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“On my honour as a student of the Diplomatische Akademie Wien, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.”

Symbat Tanaguzova

12 June 2020

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1. List of Abbreviations

BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (pipeline)
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPC	Caspian Pipeline Consortium
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
EAEC	Eurasian Economic Community
EADRCC	Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre
EAEU (EEU)	Eurasian Economic Union
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EurAsEC	Eurasian Economic Community
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MSO	Maritime Security Operations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NAVCENT	Naval Forces Central Commander
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PFP	Partnership for Peace (programme)
ROSSTAT	Federal State Statistics Service of Russia
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
UN	United Nations
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTO	World Trade Organization

2. Abstract

Since the independence declaration in 1991, Kazakhstan has been promoting its multi-vector policy with the desire to maintain balance between regional security and economic integration. This is reflected in the relations with the Russian Federation, which is considered to be the Republic's key partner and security guarantor on the one hand and recognized as a threat on the other, because of its excessive influence. Moreover, the crisis in Ukraine has intensified geopolitical tension. The paper examines Kazakhstan's policy towards the Russian Federation by applying Kenneth Waltz's theory of defensive realism. The policy is explained by the analysis of Kazakhstan's nation-building processes covering post-Soviet developments, the Ukrainian conflict, and the First President's, Nursultan Nazarbayev, resignation. The analysis provides a number of insights, including approaches to other post-Soviet cultures to prevent large-scale conflicts in the region.

The paper is based on multilingual literature sources as well as a qualitative research approach, namely interviews and opinions polls that provide valuable insights into Kazakhstan's strategic agenda with respect to Russia. The research is done with regard to the fields of International Relations and History, backed with various sources, opinion polls and recent interviews. In addition, the comparative analysis approach is applied to differentiate the policies of Ukraine and Kazakhstan in relation to Russia and to demonstrate the distinctive strategies of Kazakhstan in a state-building process.

Key words: Eurasian integration, defensive realism, multi-vectorism, post-Crimea, multiculturalism.

Abstrakt.

Seit seiner Unabhängigkeitserklärung 1991 fördert Kasachstan seine Multivektorpolitik mit dem Wunsch, das Gleichgewicht zwischen regionaler Sicherheit und internationaler Integration aufrechtzuerhalten. Dies spiegelt sich in den Beziehungen zu Russland wider, das einerseits als wichtigster Partner und Sicherheitsgarant der Republik gilt und andererseits aufgrund seines übermäßigen Einflusses als Bedrohung erkannt wird. Darüber hinaus hat die Krise in der Ukraine die geopolitischen Spannungen verschärft. Dieses Papier untersucht die Politik Kasachstans gegenüber der Russischen Föderation unter Anwendung der Theorie des Defensiven Realismus von Kenneth Waltz. Die Politik wird durch die Analyse von Kasachstans Nationsbildungsprozessen erklärt, die die Zeit der postsowjetischen Entwicklungen, den ukrainischen Konflikt und den Rücktritt des ersten Präsidenten Kasachstans Nursultan Nasarbajew umfasst. Die Analyse dieser Prozesse offenbart eine Reihe positiver Einsichten, darunter auch Ansätze für andere postsowjetische Kulturen zur Verhinderung groß angelegter Konflikte in der Region.

Diese Arbeit stützt sich sowohl auf mehrsprachige Literaturquellen als auch auf einen qualitativen Forschungsansatz, nämlich Interviews und Meinungsumfragen, die wertvolle Einblicke in die strategische Agenda Kasachstans in Bezug auf Russland liefern. Die Forschungsarbeit basiert auf den akademischen Disziplinen Internationale Beziehungen und Geschichte. Verwendet wurden einschlägige Literatur, Meinungsumfragen und Interviews. Darüber hinaus wird der Ansatz der vergleichenden Analyse angewandt, um die Politik der Ukraine und Kasachstans in Bezug auf Russland zu differenzieren und die unterschiedlichen Strategien Kasachstans beim Staatsaufbau aufzuzeigen.

Schlüsselwörter: Eurasische Integration, defensiver Realismus, Multi-Vektorismus, Post-Krim, Multikulturalismus.

3. INTRODUCTION

Since the Ukrainian crisis back in 2014, the research on Russian influence and expansionism in the Baltics and some European states has become quite common and at times continuous. Kazakh-Russian relations development has been among topics, requiring international and profound consideration. Changing the political system in Kazakhstan has long been a point of concern for the international community, and the situation has had a particular impact not only on the relations with Russia but also on other major world powers: China, the US and the EU. Following the independence declaration in December 1991, Kazakhstan has enthusiastically been promoting a multi-vector foreign policy by harmonizing two broad and core goals, economic development and state security. According to Reul Hanks, the policy allowed the former president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, “to pursue all available options ... and secure both of the objectives”. This policy includes the desire to maintain balance between security and economic integration through active diplomacy with the former Soviet space and various multilateral actors, organizations (CSTO, SCO) and institutions (Hanks 2009, 260). The latter is vividly reflected in the bilateral relations with Russia as Kazakhstan actively seeks to balance its security interests through international cooperation with the Collective Security Treaty Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, NATO and the OSCE. Russia had difficulty moving beyond this policy and promoted so-called “compatriot support to the area of its influence” (Grigas, 2016). In this regard, the **principal objective of this study is to examine the Kazakhstani defensive realism in domestic and foreign policies in relations with the Russian Federation.**

It is important to first evaluate the complex set of nation-building processes both domestically and internationally. Next, a special attention will be given to the Kazakhstan strategic agenda to establish a strong, stable, tolerant, and economically successful state.

The second approach of research considers the state's inclination towards regional security and cooperation, different international actors involved.

The experience of nation-building policy in relations with Russia is explored with regard to the fields of International Relations and History. The research on bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and Russia inevitably includes issues over security and military affairs, foreign policies of both countries, national identity, ethnicity, nuclear withdrawal, and particularly the role of historical trends. In fact, Kazakhstan nation building and its influence on bilateral relations with Russia requires a thorough historical examination due to Kazakhstan's ethnic diversification, resulting from Soviet identity-building policy and prevailing Russian population. It is important to understand the relationship through different evolving stages in the period of post-Soviet developments. For example, the role of Kazakhstan's nuclear withdrawal, the Republic's international negotiations following the collapse of the USSR, its impact on economic wealth of the both states, signing agreements on the delimitation of Kazakh-Russian borders, as well as the impact of the Ukrainian conflict.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretically, explaining the outcomes resulting from the interaction of two or more countries, including international cooperation or the likelihood of hegemonic wars, fall within the horizon of neorealism. While neorealism explains different phenomena, the division between defensive and offensive realism generates different implications of the anarchy (Waltz 1979, 117).

Kenneth Waltz's balance of power theory is the most famous example of the neo-realistic approach. There are states which act for "universal domination" at the maximum and "seek their own preservation" at the very least. To achieve the end, actors use the following

efforts: internally, they develop sensible strategies to "increase economic capability" and "military strength", while externally they move to "strengthen [their] own alliances" or to "weaken the opposing one". A self-help system is considered the condition for the theory operation, in which weak actors, who fail to help themselves, will suffer from unwanted consequences. This fear builds motivation for states to behave in ways that form the "balances of power". The theory explains a result which may diverge from the original intention of the actors, meaning that maintaining a balance itself may easily not be the aim. Yet most of the statements ascribe the balance maintenance to states as a conscious motive. Notably, the theory does not explain the particular policy of the state, rather making assumptions on the state motives (Waltz 1979, 117-119).

Externally, balancing is sensible, when states - should they fall behind - "combine with other actors" and "work harder" to increase the strength. According to Waltz, "in anarchy, security" not power "is the highest end", and power is considered more as "means". Thus, encouraged to seek security, secondary states will join the coalition with safe and defensive strength to "dissuade adversaries from attacking" (Waltz 1979, 119-122).

With regard to the research objectives, Kazakhstan's policy to maintain peace and stability clearly features the above mentioned theory of defensive neorealism. The Republic actively pursues a multi-vector foreign policy through balancing the influence of major powers, and thus harmonizing economic development and state security.

Methodology

To test and see if the theory is valid, the application of the deductive research approach proves to be relevant.

