic stratification, which has not received sufficient attention in previous research in this area. In explaining these developments I found that the character of the transition and also of the 'prior regime type' in Kazakhstan has had a significant effect on ethnic relationships, but also that international factors, such as those presented in Brubaker's (1996) 'triadic' model, and internal factors, elaborated by Schermerhorn (1970) and Horowitz (1985), were also important.

8.2 Summary and Explanation of Main Findings

8.2.1 The Character of Kazakh and Russian Identities in 2003-2004

As I argued in chapter 2 (2.3 and 2.4) the identity of ethnic and national groups is a complex mix of variables formed by both internal and external influences. A. Smith, whose model of national identity I have broadly followed, analysed the various linguistic, historical, political, economic, religious and other cultural elements which make up this wide-ranging concept. His main focus was on the internal character and development of national identity. But other authors, notably R. Brubaker, have emphasised that interaction with external forces is quite as important in the development of national identity, particularly for newly independent states: the impact of a hostile (or, on the other hand, an attractive) 'other/ (often in the form of the former 'imperial' state) and attitudes of 'national minorities' towards their 'parent' state (and *vice versa*) are often crucial in the consolidation of new national identities. Hence in drawing up my survey questions I tried to focus on the key internal and external variables which these theories suggested were the most important elements and determinants of national identities.

My first research question concerned the character of the identities of Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan at the time of my research in 2003-2004: were there signs at that time of the consolidation of new, stable identities based on a new post-independence stratification of dominant and subordinate ethnic groups? In chapters 5 and 6 I looked at the external and internal factors, which shaped the ethnonational identities of Kazakhs and Russians. The external factors that I covered in these chapters include the attitudes of Kazakhs and Russians to the creation of independent Kazakhstan and to key foreign states and peoples, the internal factors include the attitudes of both groups to the Soviet past, to the nationalising policies and practices of the new state and to the questions of loyalty of the non-titular population and especially Russians.

To take the **external factors** first I asked about **attitudes to independence**, which in itself, as Clifford Geertz has pointed out, enables the dominant group 'to be recognized as responsible agents whose wishes, acts, hopes, and opinions 'matter'', to ensure that their 'identity [is] publicly acknowledged as having import, a social assertion of self as 'being somebody in the world,' and beyond that to 'play[] a part in the larger arena of world

politics,' or exercise[] influence among nations' (1963:108). What emerged from my **Kazakh respondents** is *predominantly positive attitudes* towards Kazakhstan's independence, which is to be expected in a newly-independent titular group trying to establish their distinctiveness and national identity. There was a clear awareness among my Kazakh respondents that independence has had a positive impact on their status as a group and on their relations with other groups. They frequently linked independence to 'freedom' and 'democratisation' and stressed that it *enabled Kazakhs to speak their mind, to reassert their national values and to come to terms with difficult episodes in the Soviet past*. Independence in this respect has had a major impact on Kazakh identity.

What emerged from my **Russian respondents**, by contrast, is *predominantly negative or neutral* attitudes towards Kazakhstan's independence, which is understandable in an ex-dominant group struggling to come to terms with their new subordinate position in a new and potentially foreign state. There was some awareness among my Russian respondents that independence has had a negative impact on their status and on the interethnic relations in general. They stressed that since independence they have become the recipients of the titular group's discontent about the state of their culture, language and their negative identity that developed during the Soviet time. These perceptions were the strongest in Chimkent and the weakest in Almaty. There was also a lot of *anxiety that independence has severed the links between Kazakhstan and Russia, leaving the Kazakhstani Russians vulnerable* and exposed to the nationalising policies of the new state. Unlike my Kazakh respondents, who saw themselves as being empowered by Kazakhstan's independence and lifted from non-existence to the world stage, my Russian respondents usually felt *confused, anxious and constantly on the defensive, which is a typical characteristic of a former dominant group developing a minority identity* (Doane (1997), Wright (2004)).

Thus what we find is that the very fact of independence and its implications set the framework of a *new status stratification* for the main ethnic groups in Kazakhstan: for **Kazakhs** this reveals a new 'grown-up' self-confidence and an awareness of the positive value of Kazakh culture in relation to the outside world which is not, however, yet an

assertive dominant identity, but for **Russians** there is a real and anxious sense of a new subordinate status which they find difficult to accept and the perception of Russia as an attractive 'homeland' state in Brubaker's (1996) terms.

As for the **attitudes to key foreign states and peoples**, which studies, such as that by Greenfeld (1992) on 'ressentiment', show, often crucially indicate the character of the identity of national groups, what seems to appear from my **Kazakh** respondents is a *positive differentiation of Kazakh identity from all main states* and peoples with whom it comes into contact. But in general Kazakhs *still remained in the post-Soviet, post-imperial cultural orientation feeling closest to Russia, despite their growing discomfort* about the rise of Russian nationalism and xenophobia and the neo-imperial behaviour of Russia in the Near Abroad. With regard to *the West*, there was a strong admiration for many aspects of western economic, political and cultural achievements, but there was also some resentful awareness of Westerners' low opinion of Asians and Muslims (especially since 11th September) and rejection of some elements of western culture and life that they believed should not be slavishly emulated. While there was a noticeable *common feeling* with their *Islamic and Turkic neighbours*, but there were also *strong doubts*, as shown in the fear that some of these states (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) are a source of drugs and arms trafficking, religious extremism and international terrorism. *China, however, emerged as an object of real fear* and threat perception which related to the economic, demographic, military and cultural expansion. The universally negative attitudes, which I found in my survey, are a bit ironic because China undoubtedly is becoming the biggest investor in the gas and oil industry in Kazakhstan. But experience has shown that big investors are not necessarily popular with the local population and that was certainly true of China in the 1960s in Africa.

With regard to my **Russian respondents**, their external orientations were *very similar to those of Kazakhs*, although with several important *qualifications*. Russians failed to notice the more threatening aspects of Russian behaviour which concerned Kazakhs. There were several references to the activity of the ultra-right nationalist parties, but they were

invariably linked to the reactions of Kazakhs and possible subsequent deterioration in Kazakh-Russian relations. My Russian respondents understandably showed an *unqualified positive attitude towards Russia and the West and a predominantly negative one towards the Islamic states. China*, on the other hand, was the only country on which both *Kazakh and Russian attitudes converged*.

On Russia itself there were some interesting findings with regard to the question of **how much influence the Russian government should have in protecting the rights and freedoms of Russians** in Kazakhstan in their role as ‘the homeland’ state. This question produced an *ambivalent* series of responses. A clear majority of **Kazakhs** (53%) *thought that the Russian government should play no role in this area*. However a significant minority (22%) *felt that the Russian government should protect Russian rights and freedoms* in Kazakhstan, and a further 20% *felt that there should be such a role, but only at a minimal level*. But in both cases the Kazakhs in these groups were motivated by a strong, almost primordial ethnic feeling that each national group should in some way look after their co-nationals abroad. Amongst **Russians** almost half (45%) *felt that the Russian government should have a protective role, but a significant minority (25%) felt that this should not be the case*. What comes out of the responses to this question is, once again, the divided loyalties of the Russian population, but at the same time the extensive Kazakh understanding of their position, although with the implication that Russians should make up their own minds on this issue and the Russian government should still have some responsibility in helping their co-nationals in ways that do not undermine the sovereignty of Kazakhstan.

What these results on external relations show is that for **Kazakhs** *Russia has not yet emerged as a ‘hostile other’ which might help consolidate their new identity* (even to the extent that almost half recognise Russia’s right in some way to protect its co-nationals in Kazakhstan), but that *China has the potential to become such a ‘hostile other’* in the future. For **Russians** *Russia is clearly an ‘attractive other’, but not implying a threat to the sovereignty of Kazakhstan*; but the *Islamic states and China are emerging as ‘hostile*

others’, increasing their sense of alienation in Kazakhstan. However, it should be pointed out that all the above ‘external’ attitudes were usually conflated by my respondents with attitudes to internal ethnic relations in Kazakhstan, as we shall see in the next sections, and the speed and details of their new orientations will depend greatly on the economic and military relations between Kazakhstan and various states as her oil-resources are gradually developed.

As for ‘**internal**’ factors, they may be divided into **three broad groups**: 1) attitudes towards the recent, i.e. Soviet past; 2) responses to 'nationalising' policies and practices; and 3) issues concerning the loyalty and integration of the Russian population.

(1) Attitudes towards the Soviet past, i.e. Kazakhs’ and Russians’ feelings about their status in the USSR and their historical experiences and in general about the positive and negative aspects of their pre-independence life, are very revealing about their current identities. Perceptions of the past are often as important as external factors in revealing and forming identities. What emerged from my survey is a lot of *similarities in the way my Kazakh and Russian respondents perceived the ‘positive’ side of the Soviet Union*. There was a clear appreciation by both groups of many aspects of the Soviet economic and welfare policies, of the Soviet policy of internationalism and friendship of peoples and to a smaller degree of the Communist ideology. The latter aspect was usually brought up by the older respondents (in the age bracket between 30-65) who pointed to the unifying role of Lenin, Pioneers and Komsomol organisations and the CPSU. Notably, some Kazakh respondents stressed that Kazakhstan was part of a great superpower – the USSR and that Russians have had a positive influence on Kazakhs and Kazakhstan. A small number of Russians, on the other hand, stressed that Kazakhstan owed its sovereignty to the Soviet Union – a factor not mentioned by the Kazakhs.