The contemporary crisis in Ukraine raised serious concerns in Kazakhstan and presented Kazakh-Russian relations as the next potential point of tension. However, the experience of the Russia-Ukraine crisis seems to be highly unlikely due to political, social and

historical differences between Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Although the states have a “common history due to the forming a part of the Russian Empire” and the Soviet Union, they “implement various strategies of nation-building, ethnopolitical processes, and statehood development”. The government of “Kazakhstan pursues the policy of forming multiple identities. In contrast, the social and cultural situation of Ukraine has increased the potential for conflict due to the formation of a modern civilized nation there” (Zogg 2016, 4). The experience of Crimean annexation can be considered a particular case to explain the absence of bias on Kazakhstan’s part against Russia. Hence the need in a comparative approach is to examine the difference between the Ukraine and Kazakhstan policies.

As there are many publications on tensions in the post-Soviet space, the Kazakhstan and Russia relations are brought out as an issue of considerable importance. The research is based on the multilingual and multicultural literature sources, and in order to assess a broader scope of the relations, English, Russian and Kazakh sources are utilized, including international research works, scholarly articles, published interviews provided by government representatives, and other literature available in local databases. Following the EAEU establishment and analyzing the importance of Caspian oil reserves, the research considers statistical data offered by the World Bank, the IMF, the Statistics Committee of the National Economy Ministry of Kazakhstan, and the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia.

When it comes to the ethnic relations, there are several surveys to provide the evidence of Kazakhstani public attitude towards Kazakh-Russian relations after Crimea crisis, Kazakhstan’s language policy, and Russia’s foreign policy on expansion. Although many ethnic Russians are well-integrated in Kazakhstan, there is little data to confirm whether they feel discriminated against or maintain the status quo. Moreover, the Russian media

have a major presence in Kazakhstan, which may have its effect on the Republic's government. While Kazakhstan initiated policies on strengthening the primacy of the Kazakh language, including the alphabet transition, there is not enough data to explore the impact of these policies on people of Kazakhstan. Surveys on the extent to which Kazakhstanis are supportive of the language policy would fill this gap.

Analysis

The triumph of democracy and the end of the Cold War have influenced the system of international relations greatly, leading to the emergence of new challenges. The development of current and alleged strategic alliances have put security and stability at risk in the post-Soviet space and the world as a whole. Boris Yeltsin, driving the Russian regime, and the EU, enlarging the borders with the Eastern and Central states back in the 1990 and 2000s - marked the end of the war history. Mr Yeltsin withdrew Eastern-European troops, having curtailed military spending and allowed Ukraine to maintain part of the Black Sea Fleet. Both Yeltsin and Putin, the current nation leader, did not encourage Crimean separatism, nor did they approve the independence of South Ossetia, Abkhazia and the separated territory of Transnistria. Meanwhile, Russia admitted the enlargement of NATO by the accession of post-Soviet states such as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and the former members of Warsaw Pact. And while the United States maintained military bases in Central Asia, Russia lowered its military presence in Cuba and Vietnam in 2002. The collaboration between Russia and the United States on disarmament of nuclear weapons since 1991 and actions against terrorism after the September 11th attacks have demonstrated Russia as a potential partner to the West (Grigas 2016, 6-9).

However, tensions over NATO and EU expansion reemerged, and the enlargement reached the borders of Russia's neighbouring states which were viewed as the inherent area of Russian influence. Moreover, in 2008, Russia's revival appeared in the Russo-Georgian

conflict. Some see Russia's rising imperial ambitions as a result of high oil prices in the mid-2000s, while others view it as the need to restore Russia after the disintegration of the USSR as for Putin, "the collapse of Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century" (Barbashin and Thoburn 2014). Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist and the founder of the peace and conflict studies, viewed Russia as an expansionist with spreading its influence on the basis of Slavic culture, Russian orthodoxy and "building a Soviet Union II based on Russia, Belarus, eastern Ukraine, and northern Kazakhstan" (Motyl 2001, 113). The strategy outcomes can be seen in the following annexation of Crimea.

The war in Eastern Ukraine and Crimean annexation aroused mounting anxiety followed by further aggression from the Western powers. Before the Crimea annexation, a military threat to the post-Soviet states did not seem to be plausible despite active foreign economic policy of Russia towards its neighbouring countries. Following the conflicts of the 1990 and 2000s in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria, the Crimea takeover triggered yet another common concern. This led many political analysts and Western power leaders to agree that Russia under Vladimir Putin appears to challenge the current order of the post-Cold-War period instead of being a partner to Europe and the United States. Over this, within scholars and policymakers communities a question on subsequent objectives of Russia in relation to the post-Soviet states and Eastern Europe arose. The potential of redrawing boundaries with the former Soviet Union republics on the pretext of protecting Russian compatriots abroad became very plausible (Kivirähk 2009, 9-10).

Since the current crisis in Ukraine suggests that Russia may anticipate future steps towards other states with a significant Russian diaspora, this would inevitably influence the bilateral relations between Russia and its direct neighbouring state, Kazakhstan.

Considering the Central Asian countries, Kazakhstan is the largest country in the region and the ninth largest country in the world; its geographic location between resource-demanding China and influential Russia cannot be overestimated in contemporary developments. Alongside its geopolitical location, the country is one of the world's leading uranium producers and is famous for its oil, gas reserves and energy resources in the Caspian region, which again intensifies its strategic position. This directly involves multiple national interests of the USA, China and Russia due to various trade deals and security factors, arising from the Afghanistan neighbourhood (Cooley 2012). However, greater military and economic roles of Russia are taken for granted in this region.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of new foreign policies, Russia has transformed into the key military partner of Kazakhstan. This is explained by major threats to the security in the region, including extremist movements and transnational organized crimes coming from Afghanistan. Moreover, a considerable concern for the Kazakhstani military policy originated in January 2005, after the negotiations with Russia on Kazakh-Russian borders delimitation, causing possible disputes with China (MFA 2013). Changing its relationship with China, Russia gained a reputation of a political supporter for Kazakhstan in relations with other countries. Along with security relations, other aspects also remain important. In the economic sense, there is a profound importance of Russia for Kazakhstan, whereby the latter is dependent on its energy exports as almost 100% of gas and some 85% of Kazakhstani oil are exported to foreign markets through Russia (*Today.kz* 2015). Additionally, a high concentration of Russian diaspora residing in the Northern region (Map 1), inherited from the Soviet Union, accelerated concerns about Russian irredentism although this trend has been rapidly declining. Thus, the ethnic factor seems to play an important role in the Kazakhstani foreign policy, where Moscow may view Russian Kazakhstanis as more favourable for Russian policy and may consider it as

valuable assets. During the collapse of the USSR, the Russian population in the northern territory exceeded 65% and Kazakhstan's policies of nation-building were intentionally implemented in the North. According to some analysts, the relocation of the capital to Astana was caused by the threat of a possible secession of northern territories to Russia (Bremmer, Ian, and Welt 1996, 188). Lastly, the Ukrainian factor has intensified tensions between Russia and Kazakhstan, where the latter has been often characterized as a next potential candidate for confrontation (Brletich 2015).



Importantly, the “Russian threat” concept should be conveyed with caution. According to the research on vectors of “influence” conducted by Laruelle, Royce, and Beysembayev, if a state acts favourable to a second state, then it must not mean that the second state has manipulated or forced the first state to act in a desirable manner (Laruelle, Royce, and Beysembayev 2019, 3-4). The reasons unconsidered by scholars are that states act in a manner beneficial to military powerful states simply because the objectives pursued by the

states align with those of the other influential states or due to economic and politically strategic motives (Isaac 1987, 8).

To sum up, contemporary developments of Kazakh-Russian relations require profound consideration. Since independence declaration, Kazakhstan has been promoting its multi-vector policy with the desire to maintain balance through security alliances and international integration. The analysis of these processes reveals a number of insights, including approaches for other post-Soviet cultures to prevent large-scale conflicts or confrontations in the region.

Literature Review:

It should be noted that the majority of literature only reviews the relations between Russia and the Central Asian region, with a short number of publications on specific spheres of Russian ties with Kazakhstan. Even though there is a paucity of literature, there is a limited number of fundamental sources that assess these relations in a broader scope. As such, the academic literature has been as follows:

1. Alexandrov, Mikhail. 1999. *Uneasy alliance: relations between Russia and Kazakhstan in the post-Soviet era, 1992-1997*. No. 66. Greenwood Publishing Group.

This is the first source in English which provides a study of Kazakh-Russian relations with the interpretation of many events since Gorbachev's time. Due to the rapid political change that emerged after the USSR collapse, the book introduces new concepts and developed approaches in examining the Kazakh-Russian relations nature. The analysis the book provides demonstrates how Russia and Kazakhstan strived for establishing a new and post-imperial foundation for their relations. With the knowledge of Russian foreign policy mechanisms, the author examines major groups of problems: Kazakh policy of a nation creation and other integration initiatives, bilateral military relations, Russia's eagerness for

Kazakhstan's energy resources, Kazakhstan's nuclear withdrawal and the Caspian Sea status.