As for the **negative attitudes**, my *Kazakh and Russian respondents differed considerably* in their perceptions of the Soviet past and they placed different emphases on the national and cultural issues, regime factors and economic problems. **Kazakhs**, for example, were

mostly *aggrieved by the policy of Russification* which resulted in the loss of their national culture and language and by the state-sponsored policies of *collectivisation, sedentarisation and purges*, which affected the Kazakh nation both physically and mentally and reduced them to a minority in their national homeland. There was also some resentment of the numerous *drawbacks of the Soviet regime* such as censorship, lack of freedom of speech, the Soviet insularity (*zakrytost'*) from the rest of the world, and importantly, the '*imperial*' *set up between Kazakhstan and Russia*, whereby all important decisions related to the republic were made in Moscow. The *economic problems*, which were covered only briefly, included the Soviet economy of shortages and the treatment of Kazakhstan as a 'raw material appendage' of Russia (*syr'evoi pridatok Rossii*). **Russians**, by contrast, disproportionately *focused on the regime and economic factors* and mentioned the nationality problems only briefly. Unlike Kazakhs, they did not 'dwell' on the national grievances and link them again and again to the regime set up and economic arrangements, but rather looked at these problems as they were constructed by the Kazakh elites or Kazakhs. This *lack of insight (or insufficient insight) into the national problems of the Soviet era* indicates, as G. Schöpflin (2000) suggested, that Russians were the dominant and state-bearing group of the Soviet Union, and similarly, Kazakhs' excessive preoccupation with the national question points to their ex-minority status (see also Brubaker 1996, Doane, 1997).

These findings show that for **Kazakhs** *the past*, like the external environment, is *not yet an unqualified 'hostile other'* determining their identity, but it may soon become so as feelings of injustice about the imperial past are increasingly used in political rhetoric. What we can see is that independence involves a reevaluation of the past: Kazakhs feel that the state 'helps' them to re-evaluate the past and make them more comfortable and confident in the new political and socio-cultural environment, while **Russians** feel that *the new state*, in Igor Savin's (2001) terms, '*no longer exists for them*' and that they have to be on the defensive to protect what is left positive of their identity.

(2) With regard to ‘**nationalising**’ policies (to use Brubaker's term discussed in chapter two) I made an explicit analysis, based on primary sources, of the theory, operation and development of these policies in Kazakhstan in Chapter 4, in relation to the **Kazakhstani national state project**. I found that this project *started with a very cautious approach* to the character of citizenship, which can be termed *broadly ‘civic’* or inclusive in character rather than strictly 'nationalising' in Brubaker's sense. Though Kazakh became the official state language, Russian continued to have a major practical status as the ‘language of interethnic communication’, and in terms of *equality before the law* in all major aspects of civic life there was no overt ‘nationalising’ discrimination. *Nevertheless, from the start the ‘civic’ project contained at its core an ‘ethno-national’ concept of the state*, in the sense that the state was viewed as the national homeland of the Kazakh people, which thus has a prior right to ‘ownership’ of the state and to the determination of its ‘national’ character, that is to introduce ‘nationalising’ policies in order *to restore the perceived loss of historical status and cultural expression of the Kazakh people*. In fact such restorative policies have been gradually implemented: the use of the Kazakh language has been gradually extended in administration and education; preference for Kazakhs in administration has increased; attempts have been made to increase the ethnic imbalance by encouraging in-migration of Kazakhs from other countries and not hindering the out-migration of Russians; and in most national symbols Kazakh cultural features have been increasingly dominant. So while the legal aspects of the original civic project have not been radically changed, the actual *character of civic life and the whole national ‘image’ of the state have been increasingly changed* by de facto ‘nationalising’ policies. This is confirmed by the tone of Nazarbaev’s recent pronouncements on this question, revealing a much more confident assertion of Kazakh ethnic dominance in the character of the state.

It is the reaction to these ‘*nationalising*’ changes by both Russians and Kazakhs which has significantly impacted their identities and which I tried to investigate in my survey. I grouped **nationalising policies** into: 1) language and educational issues; 2) economic and personnel issues; and 3) issues of Russian integration and loyalty.

(1) Let us start with **language use**, which is usually regarded, particularly by Laitin (1998), as one of the key determinants or instruments of ethnonational identity. One of the key questions is the **legal status of the two languages**. The status of Kazakh is clear – it is the official state language. It is the status of Russian which is anomalous. At present the position is that Russian is as an official language, but not the state language. How did my respondents react to this position? As can be expected, *95 % of Russians wanted Russian to be the second state language alongside Kazakh. Interestingly, as many as 48% of Kazakhs agreed with this, reflecting the continued practical dominance in everyday life. But it must be said that my survey was based on urban areas in which the majority of Kazakhs had attended Russian schools and whose use of Russian was therefore significantly higher than in rural areas. However, another 48% of my Kazakh respondents did not want Russian to have the status of joint state language because they felt that there was a danger that Kazakh would be in effect swamped by Russian and that therefore the historical injustice of the diminution of the use of Kazakh would not be reversed.*

Perhaps even more significant is the question of **education in these languages**. Here there were some important changes in peoples' attitudes. In the case of **Russians** the position is clear. Russians *continued to send their children only to Russian-language schools*. In the case of **Kazakhs** the position is more *ambiguous*. 58% of my Kazakh respondents were educated in Russian-language schools, although some of the younger respondents admitted that they changed from Russian to Kazakh schools half way through to improve their career prospects. Of the 58% over a third (36%) have started sending their children to Kazakh schools, though these parents come from Petropavlovsk, Astana and Almaty, while in Chimkent there was very little change in that most parents attended Kazakh-language schools and sent their children to Kazakh schools. One interesting finding was that there was a slight increase of 8% amongst parents who were educated in Kazakh schools, but have sent their children to Russian-language schools. However, most of these were from more Russified Almaty and Petropavlovsk and the *parents indicated that they saw a knowledge of Russian as an advantage* in terms of higher education and job prospects, especially as this did not threaten their fluent command of Kazakh.

With regard to **higher education** the controversial issue is **whether Kazakh should be the normal language of instruction**. **Russians** virtually unanimously felt that this would be *a negative development* because it would cut off Kazakhstani students from access to Russian educational material and exchange and severely inhibit Russian access to higher education. With regards to **Kazakhs**, interestingly, the great majority of them (80%) *felt that there should not be a Kazakh language monopoly in higher education* and that Russian-speakers should not be compelled to study in Kazakh. My respondents admitted that at the moment there was a great lack of advanced educational material in Kazakh such as textbooks and also a lack of experienced teachers at that level. As in other areas, *Kazakhs can be seen to be very pragmatic and realistic in their understanding of the language status issue*.

One of the questions of my survey concerned **what language would be predominantly spoken in Kazakhstan in 50 years time**. Significantly, only a small number (11%) of **Kazakhs** thought that Kazakh would be the overwhelmingly predominant language, although rather more Russians (22%) were worried about this prospect. *The overwhelming majority of Kazakhs (84%) and a substantial majority of Russians (62%) felt that both Kazakh and Russian would continue to be spoken in Kazakhstan [note correction]*. But these percentages conceal considerable uncertainty particularly among Russians and Russian-speaking Kazakhs about the extent of the Russian language use in the future, if the current decline of the Russian population through emigration continues. My survey also revealed that while in the case of **Russians** *the use of Russian at all levels remains a crucial part of their identity and continued status*, most of them (80%) wanted their children to have a good knowledge of Kazakh as a second language to improve their job prospects and to help them adapt more comfortably to life in independent Kazakhstan. But in practice they contradicted this stated belief by sending their children to Russian-language schools. With regard to **Kazakhs** the position is more ambivalent. Half of them believed that Kazakh should remain the only second state language in order to defend and develop Kazakh culture, but realistically understood the continued use of Russian, particularly in

higher education as being inevitable, which once again reflected the *provisional and ambivalent character of Kazakh cultural identity*.

To summarise, what my findings on attitudes to language and educational issues show is that for **Kazakhs** the issue of the *status of the Kazakh language and its use in education is not yet such a crucial determinant of their new identity* as we might expect from comparative studies. Russian is still used as the main public language by many Kazakhs and is still seen as the language of modernization which is more useful than Kazakh in higher education and the wider world. But at the same time there is a clear wish that Kazakh should have the status of the official state language and that Russian should have a subordinate, unofficial status. Of course, my survey was biased towards urban Kazakhs; for rural Kazakhs the use of Kazakh would be far higher and would have a stronger association with a dominant Kazakh status. For **Russians**, on the other hand, the *increasing 'Kazakhisation' of education and public life is a clear threat* to their cultural status and reinforces the awareness of their subordinate 'minority' status, making clear their 'cultural incongruence' with Kazakhs, which may, as Schermerhorn suggests, create future tension and conflict.

(2) My second category of nationalising policies, concerning **economic and personnel issues**, I found to be perhaps the most important. The overwhelming majority of **Russians** (80%) felt that *being a Kazakh crucially affected job prospects*, although some of them (5%) felt that this only applied to certain sectors, and all of them were from Almaty. With regard to **Kazakhs** as many as 42% admitted that *ethnicity was important in career advancement*, although some (17%) felt that this was only in certain sectors as government administration and important industries such as oil and gas. With regard to the perception of which group has most benefited economically in independent Kazakhstan, I posed the question of **which nationality has the highest percentage of wealthy people in the country**. *Overwhelmingly (85%) the Russians and to a lesser extent the Kazakhs (73%) felt that the Kazakhs had benefited most*. However, over a third of Kazakhs (35%) and rather fewer Russians (25%) felt that Russians could also achieve economic success, particularly

in areas which did not compete with Kazakhs. Most Kazakhs (77%) and to a lesser extent Russians (55%) thought that other non-titular groups still have an opportunity of economic success. These data indicate that while Kazakhs feel more confident that their ethnic identity has become very important for their job prospects, *Russians reluctantly accept this situation as representing the right of the titular group* to operate in their own interests, but they *resent the fact that Kazakh ethnicity and language make a difference* in this way and that this is a fundamental obstacle preventing them from achieving career advancement in accordance with their skills. These two factors, ethnicity and language, associated with economic success, could be the most important factors consolidating identities at present and in the future.

(3) With regard to my third category of **group loyalty and integration of Russians** within Kazakhstan, this also produced an interesting mixture of responses. One question was fairly clear cut. *Virtually all Kazakhs thought that the borders of Russia should not be expanded to include ethnic Russians living in Kazakhstan and this view was shared by most Russians (72%),* although a minority of Russians (22%) were in favour of some sort of territorial alteration. But in contrast to this my question about **whether Russians of Kazakhstan are culturally and mentally closer to Kazakhs or to the Russians of Russia** produced much more **ambivalent responses**. A large minority of Russians (40%) felt that they were closer to their Russian compatriots in Russia, although 20% felt that they were closer to Kazakhs (but most of these came from Chimkent). My Kazakh respondents clearly thought that Kazakhstani Russians had more in common with themselves (57%) than with Russians in Russia (26%). A substantial minority of both ethnic groups (17% of Kazakhs and 40% of Russians) felt that the Russians had a lot in common with both groups. In response to my question **whether Kazakhstani Russians should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they hold citizenship or to Russia**, their historical homeland, naturally the overwhelming majority of Kazakhs (75%) felt that they should be loyal to Kazakhstan, although a significant minority (20%) felt that people should make up their own minds about where their primary loyalty lies. 54% of Russians felt that they should be loyal to Kazakhstan, but a significant minority (32%) thought that people should make up their own minds between

these loyalties. And a small number of both groups (4% of Kazakhs and 12% of Russians) felt that it was possible for Russians to be loyal to both countries. What these data show is that *both groups agree that the primary loyalty of Kazakhstani Russians should be to Kazakhstan, but the Kazakhs show some understanding of the problems that Russians have* following the collapse of the Soviet Union with establishing their new loyalties and are prepared to give them some leeway in deciding this question. They also show, interestingly, that a *substantial proportion of both groups recognise quite a strong degree of 'cultural congruence'* (in Schermerhorn's terms) in the sense of shared values between the two groups, which, of course, mitigates identity differentiation and the potential for conflict.

One fundamental issue affecting Russian 'loyalty' and integration is that of **Russian out-migration to the Russian Federation**. While I did not have any direct question on the reasons for this out-migration, there was extensive material in my responses which cast much light on this issue. Most Kazakhs understood that with the emergence of independence of Kazakhstan from the break up of the Soviet Union, there was a clear status reversal between Kazakhs and Russians as the national homeland concept predominated in the organisation of the new successor states. **Kazakhs believe that most Russians emigrated in the hopes of achieving greater economic prosperity in Russia or to be reunited with family members**. Some Kazakhs drew attention to problems Russians faced in dealing with the nationalising policies, which we have discussed and even admitted that Kazakhs in rural areas and in the South put a lot of pressure on Russians to leave, although they also drew attention to the number of Russian returnees. For **Russians** it was clearly the *nationalising policies which were decisive particularly language and employment policies*, which affect general life prospects for Russians. Some also drew attention to the difficulties of living amongst a declining Russian population and the resentful attitudes of some of the Kazakh intelligentsia and the majority of the Kazakh youth displayed towards Russians.

To try to **summarise the implications of my findings on external and internal factors** for Russian and Kazakh identities. The **Kazakhs** were *proud of their new independent status but still quite positively oriented towards Russia* and understanding of the dilemmas

faced by the Russian population in Kazakhstan; they felt justified in taking restorative action through nationalising policies but were still ambivalent on the crucial issues of language and education. The **Russians** in Kazakhstan were *more clearly aware of their subordinate status* in the new state and attracted to Russia as a ‘motherland state’ and were concerned about increasing Kazakhisation in employment and education; but they supported the sovereignty of Kazakhstan and acknowledged the right of Kazakhs to determine the character of ‘their’ state. Nevertheless there were *signs of hardening of attitudes on both sides*, particularly in the less Russianised areas like Chimkent and amongst the older generation of Russians (geographical area and age group are the two most important factors limiting general statements). As more Russians are prepared to consider out-migration to Russia, Kazakhs become more doubtful of Russians’ loyalty to Kazakhstan. In general it is clear that *a new stratified system of identities is taking shape, but Kazakhs are still not quite confident of their dominant status, while Russians already feel they have a clear subordinate position.*

8.2.2 Kazakh-Russian Interaction from the Late Soviet Period to 2004

I have argued, first of all, that I have made a snapshot of how Kazakh and Russian identities were in 2003/ 2004 and I have tried to indicate the importance of various internal and external factors in these identities. It is important, however, in order **to understand the significance of this snapshot, to see it against a developing historical context taken from the Soviet period onwards.** For this I have used the various surveys, which were carried out in the periods both before and after independence and theoretical models of ethnonational interaction related to status and power.

I argued above that both internal and external factors were important in the make-up and formation of national identity. However, what is usually left out of discussions of national identity is that the various ethnic groups in a country interact with one another, particularly in relation to access to political and economic power, and the resultant pattern of status stratification (domination and subordination) is a very important element in the make-up of

the identities of these groups. To elucidate this I turned to **another body of theory, that on ethnic interaction**, which was mainly developed to analyse social integration or conflict, but in fact can be helpfully applied to the study of development of identities. In chapter two I discussed the contributions made by Shibutani & Kwan, Hennayake, Horowitz and Schermerhorn in analysing the emergence and significance of ethnic stratification and how this relates to identity formation. However, it is also important to bear in mind the impact of external interaction on identity, and here Brubaker (with his ‘triadic’ interaction model, supplemented by G.Smith) has made an important contribution. Linking internal and external aspects I have also used A.Hirschman’s concepts of ‘exit’, ‘voice’ and ‘loyalty’, originally developed to explain behaviour of personnel in business concerns.

I tried to apply the concepts and models of these theories to answer my **second research question**, which was **how have Kazakh and Russian identities interacted in the period since independence and what mutual effects has that produced on their identities?** To obtain a **general picture** of how Kazakhs and Russians have interacted in a longitudinal perspective, I employed Horowitz’s (1985) original model of ethnic stratification adapted by Juska (1999) and **extrapolated my own two additional models from it – a transitional independence model and a consolidated independence model**. The Juska model provided a very rough representation of proportion of power between Kazakhs and Russians in late Soviet Kazakhstan. What I found, as I argued in chapters 2 and 7, is that this model is not entirely satisfactory because while it presents the rough equality of Russians and Kazakhs at the top it does not accurately characterize the complexity of the dual power situation. That is, Russians were primarily concentrated in the sectors of strategic policy-making, such as the political, socio-ideological, economic and military spheres, while Kazakhs wielded power in the administrative and cultural spheres within ‘their’ republic.

Since Kazakhstan gained independence there has been a gradual shift from a Soviet pattern of ethnic stratification to a new pattern with ethnic Kazakhs at the top. That is, as one section of the dual power system that was dominated by Russians and Slavs was gradually

destroyed along with much of the influence, which its members wielded, the way became clear for the previously local Kazakh networks to assume control of the national and local administration. This trend was accompanied by the continuation of the Soviet patterns of ethnic stratification and the ambiguity that were still lingering in people's minds, especially in the older Soviet generation, who have not come to terms with the changes and have not internalized new developments.

These two trends – of *gradual ethnification and continuation of patterns of Soviet ethnic stratification* – are reflected in the 'transitional independence model' that I extrapolated from Juska's model, and they have been also supported by a number of surveys that were carried out in Kazakhstan during the first ten years of independence. The survey of Malkova *et al.* (1999), for example, found that in the early to mid 1990s there was, to use Weber's terms, a 'naked class situation' in the economic sector of Kazakhstan with only limited stratification by ethnic status. Similarly, in the political sphere the new regime, as we have seen, represented a mix of ethnocratic and consociational elements, which allowed Russians and Slavs to participate in government structures while ensuring that the state and its institutions remained under firm titular group control. The consociational arrangements, however, have been gradually waning since 1995 with the system being, in the view of some authors, completely dismantled by 2000 (Cummings, 2005).