2. Mansurov, Tair. 1996. “*Razvitie Kazakhstansko Rossiiskikh otnoshenii v protsesse suverenizatshii Kazakhstana. 1991-1995 godi*” [Development of Kazakh-Russian relations in the process of Kazakhstan's sovereignty. 1991-1995]. Moscow: Rossiiskaya Akademiia Nauk.

The study of Mr Mansurov on the development of Kazakh-Russian relations while gaining sovereignty in the Republic is of particular interest. On the basis of extensive factual material and personal observations, the author analyses the development of the relations for the period from 1991 to 1995. This is an important scientific work for studies on CIS problems and integration processes. It reveals a Kazakhstani position on the bilateral relations with Russia development and, at the same time, sees Russia underestimate the integration processes.

3. Grigas, Agnia. 2016. *Beyond Crimea: the new Russian empire*. Yale University Press.

Agnia Grigas demonstrates how the Russian policy has been implemented in Ukraine and Georgia. Her purpose is to prove that Russia begins to reconstitute its empire back to the sixteenth century by intervening in its neighbour's affairs on the basis of defending threatened compatriots. Grigas provides an analysis of the nature of Putin's foreign policy and how Russia uses both hard and soft power for its territorial expansionism. Her claims are based on the experience of Georgian war in 2008 and Ukrainian conflict in 2014, which serve as a warning to countries at similar risk, like the Baltic States, Kazakhstan and Moldova.

4. Laruelle, Marlene, Dylan Royce, and Serik Beysembayev. 2019. "Untangling the puzzle of "Russia's influence" in Kazakhstan." *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 60.2: 211-243.

The article discusses the theme of "Russian influence" which has been often assumed by analysts without care, and the reasons why several states act in a manner favourable to another left unconsidered by most of the analysts. In this view, the authors explain these reasons through endogenous and exogenous vectors generated actively or passively by states. Examining the vectors allows understanding the Kazakhstani-Russo relationship and explains Russia-favourable behaviour of Kazakhstan. The latter is achieved through a more nuanced discussion of Russia's strategic and economic ties with Kazakhstan, the Russian language status, the Russian minority issue, the Russian media presence, and quite a widespread "Russophilia" in Kazakhstan.

5. Cameron, David R., and Mitchell A. Orenstein. 2012. "Post-Soviet Authoritarianism: The Influence of Russia in Its "Near Abroad"." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 28.1: 1-44.

Thinking about political power forms in the post-Soviet states, the article examines the changes extent and direction in democratic and authoritarian elements, the extent to which Russia can exercise the leverage in relation to the states, its influence on the forms of political authority, particularly the degree of democratization.

6. Pantin, Vladimir Igorevich, and Vladimir Valentinovich Lapkin. 2015. "Etnopoliticheskie i etnosocialnye protsessy na postsovetском prostranstve (na primere Rossii, Belorussii, Kazahstana I Ukrainy)" [Ethnopolitical and Ethno-Social Processes in the Post-Soviet Region (Case Study of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine)]. *Polis* 5: 75-93.

The article analyzes key trends in ethno political and ethno social development in the largest post-Soviet states, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. Special attention is paid to the comparative analysis and the correlation of ethnic and civil components of identity, as well as identity politics in each of the states. The authors analyze the difficulties of developing civic identity and civil society, as a result of continuing uncertainty of nation-building guidelines, as well as low political efficiency. It is shown that the situation in the area of interethnic relations and national identity across the countries are very different.

7. Zabortseva, Yelena Nikolayevna. 2016. *Russia's relations with Kazakhstan: Rethinking ex-Soviet transitions in the emerging world system*. London: Routledge.

The book is of particular interest to researchers of post-Soviet and CIS, which centres upon exploring changing relations between Kazakhstan and Russia and the influence on the post-Soviet engaging with the world. Integrated relations between the two states are explored from a historical perspective, started back in 1991; the book also analyzes politics, economics, nuclear disarmament, ethnicity and national identity issues, regionalism and security.

4. 1991-1999. Disintegration of the Soviet Union and Kazakhstan's State-Building Process.

Russian Imperialism over Soviet non-Russian republics.

It is important to consider the influence of historical trends on contemporary Kazakhstan-Russian relations, particularly in security and ethnic dimensions. The country was heavily influenced by Russian imperialist views beginning with the Russian protectorate, when Kazakhs were threatened by Zunghars' invasion, appealed for Catherine's protection, and ending with ethnic distribution and forced migration from the Soviet Union.

In the first years of the Bolsheviks' rule, the goal of the Communist Party was to demonstrate to the world that the USSR was a voluntary federation of equal Union republics and to make the Party's power effective in a multinational community. However, in the 1930s, Stalin witnessed the growth of non-Russian culture, ideology, languages and saw the sense of national identity as a threat to Moscow. This led Stalin to stressing Russian patriotism, Soviet loyalty to communist order and to creating a monolithic society, separated from the threatening international environment. Obviously, more than a half of the demographic and political core of the Soviet Union was constituted by the Russians. Largely perceived as a leader and core patron for the USSR people, Russia was still unshakeable until Stalin's death in 1953. In the post-Stalin era, the economy was ruled in a very centralized manner, with a Stalinist component - no mass terror. The 1958 educational reforms on Russian language teaching were implemented across high schools and higher educational institutions of many non-Russian republics. For instance, although Ukrainians dominated office-holding in the central Party and in the armed forces, only 19% of Ukrainian textbooks for higher education and 30% of all books were published in Ukrainian. By 1974, the majority of urban school students in Ukraine were enrolled in Russian-language schools, parents wanting to achieve a better future career for their children (Lieven 2000, 292-93).

The cultural revolution of Stalin in the 1930s enhanced the Russian language role through classical literature and musical heritage. In the communist system of education, Russians had a strong source of identity, triumph and pride, where the language of Lenin and Pushkin would be the world's main language. Knowing this language, everyone could share Soviet identity for prestige, high culture, and immense richness (Lieven 2000, 306).

The fluency in Russian was required for anyone in the USSR who was needed a successful career. This included all ministries, committees, state organs of the Union. Russian was

portrayed as the language of not just state or government but also as the language of high culture, elite and future. The latter provided Russians a sense of progress and power, particularly in developing regions of the Union. Other languages were defined as ethnic. In some non-Slav republics, like the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic (KSSR), widely used Russian language no doubt contributed to a strong sense of Soviet identity, which inevitably bound the whole Union with cultural russification. The identity and the language status of non-Russian republics had been threatened in result. The experience of communist youth organizations, like Komsomol and Pioneers, left distinctive marks in the memories of both Russian and non-Russian children, who passed Soviet schools (Lieven 2000, 306-307).

The feeling of loyalty to the Soviet regime emerged from a number of shared understandings and beliefs. For instance, these assumptions were used in the school system through the history lessons about the Union's past. The lessons were consciously taught in a different way, with a number of omissions. In the Soviet version, the history was centered upon Russia as a victim of oppression, meaning no wrongs had ever been committed by the Russian people. All Soviet citizens were therefore taught to believe to be the first socialist, modern, progressive and powerful society in the world.

However, the sudden shocking fall of communism had been a terrible punch to Soviet identity and patriotism. The task to overthrow global capitalism had been extremely ambitious for the country with a weaker economy than Western Europe. The Union's regime restrained its legitimacy to compete with capitalism and achieve external goals. Moreover, anti-Russian feelings had been formed among republican leaders and non-Russian nations. The basic reason for the failure of Communist regime was in fact a loss of ideology, and under Gorbachev, the Soviet citizens abandoned their commitment to Soviet patriotism and identity as the regime's project of modernity failed and became public. The loss of credibility to Soviet ideology was also the reason for wrong predictions about

capitalism economic failure, which eventually led to a final crisis in 1991. The legitimacy of Communist leadership was destroyed by the failure of Gorbachev's economic reforms combined with democratization, *Glasnost* (loosely, “publicity”) about the Soviet state’s past and denunciation of Stalin’s terror. The ethnic diversity of the Union always made the relationship between the imperial center and the regional leaderships politically fragile. Republican first secretaries would not have supported or passed resources to the center if they had not received something in return. Therefore, the Soviet regime needed to pursue the policy of providing regional leaders with legitimacy, high status, security protection, and budgetary resources (Lieven 2000, 335).