My small-scale survey both confirmed that there was a lot of confusion about how my Kazakh and Russian respondents perceived their identities and indicated that there has been a small qualitative shift towards a more clear-cut ethnic hierarchy with ethnic Kazakhs at the top, which is reflected in the transitional independence model. To obtain a general picture of where Kazakh and Russian identities were in 2003/2004 and an idea of the ethnic stratification or the social standing of ethnic groups in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, I employed **Pineo's (1998) scales of social standing** of ethnic groups. My survey has revealed that the *overwhelming majority of the Kazakh and Russian respondents (71% and 82% respectively) believed that Kazakhs had the highest social standing in Kazakhstani society*, although these results were less decisive in the North than in the South. In Petropavlovsk a

small number of Kazakhs and Russians (4% and 2% respectively) thought that Russians carried the most prestige as a group. This was not the case in Astana, Almaty or Chimkent. Interestingly, a *considerable number of Kazakhs and Russians (26% and 12%) were convinced that Kazakhs and Russians shared the most prestigious social position in Kazakhstan*, which reflects the continuing, although diminishing influence of Soviet institutions and the Soviet dual power system. Russians, however, were less inclined to think this way, which points to their anticipation of a diminished role in post-Soviet Kazakhstan.

The above *findings show that the Soviet pattern of ethnic stratification has not been completely dismantled yet* and the perception of some of my respondents that Kazakhs and Russians shared the highest social standing in Kazakhstan is a prime example of it. There is, however, some *indication that Kazakhs and Russians are gradually reconsidering the Soviet structure of dominance/subordination and are moving towards a new ethnic hierarchy* with ethnic Kazakhs at the top. This process is virtually complete in Chimkent and is still largely in flux in Petropavlovsk, Astana and Almaty.

In addition to tracing the general trends in the shift from the Soviet to the post-Soviet situation by using my adaptations of the Horowitz-Juska model, **I tried to map particular patterns and sequences of ethnocultural interaction between Kazakh and Russian identities over time** by applying Schermerhorn's models of social domination and legitimacy perceptions, power differentials and cultural congruence, and reciprocal goal definition. Although these models, as argued in chapters 2 and 7, do not accurately account for the dual character of the Soviet power/ legitimacy structure and are primarily intended to analyse the constitutive elements of social integration rather than the emergence of identities, nevertheless Schermerhorn's perspectives clearly have a strong impact on identity and I found them in many respects to be illuminating.

Schermerhorn's first model relating to **social domination and legitimacy perceptions** argues that the degree to which both dominant and subordinate groups view social

domination as legitimate indicates the degree of social cohesion and integration. From the identity viewpoint this means that when the pattern of social domination and stratification is accepted as legitimate by both dominant and subordinate groups it tends to weaken or blunt their identities, but if it is considered illegitimate then this tends to cause more interaction between the groups and produces stronger polarization of identities (they become 'hostile others'). As argued in chapter 7, **during the later Soviet period** Kazakhs and Russians viewed their status positions as partly legitimate, making an imperfect accommodation possible. These perceptions were sustained by the Soviet federal structure, whereby Russians dominated in all the major military, security, top party spheres, while Kazakhs wielded power in the administrative and cultural spheres. Ultimately at the national level the Russians had a greater status and power, but in terms of the effect on people's lives in the republic the Kazakhs, as a 'titular' group of the Kazakh SSR, had a considerable and growing amount of power, even though they were not visible at the top of the Soviet power hierarchy.

In the early post-independence period there was *little or no polarization of identities* because people still accepted the Russian dominance of culture and language in society and because Russian played a crucial role in the economy. *This, however, started to change* gradually as Kazakhs viewed their new status and the right to determine the character of the new state as 'natural' and 'legitimate', while Russians had come to understand that their power had been de-legitimated and that they had to come to terms with their new minority status and ultimately be subordinate to Kazakh language and culture. These patterns of *gradual mutual adjustment of the two groups to new statuses and perceptions of their legitimacy* can be seen in the survey material of 1994 to 2003 and are also illustrated in the findings of **my surveys of 2003-4**. My findings made clear that while *many Kazakhs are still not confident of the reality and legitimacy of their new status as the 'state-bearing' group, they are increasingly assertive of their right to achieve this status, while most Russians seem to reluctantly accept the legitimacy of the Kazakhs post-independence status, though they find it difficult to come to terms with their own newly subordinate position*. In particular my findings on the impact of 'nationalising policies' showed that

Russians were worried by Kazakh dominance of political and cultural life, while Kazakhs were increasingly confident in the legitimacy of these policies, encouraging a corresponding consolidation of their statuses and identities.

Schermerhorn's second model relating to **power differentials and cultural congruence**, can throw much light on the social interaction of this period and is reflected in my survey findings of 2003-4. Schermerhorn's point was that if the cultural congruence between the dominant and subordinate groups of a state's population is low (i.e., where they belong to very different cultures) then social integration will be more difficult. From the identity point of view this means that where the cultural values which differentiate the various groups are increasingly stressed, their identities will be more easily consolidated. It is clear that the Kazakh and Russian languages and cultural traditions are very different, and this was to an extent recognised in the **Soviet system**, which encouraged local languages and the use of local personnel (*korenizatsiya*) in the republics, but these differences were overlaid by the dominance of Russian language and culture, and Russian personnel, at the top (USSR) level of the power system. This linkage between cultural incongruence and power differentials should, on Schermerhorn's model, produce an unstable and potentially conflictual situation, and this was perhaps reflected in the growth of Kazakh power in the republic in the later Brezhnev period.

After the break-up of the Soviet Union there has been a **gradual shift from the Soviet dual power structure to the post-Soviet single power structure** (i.e. large power differentials between groups) whereby Kazakhs have come to dominate in all spheres of economy and polity. In the immediate post-independence period the Russian dominance of culture persisted, with surveys indicating a lack of confidence by Kazakhs in asserting their culture and continued attachment to the 'imperial' modernising culture. But **my findings** showed that by 2003-4 this was changing. Despite some continuing doubts and uncertainties *Kazakhs were becoming more confident in implementing 'nationalising policies' in the cultural area to assert the dominance of their group in determining the character of the nation.* As we saw in chapter 4 this cultural dominance was built in to the

constitutional description of the state and led to an increasing emphasis on the encouragement of Kazakh language and culture. *By the time of my survey it was obvious that both groups were moving further apart culturally, leading to a greater differentiation of their identities.* However my findings also showed, interestingly, that a significant proportion of both groups felt that Russians in Kazakhstan had more in common with Kazakhs than with Russians in the Russian Federation, suggesting that *cultural polarisation was far from absolute* (see p.236 above).

Schermerhorn's third model relating to **reciprocal goal definition** argues that social integration is more likely if, despite cultural differences between dominant and subordinate groups, they could share many key goals for the society. Clearly also differences in group identities will be fewer and less conflictual where they share strong societal values and goals (Schermerhorn was undoubtedly thinking of the USA as an example of this). **During the Soviet period there were very clear shared societal goals** which potentially united Kazakhs and Russians, even though these goals were arguably imposed in an 'imperial' manner without free discussion and assent. Much emphasis was placed on integration of the various cultures through unifying ideological instruction. Many of these goals and values of the Soviet system became deeply imbedded in the cultures of its peoples, so that in the immediate post-Soviet period many aspects of Soviet life and the 'modernising' impact of its system continued to be valued, even though as a political and economic system it had collapsed before independence. As I have described in chapter 4, *after Kazakhstan gained independence Kazakhs held out an offer of a project of a different shared value system* with different subordinate and dominant statuses, but one they hoped everybody might accept, which was that Kazakhs determine the character of the state as Kazakhs, but all other ethnic groups had a place within it as fully legitimate citizens. This attempt to substitute the Soviet shared project by a new Kazakhstani national project fairly *soon got into difficulties, because it struck no chord with the Russians.* As my findings in chapter 6 showed, *Russians were not prepared to accept the dominance of Kazakh culture and language* and while they might agree that Kazakhs had a 'primordial' right to determine the character of the state,

they were not prepared to follow that up by an interest in Kazakh culture and language. The Kazakh response was disappointment and resentment and increasing ethnicisation.

My findings of 2003-4 showed that Kazakhs and Russians at the time of my survey had developed *increasingly different goal orientations*. Although I found that Kazakhs continued to value several aspects of the Soviet past and its values (welfarism and industrial modernisation and urbanisation in particular) they were increasingly questioning its ‘imperial’ character, the suppression of Kazakh culture and its political autonomy. With the increasing assertion of ‘nationalising policies’ *the societal goals of the new state became different from the old Soviet state and I found that Kazakhs were becoming more confident in asserting them*. Since these goals were largely associated with the ‘Kazakh’ nature of the state and the right of the Kazakhs to direct it, this was *likely to stimulate alienation in the newly subordinate Russian population*, which clearly emerged from my surveys. *As their shared goals decreased, so the cultural identities of the two main interacting groups became more sharply differentiated*. This was reflected in the increasing doubts both groups had about the integration and loyalty of the Russian population, doubts which were justified by the high level of Russian emigration, creating the emergence of a ‘hostile other’ situation, in which identities typically consolidate rapidly.

To summarise my findings in relation to my second research question, my adaptations of the *Horowitz-Juska ethnic stratification model offered a useful general map* of the changing power and status relationships between the ethnic groups from the Soviet to the post-Soviet periods. By *applying Schermerhorn’s taxonomies* of ethnic dominant-subordinate stratification it was possible to trace the *salience of legitimacy, cultural congruence and shared goals as determinants of status, and therefore identity, differentiation*, reflected in the attitudes of my respondents. This tended to confirm my conclusion on the first research question that a new ‘ranked’ ethnic stratification is taking shape in Kazakhstan but that it is not yet fully consolidated for either group. As we discussed in chapter 2 and 7 Horowitz and Schermerhorn also suggest a series of causative

variables which help to explain these trends and patterns of interaction. We shall consider these in the next section.

8.2.3 Explaining the Interaction and Development of Kazakh and Russian Identities

My **third research question** was: **why have Kazakh and Russian identities interacted in the way they have done**, or why after nearly 14 years of independence both Kazakh and Russian identities are still quite uncertain and in many respects unclear even though in both cases they are showing signs of coalescence? As I argued in the Introduction, questions of identity and especially of the development and interaction of identities cannot be approached with the classic social science testing of one or two variables, and in any case such a rigorous methodology would hardly be possible in the circumstances of contemporary Kazakhstan. Rather **we need a broader, multi-factoral approach**, more characteristic of history or social anthropology, to understand and explain the complexities of this phenomenon. **Two groups of explanations** can possibly help to illuminate the situation. These include (1) **historical or pre-independence factors** and (2) factors of the post-independence period related to the **features of the political and economic transition**. It has to be noted, that these answers can only be tentative as it is impossible to provide clear proof of any of the proposed explanations. Given the complexity of the phenomenon of national identity and the number of factors involved, it is difficult to test and prove them in a precise way. All I can do here is to make some suggestions of probabilities, which together make an attempt to explain or clarify the trends in identity development.

As for the historical explanations, there are certain **long-term factors**, which still have salience for identity development in Kazakhstan. These were often referred to by my respondents, both Kazakh and Russian, but not in a way which could serve as a direct explanation of the character and development of their identities. So they formed more the **indispensable background to the analysis of these identities**.

As was pointed out in chapter two, transition theorists have often stressed the **importance of understanding the ‘prior regime type’ of a country** in transition because of the impact this has on the character and pace of the transition. Linz and Stepan (1996) created a typology of four non-democratic regimes (authoritarianism, totalitarianism, post-totalitarianism and sultanism), explaining the different sets of problems such regimes posed for the development of democracy. As was pointed out, this typology does not adequately explain the developments of identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, since it takes no account of the syndrome of post-imperialism, and ‘post-totalitarian’ is not a useful label for the whole of the USSR in the 1980s because of the very different characteristics of power relationships in the fifteen Union Republics which had evolved in the Brezhnev period (e.g. contrasting the democratic-oriented Baltic republics with the authoritarian-traditional character of Central Asia). But the **idea of the ‘prior regime type’ can be usefully applied to explain transition in identity-formation** as they used it to explain problems in developing democratic transition, in the sense of **long-term background factors, which formed important constraints for the development of identity**. These can be briefly summarised as follows.

The striking thing about both **Kazakh and Russian identities in Kazakhstan** in the **immediate pre-independence period** was their **ambivalence and incompleteness**. As discussed in chapter three, the formation of a unified *Kazakh national identity* was, ironically, largely the result of Soviet structures (the quasi-federal system) and policies (sedentarisation, collectivisation, settler in-migration) and *was still incomplete* in that earlier clan and regional loyalties were still important and because Kazakh national identity could not be fully expressed within the framework of the Soviet power system. The ‘titular’ Kazakh nationality was nominally dominant within the boundaries of the Kazakh SSR and during the Brezhnev period Kazakhs had accumulated considerable power in the administrative structures of the republic, but at the same time it was rooted in and hierarchically subordinated to the Slavic-dominated overall power structure. But the *Russian national identity in Kazakhstan was also ambivalent and limited*, in the sense that, while they formed part of the Russian cultural and political dominance of the whole USSR,

firstly, the USSR was never openly declared to be a Russian national state and the RSFSR's role in this respect was very partial and, secondly, within the Kazakh SSR Russians had to co-exist with an increasingly cohesive and powerful 'titular' Kazakh nationality. As discussed in chapter 7 (when this situation was fitted into the interaction models of Horowitz/ Juska and Schermerhorn), the *stratification relationships (dominance-subordination) of both ethnic groups were complex and provisional and varied between different sectors of life and this meant that their identities were also ambivalent*. This needs to be borne in mind when we discuss the status-reversal in power relationships, which is gradually producing new identities in the post-independence period, since it probably accounts for the continued ambivalence of their identities.

As for the **post-independence or transition factors**, these could be divided into (a) general factors determining ethnic interaction; (b) political transition which includes a post-imperial element to it; (c) economic transition and (c) international factors.

First, let us deal with the **general factors determining ethnic interaction** suggested by Schermerhorn and Horowitz. Strictly speaking these are factors, which applied both to pre-independence and post independence periods, but they are most relevant for the post-independence period. As we showed above, these factors shed considerable light on the processes of ethnic interaction and the trends of its development. The question of the decline in shared values and the consequent ethnicisation and increased cultural dissonance is one which concerned many of my respondents. The declared 'ownership' of the newly independent state by the Kazakhs and the nationalizing policies which have promoted the dominance of their language and culture have demonstrated to the Russians their subordinate and almost alien status within the country. Secondly, as a result of this, the increasing exclusion of Russians from the central career structure of the state and from a defining role in determining the character of the state is a major factor in persuading Russians to emigrate or to maintain a defensive separate social position within the state. With regard to the degree of legitimacy of dominant group power, Russians partly recognize the right of the indigenous group to determine the character of the state, but find

it difficult to come to terms with the delegitimation of their own social position within that state. These factors together, along with the longer-term factors which we shall shortly discuss, have greatly influenced the new patterns of domination and subordination between ethnic groups in Kazakhstan.

Turning to **explanations offered by theories of transition, political transition theory** has suggested that national unity is necessary to achieve a successful democratic transition (Rustow, 1970, Dahl, 1989; Miller, 1996, Canovan, 1996, Linz & Stepan, 1996) and that democratic transition is much more difficult, although not impossible, to achieve in multi-ethnic states because politics tends to become highly politicised and develop into ethnic differences (Linz & Stepan, 1996, Snyder, 1998). In other words, in democratising multi-ethnic states there is a potentially high risk of ethnic conflict and identity problems because both the majority group and the minorities are given the opportunity to voice their opinions, to form parties around their opinions and to push their points of view which would lead to conflicts in words, if not in war. This has the effect of coalescing the identities very rapidly as various groups try to differentiate themselves from the competing or 'hostile' other in an open system.

The Kazakhstani case, arguably, fits in well with the democratisation transition theories because there has been *no fully-fledged democratic transition and therefore the contentious bargaining and competition that democratisation brings have not been allowed. Hence Kazakh and Russian identities remained relatively uncertain and unconsolidated.* On the other hand, however, in the states which remain authoritarian and have not made a full transition to democracy, there is still an increase in identity problems because in the new state the elites have to establish a new identity and authority and in doing so they set up a reaction with other minorities' identities, although this reaction is suppressed. That is, the expectation from transition literature is that even in the case of an imperfect transition, the problems of ethnic and national identities become more salient. This seems to be the case in Kazakhstan, although the process has been more gradual and less extreme than in other Central Asian states.

Rather than through democratic bargaining, both the Kazakh majority and the Russian minority have, as my discussion of my findings above in 8.2.2 showed, reacted to the nationalising policies and practices and the ‘internationalist’ rhetoric of the new elites, which have had in the one case a stimulating and in the other case a dampening effect on their identities and encouraged their partial consolidation. Moreover, in Hirschman’s terms, the ‘voice’ option has been very limited for both the Kazakh majority and Russian minorities in the sense that both groups did not have the chance to interact with each other and exchange opinions on a mass level (the ‘battles’ were fought mainly in the narrow academic circles, some local newspapers and on internet sites). This also meant that Russian minorities, unlike their Russian counterparts in the Baltic states, have not been able to agitate for their rights on the basis of national or international human or civic rights legislation, but rather have been forced to consider the option of out-migration from Kazakhstan or loyalty to the new state, however imperfect.