Indeed, the impact of democratization contributed sufficiently to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The democratic reform implications introduced to almost all Union republics in 1989-1990s led republican leaders to become dependent on their local electorates rather than on the Party in Moscow. In the 1990s, to adapt to the challenges of *perestroika* (loosely, “reorganization”), the republican leadership was allowed to apply the means for independent survival. Thus, the breakdown of the Central Party’s power and its relationship with republican elites incentivized regional leaders to seize local assets, satisfy the needs of electorates, and control regional power. In the midst of severe economic crisis, the Union had to evolve flexible institutions and open semi-democratic means overnight, consequent rules being hastily crushed week by week. Given the chance of democratization and *glasnost* (loosely, “publicity”), the population was bound to demand a better life after seven decades of tyrannical ruling. At the end, the failure was inevitable, having left all Union republics with a very complex destruction of the communist political and economic systems (Lieven 2000, 335).

Disintegration of the Soviet Union and the development of Kazakhstan as a sovereign state.

The history of Kazakhstan is inseparable from the history of Russia. During the period of 1991-1995, the Kazakh-Russian relations have passed a number of essential stages, which can determine the scale and depth of the two countries' integration.

A remarkable step towards the construction of a new Kazakhstani statehood was the adoption of the Declaration on State Sovereignty in 1991 by the Kazakh SSR Supreme Council and the first President election in 1990. The new stage in the history of the republic began on December 16, 1991 with the state independence proclamation - a democratic state with full authority over its territory and pursuing its own internal and external policy. The process of political system formation in Kazakhstan was difficult and tense. In many respects, it was caused by a legacy of former one-party, absence of political experience and conditions for the state power, legal irregularity and modern level of the Kazakh statehood, experiencing the first steps in formation. Parliamentarism in the Republic has gone through a number of political problematic cases. In 1993, the Supreme Council decided to dissolve itself. However, it is important to remember that the Council was the one who adopted all state acts on sovereignty, independence of the country, election of the President and other political reforms. In March 1994, the first professional parliament consisting of 177 deputies was elected. The new parliament proved incapable of legislative activity and was elected with significant violations, which subsequently led to its dissolution. The new Parliament, consisting of two houses, the Senate and the Majilis, was held with the active participation of political parties and movements in December 1995. Being professional enough this time, the new Parliament enacted legislation effectively and was compliant with the principle of separation of powers (Mansurov 1996, 15-17).

The First Constitution guaranteed the most important democratic rights, freedom and ensured inter-ethnic harmony and civil peace. Analysing the first Constitution, a number of discussion provisions governing citizenship and the State language should be highlighted. Citizenship has been substantially unified: it is recognized as one and equal for all. The Russian language, in the role of an undefined communication language, was given the status of the official language used in state organizations and local governments equally with the Kazakh. Having affirmed the high status of the Russian language in the Constitution, the multi-ethnic State guaranteed conditions for the development of all languages in Kazakhstan (Mansurov 1996, 17-18).

In terms of social and economic reforms, Russia's decisions forced the Kazakhstan Government to use "shock therapy". The close interconnection of economic complexes, as well as the vast neighboring territories of the two countries never enabled Kazakhstan to choose another approach. In January 1992, Kazakhstan as well as Russia had to start price liberalization. Based on the ineffectiveness of "shock therapy" tactics, the Kazakhstani President decided to rely on the evolutionary process of consistent transformation in the economy. Gaining economic independence associated with the national currency introduction required to adopt strict measures against inflation and transition to the market. In 1992, N.A. Nazarbayev, the first President, outlined key strategic goals of state development in the document "Strategy of Formation and Development of Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State". However, this development concept was based on the need to tackle a twofold task: on the one hand, to preserve national features of statehood, i.e. to prevent its transformation into a simple union of administrative divisions; on the other, to establish a permanent system for each nationality needs recognition. One complex challenge here was an ill-advised policy on the language (Nazarbayev, 1992).

The factor of multinationalism required constant attention as it determined the inter-ethnic harmony provision in the Republic. Certain efforts were made to study the nation and ethnic groups' demands and to ensure constitutional norms, guaranteeing equal rights and freedoms for citizens regardless of ethnicity or race, and thereby prohibiting all forms of discrimination. Moreover, various associations of nationalities have actively begun establishing in the country to promote the national traditions and culture and native language studies development and support for other national needs. All these contributed to the Assembly of People establishment, a broad public consultative body under the Republic President (Mansurov 1996, 20).

At the first independence stage in Kazakhstan, just as in the other post-Soviet countries, specific processes were developed to determine the recognition of these countries by the international community, and especially by the leading powers. Kazakhstan-Russia bilateral relations required a new legal definition so that the continuity of good neighbourly traditions would not be violated. It is worth noting that integration initiatives originally came from the leadership of Russia and Kazakhstan. A number of documents were signed on cooperation between foreign ministries, agreements on the economic restrictions removal, on price policy harmonization between the two countries and agreements on space issues. Accordingly, all these documents regulating mutual economic relations laid the foundation for further fruitful cooperation in the new market conditions.

In the new history of the two states, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (25th May, 1992) between the Kazakhstan Republic and the Russian Federation became the foundation for new relations. This document defined that the allied states build their friendly relations guided by the principles of mutual respect for the state sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes and non-use of force or threats of force, including economic and other pressure means, equality and non-interference in

internal affairs, compliance with human rights and fundamental freedoms, fulfilment of obligations in good faith, as well as other universally recognized norms of international law (*Rfembassy.Kz*).

Post-Soviet bilateral economic relations and regional integration of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

The next stage in the relations development was very important from an economic point of view, namely, the single Ruble zone collapse. In this situation, Kazakhstan was forced to introduce its own national currency, and it can be seen how the independence, recently declared by the state, was filled with real content. In fact, the year 1992 was marked by numerous agreements stating that Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation would further prioritize economic cooperation based on free trade principles, single payment means, unfair competition elimination, etc. Among these agreements, it is important to bring out the agreement on the Baikonur Cosmodrome facilities composition, transferred to the CIS Strategic Forces, and the terms of their use and provision. But 1992 also distinguished itself by the defense cooperation: the two countries' agreement on military service and the cross-border military facilities joint use and protection (*Embassy of Kazakhstan in Russia 1995, 103-04*).

The period of 1993 can be noted as a transition of bilateral cooperation to a regional level. The history of good-neighbour relations has determined the need for yet closer contact between the two states in education, science and culture fields. In this regard, the cooperation development in education confirmed the equality of all educational institutions across the states, regardless of the instruction language.

In order to maintain common economic space, serious measures were taken to unite the monetary systems, i.e. they created so-called "ruble zone of a new type". Sadly, it all turned out fruitless. In a situation where two independent states are no longer united by a common

form of government, a single ruble zone could mitigate the consequences of the central state collapse, but only exist over a certain transitional period (Mansurov 1996, 27).

While considering this stage of bilateral cooperation, it is notable that Kazakhstan back then was actively joining the world community, establishing diplomatic relations with many states worldwide. The country was developing economic programs to revitalize the economy, working with international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and establishing various joint ventures. The next stage for the relations started at the first official visit to Moscow of the President N.A.Nazarbayev in 1994, a stage of expansion and deep integration for Kazakhstan and Russia. The visit is important to mention because it laid the groundwork for the relations in terms of documents related to the military-political aspect, including the agreement on strategic nuclear forces temporarily located in Kazakhstan at that time, the agreement on military-technical cooperation to dismantle nuclear devices installed at the Semipalatinsk test site. The documents signed brought the relations to a new level, becoming a strategic partnership for the years to come (Embassy of Kazakhstan in Russia. 1995, 161-175).

The citizenship complexities had been unique since the collapse of the Union. The people of the once united state perceived the situation very painfully, which brought considerable discomfort to the population's traditional stereotypes. As a result, a legal clarity to solve the complex problems was provided by a Yeltsin and Nazarbayev meeting in 1995, where they signed the agreements on the legal status of Kazakh citizens permanently residing in Russia and the status of Russian citizens permanently residing in Kazakhstan. The deed undoubtedly relieved some tension.

Regarding economic integration, the Customs Union establishment among Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus made it possible to remove all obstacles for the goods free transit: they

abolished existing tariffs and quantitative restrictions within the Union and established a uniform tariff regime for the others. Thus, economic barriers in the form of customs duties, control points, restrictions on the goods flow and complications in crossing borders were removed by the Union, which resulted in an increased turnover thereafter.