Thus, the lack of democratic transition in Kazakhstan has meant that in the short-term both *Kazakhs and Russians did not have means of open expression and competition and hence their identities remained less clearly differentiated and consolidated, but that in the longer term the non-democratic ethnicisation of the state has tended to consolidate identities.*

Indeed, some political theorists have argued that in the long-term authoritarianism offers no solution to ethnic diversity within a state, but puts conflicts on a long fuse (Snyder, 1998) and it gradually strengthens ethno-national identities. But it could also be argued that in the long-term authoritarianism can at least partly dampen the discontent of minorities, and soften their ethnic identities, provided there is an ‘exit’ option available for the disgruntled minority members and provided that the remaining minority members accept the legitimacy of the empowered group’s new status and adapt their expectations to the new situation.

As noted in chapter 2, one important aspect of transition in post-Soviet states is their **post-imperial character**. This has not always been given sufficient importance as a distinctive type of ‘prior regime type’ in the well-known typologies, such as that of Linz and Stepan,

though it is clearly related to the post-authoritarian type. I believe that the *comparative literature on the 'post-imperial' or 'post-colonial' states provides additional important insights* into the particular trajectories of identities in Kazakhstan. While the description of the USSR as an 'empire' and its Union republics as 'colonies' is not uncontroversial, it is clear that in its subordination of local cultures and personnel to the needs and direction of the Russian- (or Slavic-) dominated, centralised and authoritarian state Kazakhstan's experience can usefully be described as 'post-imperial' (Beissinger, 1995, Smith, 1998). This literature shows that, after gaining independence, newly empowered elites, if they have not emerged from a long national liberation struggle or civil war (which polarises and thus consolidates identities more quickly), are often very cautious and for long somewhat deferential towards their former imperial masters and uncertain about their own 'national' culture and the character which should be given to the state which they have inherited, in particular as its boundaries were devised in the interests of the former imperial power and many members of the formerly dominant 'imperial' people are still resident in the country and perform vital economic roles. The peaceful and rather reluctant character of Kazakhstan's acquisition of independence fits well into this pattern. However, it is also clear from the comparative literature that, as the stability of the state and its government becomes established, and if it is not challenged by external aggression or internal strife, the dominant elite and its associated ethnic group gain a greater confidence in asserting their own culture and start to exhibit a more aggressive and critical view of their previous 'imperial' history and a greater determination to restore the dominant status which they see as a right, with the resultant downgrading of the rights and status of the 'post-imperial' groups still living in the country.

In the findings of my survey we see these feelings increasingly clearly reflected, particularly amongst younger people and in the less Russianised areas of the country, in the newly dominant and subordinate ethnic groups in Kazakhstan. We also see that ideas of imperial exploitation, or at any rate injustice are increasingly used in the political rhetoric of the dominant group. Thus, while the absence of real democratic transition, with its open contestation between freely formed political parties, which tend to be ethnicised in a multi-

ethnic country, helps to explain the rather slow assertion and re-stratification of Kazakhstan's ethnic identities, the imperial/colonial character of the country's 'prior regime type' helps to explain the difficulties which the new titular group have faced in determining and asserting their newly independent identity and which the formerly dominant group have had in understanding and accepting the changed character of their situation.

With regard to **economic transition** it has to be said that there has been very little research or even discussion about the impact of the character of economic transition on ethnic identities. But it is clear that very rapid 'shock-therapy' transition with its dramatic social effects (regional economic shifts, unemployment, increase in poverty) can, in a multi-ethnic country, polarise a population along ethnic lines, which, like political contestation, rapidly consolidates ethnic identities. In the case of Kazakhstan, however, a much more gradual, if persistent, approach was adopted which continued for a long time to give the Russian population a strong economic role, which has thus diminished their need for a strong ethnic 'voice', as has their access to the possibility of emigration to Russia. However, it is clear from the responses to my survey, in which particularly Russian fears about their increasing exclusion from key career structures are clearly expressed, that with the gradual development of Kazakhstan's potentially rich economy one may anticipate that economic factors will have an increasing long-term effect on the development of identities, as the various groups struggle to gain advantage from economic development.

International factors (3) have also been very important in the development of Kazakhstan's identities. Relations with the 'homeland' state (in Brubaker's terms), i.e. the Russian Federation, have been crucial. On the one hand Nazarbaev has been very careful to cooperate closely with Russia and to be initially very conciliatory to Kazakhstan's Russian population, while on the other Russia has offered a safety net for discontented Russians in Kazakhstan to emigrate without much difficulty to the Russian Federation, thus providing an 'exit' option which weakens the 'voice' pressure (in Hirschman's terms) which would otherwise have built up amongst Russians. Likewise Russia has made no territorial claims on Kazakhstan or attempted to undermine the loyalties of the Russian population (unlike in

the Baltic states), and therefore has not served as the ‘threatening’ type of ‘homeland state’ which Brubaker’s scenario implies. At the same time in more recent years the confidence of Kazakhstan’s political elite in its long-term economic prospects and in its independent international status (e.g., in chairing the OSCE in 2010) has increased and with it its internal emphasis on Kazakh culture and values, which is gradually intensifying the ‘nationalising’ stance to which both Kazakhs and Russians are responding. The attitudes of my respondents, as discussed above in 8.2.2, confirm the salience of these factors in the development of their identities.

Thus in terms of my analytical framework this complex of historical factors (‘prior regime type’), transition theories and international interaction theories have been helpful in contributing to an explanation of my findings concerning the character and developmental trends of Kazakhstan's identities.

8.3 Scholarly Contributions and Further Research

It is hoped that the arguments and data presented in this thesis have made three distinctive contributions to the study of ethnic and national identities in Kazakhstan. The first one is the theoretical analysis, a synthesis of several theoretical literatures and approaches (theories of nationalism and ethnicity, transition theories, theories of ethnic interaction and stratification, post-imperialism, etc.), which I brought together in Chapter 2 into an overall analytical framework for interpreting my empirical data. To my knowledge this is the first time these approaches and literatures have been presented in this way to interpret the development of ethnic and national identities (in particular theories of transition and ethnic stratification, as well as Hirschman’s ‘strategies’, have not been used in this way before), and it is hoped that this theoretical framework and review makes a contribution to the study of ethnic and national identity. I also hope to have made a contribution to understanding differences between Soviet/post-Soviet and standard western academic approaches to the central concepts of ethnicity and nationalism.

The second contribution is the material on the national-state project of Kazakhstan, presented in chapter 4, which is based on the original primary sources – speeches, documents, books, etc. This primary material has enabled me to better understand the developing character of official policy in this area and explain to some extent the character of the Kazakh and Russian response to these policies.

The third contribution is my own survey material and the analysis of substantive data. Specifically, I have collected and analysed data of more recent date than most surveys and which are based on in-depth and wide-ranging interviews, which reveal much more about the complexity and uncertainty of identity perceptions of both Russians and Kazakhs than other previous mass surveys. These data have helped me to establish the details and the trends of ethnic identity interaction and identify the emergence of important differences from the findings of previous surveys (Masanov (1996), etc.), which indicate that the trend of strengthening of both Kazakh and Russian identities is emerging more clearly in recent years.

Of course I have to acknowledge that there are limitations to my research data and analytical framework. Specifically, the range of my survey is much narrower than that of the mass surveys both geographically and socially and I was not able to devise a survey, which could satisfactorily investigate every aspect of national identity in post-Soviet Kazakhstan and interview as many respondents as some authors did who conducted mass surveys on the same subject. Similarly, although my analytical framework is composed of numerous insights from different literatures, this makes it difficult to establish clear lines of causation. That said I have to stress that identity formation is a very complex phenomenon in which single-cause explanations would be insufficient and in which no line of explanation can be conclusively proved. All we can hope to do here is to provide some insights into the probable reasons for the patterns and trends that have been identified.

My thesis mainly dealt with the issues of a transitional period, a period of uncertainty and flux in the sphere of national identities in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Now Kazakhstan enters a very important stage in its development. If in the early years of independence the Kazakh leadership moved very cautiously in order to keep both Kazakh and Russian groups on side, now it has become much more confident and nationalistic in its governmental policies. This in turn may cause greater and speedier consolidation of both Kazakh and Russian identities given that the political agendas have become much clearer and the onset of oil revenues made the elites more confident in asserting Kazakh identity. In this respect the future research can focus on a period where there will be a much stronger nationalizing state and where the interaction between various identities are likely to be much sharper than anything I particularly dealt with, while there will also be probably increasing ethnic differentiation in class terms as economic development increases.

It should also be noted that it is very difficult to carry out empirical research on identities in the political circumstances of contemporary Kazakhstan and this partly accounts for the under-researched nature and evolution of Kazakhstani identities. This, however, raises interesting comparative issues for the study of ethnic interaction. For example, it would be interesting to know whether the Kazakhstani model which I have presented is representative of other post-Soviet Central Asian states and thus whether there is emerging a distinctive 'Central Asian' model of ethnic interaction which differs from that of other areas of the post-Soviet space (the Baltic states, the Slavic states, the Caucasus). It would also be interesting to apply the distinctive features of my analytical framework to these other post-Soviet areas and to see whether common state-building and ethnic-stratification patterns can be established. Other possible areas of research could look at the theoretical and empirical issues of nationhood and nationality in Kazakhstan, at the differences between Western and Soviet/post-Soviet concepts and at their impact on both the official national identity project, on the academic debates within this area and on the general mass of the population.

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APPENDIX 1 – DETAILS OF INTERVIEWEES

Details of Kazakh respondents

Petropavlovsk # 1 age 24, gender: male, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Almatinskaya obl., education: higher, profession: TV presenter.

Petropavlovsk # 2 age: 28, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Petropavlovskaya obl., education: higher, profession: lecturer of Russian language and literature

Petropavlovsk # 3 age: 32, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Petropavlovsk, education: higher, profession: doctor.

Petropavlovsk # 4 age: 20, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Severokazahstanskaya obl., education: incomplete higher, profession: student

Petropavlovsk # 5 age: 20, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Petropavlovsk, education: incomplete higher, profession: secretary

Petropavlovsk # 6 age: 21, gender: male, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Severokazahstanskaya obl., education: vocational, incomplete higher, profession: lawyer's assistant

Petropavlovsk # 7 age: 25, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Pavlodar, education: higher, profession: surgeon.

Petropavlovsk # 8 age: 55, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Petropavlovskaya obl., education: vocational, profession: director of the private enterprise.

Petropavlovsk # 9 age: 39, gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Petropavlovskaya obl., education: higher; profession: doctor

Astana # 1 age: 50; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: state structure, high level

Astana # 2 age: 18; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: incomplete higher; profession: student

Astana # 3 age: 41; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: company director

Astana # 4 age: 27; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Akmolinskaya obl.; education: vocational; profession: café assistant

Astana # 5 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Semipalatinsk; education: higher; profession: primary teacher

Astana # 6 age: 26; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Semipalatinsk; education: vocational; profession: nurse

Astana # 7 age: 27; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Northern Kazakhstan; education: vocational; profession: factory worker

Astana # 8 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: South-Kazakhstan obl.; education: higher; profession: civil servant, lawyer

Astana # 9 age: 53; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Akmolinskaya obl.; education: vocational; profession: secretary in the civil service

Astana # 10 age: 25; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Semipalatinsk; education: higher; profession: lawyer

Almaty # 1 age: 33; gender: female, nationality: Kazakh, place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession architect-designer, painter

Almaty # 2 age: 34; gender male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Aktyubinsk; education: higher; profession: teacher of painting and technical drawing

Almaty # 3 age: 29; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: translator

Almaty # 4 age 27; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Kyzylordinskaya obl.; education: higher; profession: civic servant, middle level.

Almaty # 5 age: 30; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Taldykurgan; education: higher; profession: civil servant, middle level; journalist

Almaty # 6 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: pianist, musician, teacher of music

Almaty # 7 age: 38; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: higher; profession: HR manager

Almaty # 8 age: 42; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Aktyubinskaya obl.; education: higher; profession: lecturer at the university

Almaty # 9 age: 28; gender: female; nationality Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: lecturer at the University

Almaty # 10 age: 28; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: teacher of Russian language and literature

Almaty # 11 age: 63; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: South Kazakhstan obl.; education: higher; profession: pensioner, former diplomat

Almaty # 12 age: 54; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth Kustaniskaya obl.; education: higher; profession: civil servant, engineer-electrician

Almaty # 13 age: 22; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almatinskaya obl.; education: higher; profession: secretary in civil service

Almaty # 14 age: 43; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: civil servant, HR, finance.

Almaty # 15 age: 4; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Dzhambul'skaya obl.; education: higher; profession: businessman

Almaty # 16 age: 28; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Kustanaiskaya obl.; education: higher; profession: marketing manager

Almaty # 17 age: 46; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: civil servant – middle level

Almaty #18 age: 47; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: secretary

Chimkent # 1 age: 25; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Chimkent'skaya obl; education: higher; profession: engineer-programmer

Chimkent # 2 age: 18; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Chimkent; education: vocational; profession: computer assistant

Chimkent # 3 age: 62; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Chimkent; education: higher; profession: GP, lecturer at the university

Chimkent # 4 age: 23; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: South Kazakhstan obl.; education: incomplete higher; profession: student, nurse

Chimkent # 5 age: 21; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Aktyubinskaya obl.; education: incomplete higher; profession: student, nurse

Chimkent # 6 age: 36; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Tadjikistan; education: higher; profession: teacher of Russian language and literature

Chimkent # 7 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Chimkent; education: higher; profession: civil service

Chimkent # 8 age: 22; gender: Kazakh; nationality: incomplete higher; place of birth: Atyrau; education: incomplete higher; profession: student

Chimkent # 9 age: 18; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: Tajikistan; education: incomplete higher; profession: student, dentist

Chimkent # 10 age: 31; gender: male; nationality: Kazakh; place of birth: South Kazakhstan oblast; education: higher; profession: accountant

Details of Russian respondents

Petropavlovsk # 1 age: 53; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: higher; profession: primary school teacher

Petropavlovsk # 2 age: 81; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Troitsk, Russia; education: vocational; profession: pensioner, ex-military

Petropavlovsk # 3 age: 55; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk ; education: higher; profession: businessman, manager

Petropavlovsk # 4 age: 49; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: North-Kazakhstan region; education: higher; profession: doctor

Petropavlovsk # 5 age: 32; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: vocational; profession: worker

Petropavlovsk # 6 age: 21; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: higher; profession: fireman,

Petropavlovsk # 7 age: 22; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: vocational; profession: nurse

Petropavlovsk # 8 age: 25; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: vocational; profession: barperson

Astana # 1 age: 56; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Russia; education: higher; profession: civil service, high level

Astana # 2 age: 53; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Akmola; education: higher; profession: company director

Astana # 3 age: 51; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: engineer

Astana # 4 age: 33; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: company manager

Astana # 5 age: 35; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Pavlodar; education: higher; profession: manager

Astana # 6 age: 53; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Russia; education: higher; profession: civil service, middle level

Astana # 7 age: 54; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Karaganda; education: higher; profession: doctor

Astana # 8 age: 52; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Pavlodar ; education: manager; profession: company manager

Astana # 9 age: 54; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Pavlodar; education: higher; profession: civil service, high level

Astana # 10 age: 23; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Petropavlovsk; education: vocational; profession: nurse

Almaty # 1 age: 46; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: civil service, middle level

Almaty # 2 age: 61; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Tbilisi, Georgia; education: vocational; profession: welder

Almaty # 3 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: secretary

Almaty #4 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: housewife

Almaty # 5 age: 53; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: engineer

Almaty # 6 age: 28; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: architect

Almaty # 7 age: 28; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: incomplete higher; profession: actor

Almaty # 8 age 28; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: designer

Almaty # 9 age 32; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: teacher of literature

Almaty # 10 age: 28; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Almaty; education: higher; profession: manager

Chimkent # 1 age: 55; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: higher; profession: pensioner, ex-accountant

Chimkent # 2 age: 31; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: higher; profession: secretary

Chimkent # 3 gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: South Kazakhstan region; education: higher; profession: doctor

Chimkent # 4 age: 24 ; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Kustanai; education: vocational; profession: hairdresser

Chimkent # 5 age 25; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: vocational; profession: beautician

Chimkent # 6 age: 19; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: incomplete higher; profession: student

Chimkent # 7 age: 24; gender: female; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: incomplete higher; profession: secretary

Chimkent # 8 age: 26; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: incomplete higher; profession: student

Chimkent # 9 age: 43; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: vocational; profession: driver

Chimkent # 10 age: 18; gender: male; nationality: Russian; place of birth: Chimkent; education: incomplete higher; profession: student

APPENDIX 2 – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I. Межнациональные отношения

Interethnic relations

- 1) Как вы считаете, улучшились или ухудшились межнациональные отношения в Казахстане после получения независимости?
(Do you think interethnic relations have improved, deteriorated or stayed the same in Kazakhstan since independence?)
2. Что повлияло на то, что межнациональные отношения улучшились/ ухудшились?
(What factors do you think have caused interethnic relations to improve/ deteriorate?)
3. Что можно сделать, чтоб межнациональные отношения стали лучше?
(What do you think can be done to improve interethnic relations?)
4. Близко ли казахское население и русское население, проживающее в Казахстане, в культурном, мировоззренческом плане или существуют определенные различия?
(Do you think Kazakhs and the Russians of Kazakhstan are close in culture and outlook or do they differ in this respect?)
5. Как вы думаете, русское население Казахстана стоит ближе в культурном, мировоззренческом плане к казахскому населению или к русскому населению, проживающему в России?
(Do you think the Russians of Kazakhstan are closer in culture and outlook to the Kazakhs or to the Russians of Russia?)
6. Что, по вашему, объединяет казахов как группу и отличает их от остальной части населения в Казахстане?
(What do you think unifies Kazakhs as a group and differentiates them from the rest of the population?)
7. Что объединяет коренную/ титульную часть населения с некоренной /нетитульной?
What unifies the indigenous / titular and non-indigenous/ non-titular groups?
8. Как вы думаете, что разъединяет коренное/ титульное и некоренное/ нетитульное население в Казахстане?
(What do you think separates the indigenous/ titular and the non-indigenous/ non-titular groups/ population from one another in Kazakhstan?)
9. Если бы у вас была реальная возможность и влияние что-нибудь изменить в сфере межнациональных отношений, чтобы вы предложили?
(If you had a real opportunity and the influence to change something for the better in interethnic relations, what would you do?)