At first, the underdeveloped market formation instruments and the lack of a competitive environment were the main source of inflation, a decrease in demand, and subsequently a decline in production in Kazakhstan. Yet the liberalization policy of 1992-94s and the Customs Union allowed to approach the country's policies together with developed market economies. The volume of goods exports in 1994 was some \$3.3 billion, the CIS countries accounting for the major share and the Russian Federation for the largest, with its massive 47%. In the volume of Kazakhstan's import purchases, a huge share went to Russia, about 70%. It is also important that more than 50 enterprises, ensuring Russia's defense interests, were operating in Kazakhstan back then, including main highways to the East, such as Trans-Siberian and Yuzhsib (verbatim, "South Siberian"), as well as the largest Russian communication lines, electricity transmission lines and pipelines. Besides, it is important to point out that the Treaty establishing the Economic Union also served as the international legal basis for economic integration (Mansurov 1996, 35).

Since the independence declaration, Kazakhstan had prioritized the task to ensure external security and to seek guarantees from the world's leading powers. The military aspect was due to the fact that the armed forces across the CIS countries are a "has-been" of the now bygone USSR Armed Forces, meaning they possessed a significant number of similar nuclear weapons and shared a common organizational structure, tactics and strategy.

Nuclear security and forces available for the CIS countries were extremely important. As it is known, after the Union collapse, nuclear forces remained in Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. By the end of 1992, all Soviet tactical weapons had been returned

back to Russia, whereas the strategic weapons had posed a more complex problem. This issue made Russia and the United States to engage the three states in talks and eventually conclude the Lisbon Protocol in May 1992. The protocol obliged Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine to acquiesce Soviet Union nuclear weapons to the strict and reliable control of a single integrated command and made all the states party to the START-I (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). The agreement signaled Kazakhstan's intention to prevent the spread of nuclear arms and accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State party, a commitment that continues to be complied with today (Mansurov 1996, 37)

Furthermore, relating to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances was signed by Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus in December 1995, thereby providing security guarantees against threats to territorial integrity or political independence. The adoption of this document was a major event in international politics. The three powers of the Non-Proliferation Treaty – the US, UK and Russia - had collectively pledged to ensure Kazakhstan's sovereignty, its territorial integrity and guarantee security against economic coercion. Kazakhstan received similar security assurances from China and France in separate documents. Military cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan is caused by many factors, the main of which is the military security. Because of Kazakhstan's geopolitical position, Russia cannot ensure its military security nor can Kazakhstan without having Russia as a military-strategic ally, solving security problems. The path of military cooperation was not easy and smooth back in 1995 when both states signed agreements on the military service of Russian citizens in Kazakhstan and on the status of Russian military units temporarily stationed in the state. At all times, cultural interaction has been a connecting link between peoples. Traditions of mutual cultural enrichment in Russia and Kazakhstan are examples of true Eurasian and

harmonious synthesis. A great Kazakh poet Abay Kunanbayev and a scientist Chokan Valikhanov both emphasized the timeless importance of the Russian language. The failure of previous cooperation caused great concern in the sphere of Kazakh students' education and training of scientific and pedagogical experts. Despite the separation, Russian universities remained the backbone for training top-class professionals, and over the Soviet period, from 1,500 to around 2,000 specialists in all fields had been acquiring valuable insights and skills at Russian universities. As a result, the 1995 Protocol on Higher Education Cooperation was concluded, allowing Kazakh students to continue their studies at Russian higher education institutions (Embassy of Kazakhstan in Russia. 1995, 181-191).

Geopolitical changes in the world during the years of the Union's disintegration created a fundamentally new situation in the Caspian region. In 1991, the Soviet Union alongside with Iran was replaced by four new sovereign Caspian states – Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan, which also gained access to Caspian resources altogether. Among tough problems was reaching a compromise on the Caspian Sea status. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan are intra-continental countries with no access to the open sea, so Caspi importance as one of the main transport hubs rocketed, let alone the possibility to independently exploit its resources.

The Caspian Sea problem is multidimensional, and its oil and gas reserves can easily be compared to that of the Persian Gulf. Such wealth is of strategic importance for the Caspian countries in terms of fishing, shipping, research and development, and exploitation of the seafloor with its rich hydrocarbon resources. The latter needed a relevant international legal framework and multilateral consultations held in 1994-95 confirmed the need for a joint compromise on the Caspian Sea status. This was also emphasized by the US Naval Forces Central Commander, Vice Admiral Kevin J. Cosgriff, who stated “there are strong

similarities of the challenges facing Kazakhstan in the Caspian and Persian Gulf States. In both areas, relatively new navies are protecting off-shore and onshore infrastructures. They also face similar geographic and hydrographic challenges” (Clarke, 2007). Thus, Kazakhstan became the initiator of the negotiation process among the five Caspian countries, having developed and presented its draft Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea in 1994 (Barsegov 1998, 121).

Kazakhstan proposed to tailor the general UN Convention principles and provisions to the Caspian Sea situation, giving it an updated legal content based on the area peculiarities, individual and common interests of each coastal state, the Caspian ecosystem preservation, cooperation development and ensuring peace and stability in the region. Kazakhstan believed that Caspian seabed and subsoil should be delimited among the coastal states, which would have national jurisdiction and exclusive rights over mineral resources exploration and exploitation. This indicates that Kazakhstan not only relied on international rules, but also followed customary law, developed on the basis of the extensive USSR and Iran practice, with the end to produce Caspian oil independently, without mutual consultation (Vovk, Ivanov 2013, 32).

Kazakhstan’s initiative and active position on the Caspian problem was dictated by the fact that the Caspian Sea resources began to play an important role in the economic and political life of the country and its cooperation with the outside world. The country’s success in socio-economic development was closely linked to the effective operation of the oil and gas complex, foreign-investment-backed. According to estimates in the 1990s, Kazakhstan was the thirteenth-largest country in the world in terms of commercially valuable hydrocarbon reserves, with a proved reserve ratio to annual production of 99 years, compared with 83, 23, and 21 years for Saudi Arabia, Russia, and China respectively. The country’s annual oil production in the second half of the 1990s was 23-25 mln tons (\$57-

62k today's equivalent), almost half of which was domestic consumption (Zhiltsov 2003, 18).

Kazakhstan considered it inappropriate to divide the Sea into national sectors, suggesting the principle of determining endorsed parameters for the territorial sea and the joint use of the remaining water column and surface. Following Kazakhstan, most Caspian States developed draft conventions on the Sea legal status, which revealed significant differences in approaches to achieving consensus. The debates on the numerous Caspian problems remained inconclusive, which prompted Kazakhstan and Russia to take practical steps towards the rational use of their positions in the region.

An example of such use was the joint cooperation statement signed by former presidents N.A.Nazarbayev and B.N.Yeltsin in Almaty, in 1996. Now, the Caspian Sea legal status was to be determined by the Caspian states on a consensus basis, meaning no one had exclusive rights to resolve the issue unilaterally. In addition, the parties were in favour of intensifying and resuming the negotiation process among the states. Kazakhstan and Russia attempted to reconcile the positions of all five Caspian states at similar bilateral negotiations with the rest of the region. And it was a breakthrough: they determined the Caspian Sea legal status that day. Having signed the agreement on the seabed delineation in the northern part of the Caspian Sea with respect to sovereign rights for subsoil use on July 6, 1998, Kazakhstan and Russia brought so much needed certainty to the northern Caspian Sea legal status. Indeed, the certainty put an end to the dispute over the question if the Caspian is a sea or a lake. The stakeholders recognized it as a sea, which enabled applying relevant international norms, in particular the division of its natural resources (Tokaev 2011, 210). The following agreement, in 2000, indicated that the bottom of the northern part of the sea and its subsoil, maintaining a shared use of the water surface for fishing, navigation and environment protection, are demarcated between the parties along

a median line, modified on the basis of equity and mutual agreement principles (Vovk, Ivanov 2013, 33-34).

Finally, Kazakhstan's position on the Caspian problem was nevertheless taken as a basis for the bilateral agreements signed with the Russian Federation in 1998 and 2000s. Despite the fact that the Caspian status had not been clearly defined before then, bilateral negotiations between Kazakhstan and other Caspian states became significant groundwork for diplomatic actions later on.

Despite some progress in the bilateral relations establishment and development, many of the stated goals remained "as a matter of good wishes". Ethno-political problems became a serious challenge for bilateral relations. The state border, which emerged after the USSR collapse, separated a number of people from their historical homeland, including Russians living in Kazakhstan and Kazakhs inhabiting the border regions of the Russian Federation. Although the both countries officially recognized post-Soviet administrative border as an interstate boundary, there were mutual territorial claims – unofficial - which threatened the states with ethnic conflicts escalation. In addition to the socio-economic situation, discrimination against the "non-native" population in education and public sector employment resulted in the Russian-speaking population emigrating from Kazakhstan, with the outflow reaching massive 2.5 million people over a decade, 1989 to 1999 (Mansurov 2001, 273).

In order to prevent uncontrolled disintegration, Kazakhstan and Russia were able to establish a solid legal foundation for the relations development, including the Treaty of Friendship. Thanks to the constructive dialogue, mutual recognition of existing borders and non-interference in internal affairs, they managed to avoid further involvement in an ethno-political conflict threatening not only the very two states but also the world as a whole. Thus, Moscow's claims to Northern Kazakhstan could easily lead to a nuclear conflict

between Russia and Kazakhstan, given that they had the world's third largest nuclear capacity until 1995. Nevertheless, had Kazakhstan satisfied Moscow's claims, the Russian Federation would have received bills and faced the unprotected border with Kazakhstan, now unfriendly and ready to join anti-Russian coalitions (Golunov 2008, 51).

One of the most serious problems in the period was weak agreements and treaties implementation. The treaties were easily undermined by the parties if they did not meet their short-term interests, and the circumstances of national currency introduction in 1993 is an example. Having announced its new currency, Russia did not agree this step with its CIS partners. In response, Kazakhstan, agreeing to recognize the Russian ruble as a common monetary unit, was at the same time issuing its own national currency.

Another striking example of inconsistency is the unilateral steps taken by Russia in 1997 in the sphere of tax legislation, which entailed double taxation of exports from the both countries and resulted in a 31% reduction of Russian-Kazakh trade turnover in 1997-1998 compared with that of 1996. Moreover, a strong impact on the process of creating a free trade zone had a financial crisis in Russia in August, 1998: after ruble devaluation, cheaper Russian products flooded the Kazakhstani market, forcing its government to impose temporary restrictions on importing 23 groups of goods into the country. After the April 1999 financial crisis, the restrictions lifted, the integration process nevertheless slowed down considerably (Golunov 2008, 53).

Given the circumstances, it is notable that the 1994 draft document project "On the formation of the Eurasian Union", proposed by the first Kazakhstani president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, maintained its wide popularity, despite being doomed to fail. The project introduced the Union as "...an independent union of equal independent states, aimed at the realization of national interests of each member state and the existing set of integration capabilities". S.V.Golunov asserted that the project was knowingly bound to fall short

(Golunov 2008, 52). The reason for project failure was that economic basis for the association should have been the development of common principles for regulating export quotas and prices for raw materials, however, there were quite sharp disagreements between the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on these points in the 1990s. However, advocating for the Eurasian initiative, primary changes to improve multilateral relations were already in place. The idea of Eurasianism came from Nazarbayev's intention to establish alternative foreign economic policy and bring together mutual peace-making values. There was no doubt that Kazakhstan aspired to strengthen economic ties with neighbouring countries but follow its own cultural practices. Based on sovereignty, neither the commonality nor dual citizenship was proposed - let alone provided - by the Eurasian Union. All member states were allowed to integrate in other associations, though (Saltybayev and Parkhomchik 2020, 199).

Giving his speech at the Moscow State University in 1994, Nazarbayev stated that post-Soviet states were always connected to each other by historic and administrative ties. He went on to say that "...the Eurasian Union is possible only on the principles of voluntariness, equality, mutual benefit and consideration of the pragmatic interests of each participating country". (Akorda.kz 2014). Although new political order had not prepared CIS countries for another form of political confederation, Nazarbayev continued to insist on Kazakhstan's vision of Eurasian cooperation. The first Nazarbayev's idea of Eurasian integration was underestimated by the majority of the CIS states and politicians back then. However, with a common political space, trade relations and power systems, the Eurasian states could realize that the establishment of such a union would be advantageous for them.

Since the independence declaration, Kazakhstan has been focused on balancing its relations with Russia, China, and the US, considering its own integration policy as an effective tool to preserve the harmony between the great powers. Relationship deterioration between the

great powers gaining momentum, Kazakhstan began to make attempts to enhance international credibility, and Eurasian integration was the best way to promote a sustainable position in the international arena. Being aware that first attempts would entail serious challenges and spark waves of reproach, Kazakhstan introduced systematic work on improving its positive image of a reliable partner, expecting to make a successful integration breakthrough. Therefore, it has always been the highest priority for Kazakhstan to demonstrate Eurasianism benefits, which was later on identified as a fundamental element of Kazakhstan's foreign strategy. Indeed, the slogan "Friendship of Nations", originated in the Soviet Union period, was right and multiculturalism turned the Kazakhstani to be open for cultural innovations. (Saltybayev and Parkhomchik 2020, 202).

5. 2000-2004. Economic Initiatives of Kazakhstan and Increased Security Concerns.

Bilateral institutional economic initiatives and Kazakhstan's efforts towards alternative cooperation.

In 2000, a new stage began. Leadership change in Russia and a rapid economic growth in the both countries marked the beginning of a new day for the Russian-Kazakh relations. The states had far more funds for foreign trade operations available, plus investments and large-scale joint projects, than in the 1990s. With the recurring complications between Moscow and Minsk, Astana claimed the role of Russia's main partner across the former-Soviet space, actively contributing to the creation of associations, such as the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which was increasingly becoming politically important amid the weakened CIS and obvious disagreements among its members.

In 2002, Kazakhstan and Russia managed to resolve the delimitation problem, having signed the Protocol to the Agreement between them. The northern part of the Caspian Sea

seabed now had its limits marked and described, and the renewed agreement secured the external borders for Kazakhstan and Russia. Greater difficulties, however, were caused not by the territory division or water areas but by transboundary mineral deposits, which was eventually decided on a parity basis. Although some Russian politicians perceived the compromise negatively - they considered the concessions made to Kazakhstan to be “an excess”, - the unsettled territorial disputes could ruin the relations or, at least, set them into an unfavourable scenario similar to the "Ukrainian", thus depriving Russia of one of the few remaining allies in the post-Soviet space (Barabanov 2005).

Favorable economic and political factors contributed massively to the rapid growth of trade turnover. Since 2003, bilateral trade had been growing rapidly, and by the end of 2007 it had increased four times, reaching some \$16.3 billion. Russia and Kazakhstan resumed parallel operating in energy systems, once divided in the 1990s, established joint ventures for power generation and distribution, uranium enrichment, transport infrastructure, oil and gas extraction, high-tech industries, etc. Established in January 2006 and planned by the two states to form an investment portfolio, the Eurasian Development Bank took a particularly significant initiative in financing the projects (Golunov 2008, 55).

A larger joint project was the construction of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) for exporting Caspian oil to Europe, stretching from Tengiz oil field to the Russian port Novorossiysk-2. The project was believed to be one of the most important elements, facilitating more successful economic cooperation. However, despite stable political relations between the two states, tensions over Caspian oil projects occurred periodically during the Putin's presidency. Putin and Nazarbayev concluded several agreements on the energy sector, including the Agreement on Oil Transit in June 2002, whereby it was 45 million tons of Kazakhstani oil to be exported through Russia with the extension over 15

years. However, from the year 2004 on, there had been no successful attempts to facilitate positive energy relations on the Russian part (Mikhailov 2002).

There were certain positive trends in cooperation between the common border regions, which accounted for about 40% of Russian-Kazakh trade turnover in 2008. The sign of an increased economic activity was a number of share purchases in Kazakh mining operators by Russian businesspeople and Russian machine-building organizations by Kazakhstani entrepreneurs. Since the late 1990s, Russia began to systematically strengthen the border, and soon coordination efforts between the security agencies to counteract cross-border challenges brought certain results. In the course of joint operations, criminal structures involved in smuggling of illegal migrants and drug traffickers went under a serious pressure. In October 2007, the head of the Russian border service, V. Pronichev, reported that "...the channels of illegal migration for third-country nations across the Kazakh-Russian border were almost completely blocked" (Popov 2007).

While the CIS' share in Russia's trade was insignificant, a real growth occurred in absolute terms during 2000-2004 period. According to the Kazakhstan Agency of Statistics, the growth in export and import with Russia held the first position among the CIS countries: they went from \$1.7b to \$2.8b and from \$2.4b to \$4.8b respectively. A notable progress in diplomatic cooperation ensued the establishment of trade consulates in the both countries, becoming necessary bridges for mutual investments. In Uralsk and Almaty, Russian trade representatives actively involved in facilitating trade cooperation, conducting multiple researches on the demand for Kazakhstani produce across Russian markets. Moreover, the intensification of partner economic projects had been widely influenced by the idea of Eurasianism. The idea gained even stronger support from many Russian politicians after Putin's presidency, including the Russian Minister of Culture, who emphasized the

significance of Eurasian region because of “...its historical background and contemporary ideology” (Zabortseva 2016, 112-114).