10. Как вы считаете, то, что сейчас происходит в Казахстане в межнациональных отношениях, это закономерный процесс, восстановление справедливости или здесь есть какая-то доля дискриминации?

(Do you consider the developments in the inter-ethnic sphere in Kazakhstan to be a 'natural' process and 'restoration of justice' or do you think there is a degree of discrimination in them?)

II. Языковые вопросы

Language issues

11. На каком языке вы разговариваете дома?

(What language do you speak at home?)

12. На каком языке ваши дети разговаривают дома?

(What language do your children speak at home?)

13. На каком языке вы разговариваете на работе, в общественных местах?

(What language do you speak at work and in public places?)

14. На каком языке люди разговаривают на работе в общественных местах вокруг вас?

(What language do the people round you speak at work and in public places?)

15. Какой был основной язык обучения в вашей школе?

(What was the main language of instruction at your school?)

16. Какой основной язык обучения в школе ваших детей (тех, кто младше вас в семье)?

(What is the main language of instruction at your children's school (or that attended by the younger members of your family)?)

17. На каком языке, по вашему мнению, будут говорить в Казахстане через 50 лет?

(What language will be predominantly spoken in Kazakhstan in 50 years?)

18. Хотели бы вы, чтобы ваши дети в совершенстве владели казахским языком?

(Would you like your children to learn the Kazakh language?)

19. Считаете ли вы, что русский язык должен стать государственным как и казахский?

(Do you think Russian should be the second state language in Kazakhstan alongside Kazakh?)

20. Считаете ли вы, что русские и русскоязычная часть населения должна обучаться на казахском языке в школах и институтах?

(Do you think that Russians and other Russian-speakers should be taught at the universities in Kazakh?)

III. Общественная культура

Public culture

21. Знаете ли вы новый гимн Казахстана?
(Do you know the new national anthem of Kazakhstan?)
22. Как вы считаете, объединяет ли он людей, живущих в Казахстане?
(Do you think it unites all the people living in Kazakhstan?)
23. Можете ли вы назвать новые государственные праздники Казахстана и их даты?
(Can you name the new state holidays of Kazakhstan and their dates?)
24. Как вы думаете, повысился или понизился уровень патриотизма в Казахстане по сравнению с советским временем?
(Do you think the level of patriotism in Kazakhstan has become higher/ lower as compared with the Soviet period?)
25. Можете ли вы вспомнить, назвать такой момент, когда вы испытывали гордость, что вы гражданин Казахстана?
(Can you think of a moment/ situation when you felt proud that you are a citizen of Kazakhstan?)
26. Можете ли вы вспомнить, назвать такой момент, когда вы испытывали неловкое чувство или чувство обиды, досады, связанные с Казахстаном?
(Can you think of a moment/ situation when you felt uncomfortable or embarrassed that you are a citizen of Kazakhstan?)
27. Как бы вы в нескольких словах или предложениях сформулировали национальную идею республики Казахстан?
(How would you define the national idea of Kazakhstan in several words or sentences?)

IV. История

History

28. Казахстан находился в составе СССР 70 лет. Как вы считаете, что было положительного в Казахстане за советское время?
(Kazakhstan was part of the Soviet Union for 70 years. What do you think was positive in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period?)
29. Что было отрицательного в Казахстане за советское время?
(What do you think was negative in Kazakhstan during the Soviet period?)
30. Чего было больше за советское время в Казахстане – отрицательного или положительного?
What predominated during the Soviet period – the negative or the positive aspects?
31. Как вы считаете, присоединение Казахстана к России было добровольным или это была колонизация?
(Do you think the adhesion of the Kazakh steppe region to Russia was voluntary or was it colonization?)

32. Доверяете ли вы современным переосмысленным историческим повествованиям?
(Do you trust the revised historical accounts?)

33. Кто по вашему новым национальный герой Казахстана?
(Who do you think is a national hero/ heroes of Kazakhstan (both past and present)?)

33. Как вы относитесь к переименованию улиц и городов после распада Советского Союза?
(How do you view the renaming of streets and towns after the break up of the Soviet Union?)

V. Религия Religion

34. Верите ли вы в Бога?
(Do you believe in God?)

35. Какая у вас религия?
(What is your religious denomination?)

36. Можете ли вы назвать основные принципы вашей религии?
(What are the main principles of your religion?)

37. Соблюдаете ли вы какие-нибудь религиозные правила/ обряды, отмечаете ли религиозные праздники?
(Do you observe any religious principles or rituals, or celebrate religious holidays?)

VI. Экономические и карьерные вопросы Economic and career issues

38. Как вы оцениваете настоящую экономическую ситуацию в Казахстане?
(How do you view the current economic situation in Kazakhstan?)

39. Как изменилось ваше материальное положение по сравнению с советским временем? (Как изменилось материальное положение вашей семьи по сравнению с советским временем?)
(How has your (your family's) economic situation changed as compared to the Soviet period?)

40. Как бы вы оценили свое материальное положение по сравнению с большинством людей в Казахстане? (Вы находитесь на самом верху, выше среднего, по середине, ниже среднего, в самом низу)
(How would you rate your material/ economic position as compared to most people in Kazakhstan (are you are the top, above average, in the middle, below average, at the bottom?)

41. Как вы думаете, улучшиться или ухудшиться ваш материальный уровень жизни в будущие 5 лет?

(Do you think your economic situation will improve, deteriorate or stay the same in the next 5 years?)

42. Как вы считаете, какая национальность имеет наибольший процент богатых людей по республике?

(Which nationality has the highest percentage of rich people in Kazakhstan?)

43. Важна ли сейчас национальность для продвижения вперед в плане карьеры в Казахстане?

(Is nationality important for one's career advancement in Kazakhstan?)

44. Как вы думаете, может ли быть президентом Казахстана представитель некоренной национальности?

(Do you think a person from the non-indigenous/ non-titular nationality can become the President of Kazakhstan?)

VII. Политические вопросы

Political issues

45. Как вы оцениваете настоящую политическую ситуацию в Казахстане? Она улучшилась, ухудшилась, осталась на прежнем уровне?

(How do you view the current political situation in Kazakhstan?)

46. Согласны ли вы, что в Казахстане существует свобода слова?

(Do you agree that there is freedom of speech in Kazakhstan?)

47. Казахстанское правительство работает в интересах всех людей Казахстана?

(Does the Kazakhstani government work in the interest of all people in Kazakhstan?)

48. Считаете ли вы, что в будущем представители всех национальностей будут жить в мире в Казахстане?

(Do you think that all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan will live in peace in the future?)

49. Считаете ли вы, что Казахстан должен иметь свою собственную национальную армию?

(Do you think Kazakhstan should have its own national army?)

50. Предпочли ли вы, если бы Советский Союз существовал до сих пор?

(Would you prefer it if the Soviet Union still existed?)

51. Считаете ли вы, что люди в Казахстане слишком сильно критикуют свою страну?

(Do you think that people in Kazakhstan criticize their country too much?)

52. Считаете ли вы, что люди, живущие в Казахстане, должны поддерживать свою страну в любых правильных или неправильных ситуациях?

(Do you think that people in Kazakhstan should support their country in any situation right or wrong?)

53. Считаете ли вы, что в Казахстане обращаются с русским и русскоязычным населением недостаточно справедливо, и что у них должно быть больше [культурных и языковых] прав, чем они имеют сейчас?
(Do you think that Russians and Russian-speakers are treated fairly enough in Kazakhstan, i.e. that they should have more [cultural and linguistic] rights than they have now?)
54. Считаете ли вы, что национальность не должна влиять на те преимущества, которые человек получает от государства?
(Do you think that one's ethnic background should not determine the privileges that a person receives from the state?)
55. Считаете ли вы, что границы России должны быть расширены, чтобы включить в себя всех этнических русских, проживающих в ближнем зарубежье?
(Do you think the borders of Russia should be expanded to include all ethnic Russians living in the near abroad?)
56. Считаете ли вы, что русские, живущие в Казахстане, должны быть верными Казахстану, чьими гражданами они являются, а не своим историческим родинам?
(Do you think the Russians of Kazakhstan should be loyal to Kazakhstan of which they are citizens or to Russia, their historical homeland?)
57. Считаете ли вы, что правительство России не должно заниматься правами и свободами этнических русских, проживающих в Казахстане, а должны заниматься своими внутренними делами и не вмешиваться в национальную политику Казахстана, даже если это касается их диаспор.
(Do you think the Russian government should protect the rights and freedoms of the Russian diaspora in Kazakhstan or should they stay away and not interfere?)
58. Откуда, по вашему мнению, исходит национальная внешняя опасность для Казахстана?
(What country or countries represent the biggest threat to Kazakhstan?)
59. С какими странами вы бы хотели, чтобы Казахстан строил свое будущее?
(What country or countries would you like Kazakhstan to build its future with?)