However, despite the achievements, there had been little to no significant breakthroughs in the very relations: a vast majority of the results were achieved thanks to the economic growth and favourable commodity prices worldwide.

Actively participating in joint projects with Russia, Kazakhstan did not abandon its multi-vector policy, maneuvering between Russia, China, USA, EU and trying to avoid excessive dependence upon any of them. Kazakhstan sought to find alternative routes and markets, and on July 29, 2006, the first phase of the Atasu-Alashankou-Dushanzi oil pipeline was launched, the project expanding from Kazakhstan to China. Energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China started in 1997, the agreements covering the oil pipelines operating from Kazakhstani reserves in the Caspian Sea to Chinese Xinjiang (China Daily, 2006). In addition, ongoing negotiations were to connect Kazakhstan to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline by constructing a section to transport oil through the Caspian Sea bottom, bypassing Russian territory. While Russia and Iran argued against the seabed pipeline, Kazakhstan started to transport oil volumes by tankers (Starr 2005, 14). Russia's attempts to increase political and economic pressure met a negative reaction in the Republic. It was expressed in the statement of S.Kushkumbaev, the first deputy director at Kazakhstan Strategic Research Institute under the President, who in October 2006 warned the Russian side against the “arm-twisting policy” towards the neighbours (Golunov 2008, 56).

Russia's position in the investment field in Kazakhstan also remained relatively weak: the total volume of Russian investments in the Kazakh economy was assessed as low, noticeably inferior to the American, Chinese, British, Dutch, and Italian ones. Moreover, during a decline in the Russian foreign direct investment (FDI), its investments fluctuated over four years, 2001 to 2004, from \$212m to \$201m, while the FDI demonstrated much

greater investment injections into the Republic's economy, accounting for \$1.4b in 2001 and \$2.9b in 2004 (Zabortseva 2016, 114). Interestingly, the total volume of Kazakhstani investments in the Russian economy, on the contrary, rose sharply, reaching \$8b at the end of 2006, which is approximately 3.5 times more than the amount of Russian investments (Pritchkin 2006).

Increased regional instability as a driver for international integration.

Increased instability stipulated the security importance, particularly in terms of terroristic activities in Afghanistan, political instability in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. After extremist Islamist groups in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan attacks, the Kazakhstani Border Guard Service adopted serious security measures, and Russia was considered a key strategic partner. Moreover, the reliance upon Russia was also caused by the border delineation with China. The Protocol on the common border demarcation between Kazakhstan and China was signed in 2002, which led to an increased concern about the border security, and about 70% of Kazakh border guards remained on the Chinese border. Moreover, instability concerns among the population living on the Chinese side remained prevalent. These factors therefore prioritized Russia's role in strategic cooperation. The Kazakhstani and the President all perceived Russia as a guarantor of Kazakhstan national security. At the official visit to Moscow in 2002, Nursultan Nazarbayev endorsed the idea that "good neighborly relations with Russia are one of the pillars of Kazakhstan's foreign policy since the first days of independence. We have always viewed Russia as a strategic ally and partner and will continue to do so. And this foreign policy imperative will never be questioned" (*Kazembassy.ru*).

Increased cooperation was also supported by Putin. In first months of his election, Putin adopted key documents, including the Concept of Foreign Policy, which prioritized multilateral and bilateral cooperation with the CIS member states in the region as well as

in various associations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Customs Union. Even though the latter was severely criticized because of its superficial character, some progress was achieved over military issues. Active implementation of military agreements was reflected in the document in 2000 between “KazspecExport”, a Kazakhstani enterprise, and a Russian defence enterprise, “RosVooruzhenie”, the key condition of which was to supply defence equipment to Kazakhstan. Another positive aspect in the military agenda between the two states was Kazakh officers training in common programmes with their Russian counterparts and under Russia’s conditions. In 2004, both countries signed the agreement on Joint planning for the military force use to preserve Kazakhstan and Russia national security. Until 2006, over 2500 Kazakhstani citizens underwent specialist military service at Russian military institutions, including the Federal Security Service (“FSB”), the Defence Ministry, Foreign Intelligence Service and etc. Thus, the Republic’s military education was founded on the Russian model. In return, Russia maintained access to new air and naval weapons at testing sites in western Kazakhstan and the State Fight Test Center named after Valery Chkalov. The access was also provided to ranges in Zhambyl, Aktobe, Karaganda, and Kyzylorda for testing military munitions and missiles. In addition, the agreement on exchange reached over an independent attack warning system, Balkhash-9, and the lease of the Kapustin Yar Testing Site. And while military training had a high priority for the Kazakh military, the agreements on the access to ranges for military testing was a top priority for the Russian “comrades” (Zabortseva 2016, 106-107).

New agreements between Astana and Moscow were signed in 2004 as the legal foundation for cooperation in the joint Baikonur space field exploitation. It was of the utmost importance as the Republic perceived a satellite launch to be a symbol of involvement in

joint space projects. As a result, the Bayterek space rocket complex was initiated, which intensified the cooperation over the following years.

If military and security cooperation was mostly determined within the regional (CIS) framework in the previous years, a greater collaboration was intensified within organizations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) by 2002. Acting as a security regime, the CSTO was based on the allied states joint military potential to safeguard regional security and stability, jointly protect independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity from terrorist bodies. Within the framework, the most effective cooperation recognized by the UN was the anti-drug operation against the trafficking from Afghanistan. Although CSTO cooperated with various regional (the SCO, former EurAsEC, the Islamic Conference Organization) and international organizations, it had no ties with its western counterpart, NATO. In order not to strengthen Russian geopolitical role in the post-Soviet space, NATO was unwilling to recognize CSTO despite several attempts made by the CIS representatives to establish relationship. Even though the both organizations had similar objectives, academic discourse often contrasts NATO with the CSTO. In his Comparative Analysis of NATO and the CSTO, Justin Tomczyk compared key articles within the founding treaties of both alliances, which hints at a prominent inconsistency in what sort of actions each organization requests from their member states:

Article 5

“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area” (North Atlantic Treaty, 1959).

Article 5

“The Organization shall operate on the basis of strict respect of independence, voluntariness of participation, equal rights and duties of the Member States, non-interference into the affairs falling within the national jurisdiction of the Member States” (Collective Security Treaty, 1992).

The articles clearly identify how member states of each alliance should respond if security and crisis situations roll out. If NATO's article emphasizes obligatory actions against armed attack, including the use of armed force, the CSTO, in comparison, insists on the “voluntary nature” of such participation among its member states, with a relatively small list of obligations (Tomczyk 2018, 3-4).

Nevertheless, despite close ties with Russia, Kazakh government continued maintaining relations with the US. Practical cooperation started in May 1994 when Kazakhstan decided to enter the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP). Since the efforts to establish CENTRASBAT (Central Asian Peacekeeping Battalion) by Western sponsor had failed, on January 31, 2000, the President Nazarbayev decided to establish its own peacekeeping military unit, KAZBAT, with the task to deploy NATO and UN-led peacekeeping operations. Since 2002, tactical military exercise “Steppe Eagle” had been hosted by Kazakhstan, which operated under the NATO command (NATO 2019). The military cooperation was intensified after 9/11 events when the US, the UK, France, and Turkey initiated security programmes with Kazakhstan as a sign of the country's developing partnership with NATO (McDermott 2012, 36). This was followed by the agreement with the US on using Kazakhstani aircraft for emergency cases related to the war in Afghanistan and hosting US troops. After Kazakhstan's statement to back the US against terrorism, in 2004, the country joined NATO Operational Capabilities Concept with an established information centre in Astana. Nevertheless, in many cases US-Kazakhstan cooperation was not always successfully developed because of the Republic's simultaneous cooperation

both with the US and Russia (Zabortseva 2016, 109). The criticism was over the Caspian Navy Initiative, the programme agreed between the US and Kazakhstan to function as an anti-terrorist educational center. However, the Kazakhstani navy initiative also entailed coordinating other activities, such as a base construction aimed to protect the Republic's energy resources.

In addition, Republic's active participation in the SCO, founded by the leaders of 5 post-Soviet states and China, should be taken into account, a strong regional Chinese interest against the background. The interest in full integration and economic investments within the SCO framework had often been seen by the Russian government as the Chinese unilateral power expansion in Central Asia. Yet, various strategic goals of each member state aside, the SCO was strongly believed to become an effective counter-terrorism mechanism. Thus, such initiatives to deepen partnerships within regional framework as well as the organizations demonstrates the eagerness of the Republic to engage with key strategic allies and maintain security and independence.

6. 2005-2012. The Military and Regional Collaboration Intensification Between Kazakhstan and Russia.

Kazakhstan's strive for regional integration.

The most intensive stage in bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia is the period of 2005-2012. Past disagreements and difficulties, particularly in the border division, were solved after the border delimitation agreement between the two states, signed in 2005. This provides evidence of the Republic's aiming at independence and national development and the no-longer existent Russia's threat to redistribute the Kazakhstan northern territories. In fact, the question of border division was one of the most challenging left from tsarist ruling and Soviet regime. Border issues concerned the rise of Cossack separatist movements on the both sides of the border seeking to return inherited northern

territories back to Russian hosts. In 2000, 13 members of the group were sentenced to jail by a Kazakh court, which indicated a clear message to all Russian separatists (Pannier and Karabek 2014).

Further cooperation has been introduced since the last agreement in a course of several annual meetings between the both presidents. In January 2006, for example, the Eurasian Development Bank agreement was eventually signed. Promoting the Eurasianism idea, Nursultan Nazarbayev pointed out two organizations - the SCO, former EurAsEC, and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) – to be the integral parts of the Eurasian unity. An important factor to the strong and productive cooperation during the second decade of bilateral relations was regular contacts between the two presidents, about ten times per year. In 2006, Nazarbayev clarified that "in Kazakh-Russian relations, there are no issues that would not be resolved through constructive dialogue and consideration of mutual interests. There is a clear understanding between our countries that only together can we adequately meet the challenges of time...Kazakhstan and Russia are partners for centuries" (*Akorda.kz* 2014). During the visit of President Putin to Astana in 2012, the initial Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance of May 1992 was updated and came into force in September 2013.

A notable strengthening of Kazakhstan and Russia regional integration falls on the period of 2005-2008. The integration intensification trends were not directly reflected in the CIS relations but rather within the organizations framework, including the CSTO, SCO, and EurAsEC, which had had a better focus on regional integration over the period. The EurAsEC had been considered the most influential organization across the region, within which the Customs Union and the Eurasian Development Bank achieved the most impressive progress. As a step towards economic integration, the member states - Russia, Kazakhstan and Belorussia - had seen the Customs Union as an opportunity to develop a

common market, increase investment volumes, and jointly respond to global threats. Following a decline in 1992-2000, the CIS trade volume had been restored by 2006 and rapidly grew thanks to the harmonized import tariffs. In 2010, new common tariffs were introduced and border controls were abolished, which consequently resulted in import tariffs change in Russia, Kazakhstan and Belorussia altogether. The drive behind the change was the past determination of external custom tariff based solely on the Russian duties. Thus, the overall trade among the three countries had grown rapidly by 25% over the 2009-2010 period and by more than 60% by 2011, which also reflected recovery trends (Zabortseva 2016, 138).

However, not all CIS countries sought for the EurAsEC membership. Uzbekistan's decision to withdraw its membership arose after the other member states declared they would build new hydropower stations in the Central Asian region, which would negatively affect ecology and agriculture - the most important sector for Uzbekistan's national economy. Moreover, the EurAsEC had long been viewed as increasing the Kremlin's influence across the former Soviet space and enforcing its long-term goal to establish a single economic space, with rising energy sales revenues (Rakhimov 2010, 96-97).

These effects were also unfavourable for Kazakhstan with Russian companies registered in the Republic seeing their rise (an 80 per cent increase in 2012 compared with 2011) as well as increased prices on food. Despite the effects, Kazakhstan was at a stage of becoming a member of the WTO: being assessed by the WTO members and in the middle of signing various agreements on goods and services. As to the CSTO and SCO, the cooperation was perceived as one opposing NATO. On the one hand, CSTO criticized NATO's cold response to the cooperation proposal coined in by the CSTO officials while Russia concerned about NATO's military bases in the CIS region. On the other hand, NATO's concern, in turn, raised the probability of the CSTO to interfere in the member states

internal affairs during political or military upheavals, such as the civil war in Kyrgyz Republic. The same was related to the SCO activities, particularly the 2005 mutual declaration to withdraw US troops from Central Asia. In response, the US refused to comply with the demands referring to the region's inability to benefit from cooperation opportunities as well as provide better SCO-US cooperation in Afghanistan (Zabortseva 2016, 139-140).

China's economic cooperation with Kazakhstan was intensified through capital investment in regional development, particularly in the energy resources. For instance, China provided unprecedented 10 billion US dollars injection to support the member states after the global financial crisis of 2007-08. Key areas according to the SCO included nuclear security cooperation, uranium mining, and utilization of nuclear waste. Inherited collapsed USSR rail/road transport as well as gas/oil pipelines made Kazakhstan and other post-Soviet republics consider an alternative regional cooperation with the Eastern neighbouring countries – China, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. China's role created conditions for the economic cooperation intensification not only in Central Asia but also within the SCO and ECO, Economic Cooperation Organization (Rakhimov 2010, 98).

Military and security cooperation with the Russian Federation and its impact on Kazakhstan's multi-vectorism.

Perhaps, solidifying political cooperation over the 2005-2008 period was linked to the threats of instability in Kazakhstan, yet Russia had been of special support in security since 2004. It remained Kazakhstan's primary strategic ally, however, particularly in spheres of armed forces and military-technological cooperation. This, in turn, raised concerns from NATO and the US despite the Republic's approach to cooperate with both the West and Russia.

Russia gained the status of strategic guarantor of Kazakhstan national security thanks to several factors, such as the 2005 border agreement, diminishing concerns about northern territories of the Republic, and China as a threat to national security. Concerns arose among the population who expressed a fear that current policy, such as immigration waves from China, might cause Kazakh nation to disappear, on the grounds that they represent mere 1% of the total Chinese population. Chinese immigrants, compared with the Russian population in Kazakhstan, made no attempts to assimilate into the Kazakh culture. In addition, growing public concerns were further deepened by the following developments in bilateral relations, including Chinese assistance provided after the 2008 global crisis. In fact, the negotiation process for border delineation with China had been taking place for six years, 1992 through to 1998, and the complete demarcation was attained in May, 2002. Agreements were also signed among the other three neighbouring states: the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the People's Republic of China agreed to define the Junction point of the borders, effective from May 5, 1999; also, the Kazakhstan Republic, the People's Republic of China and the Kyrgyz Republic agreed on the same matter in August 25, 1999. Thus, growing public criticism at the background, Russia positioned itself as a protector, referring to the close historical relationship with Kazakhstan, which further strengthened its military position in the Republic (MFA 2013). Military cooperation over the period was intensified simultaneously within the CSTO framework and backed with some 60 important military agreements. A good example of the latter is the amendments made to the agreement on supplying Russian defence equipment to Kazakhstan in 2000. Russia had always been interested in military facilities of the post-Soviet states, and anti-ballistic missile testing range Sary Shagan was one of such facilities, which was later leased by the Russian Ministry of Defence. In 2006-2008, Kazakhstan Defence Ministry had been focused on modernizing its air force, Russia-aided,

to replace the outdated military stock, remnants of the Soviet era. For instance, deals on air-defence missile systems procurement and existing equipment maintenance were discussed by the states' defence delegations in 2008. The most visible bilateral military cooperation is reflected in two joint military drills, which took place in 2008 and 2012. The first drill at the Chebarkul training range outside Chelyabinsk involved some 2000 soldiers, 100 combat vehicles, and 30 aircrafts, thus making it the largest military event among the countries since Soviet Union disintegration. A similar joint exercise occurred in July 2012, when the three-stage "Aldaspan-2012" exercise involved 3000 Kazakh air defence forces units as well as the Interior Ministry, the Border Guard Service, and the Ministry of Emergency Situations troops. Airborne troops from the Central Military District represented Russia together with "Il-76 military transport aircraft and Mi-8 multi-purpose helicopters" provided by the Russian Air Force (Weitz 2012).

However, prioritizing Russia in military affairs did not stop Kazakhstani cooperation with the US and NATO. To implement the initiatives of military cooperation between the state and the Alliance, the Individual Partnership Action Plan, a major program in the 1994 PfP, was endorsed in 2006 by the Military-Political Committee within "NATO plus Kazakhstan" format. Following this, a distinctive feature of the cooperation was a tactical military exercise, "Steppe Eagle", hosted by Kazakhstan since 2002 and operated under NATO-led command during 2006-2009. The Republic's peacekeeping battalion participated in the activities (2003-2012) under the Euro - Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC), aimed at practicing disaster response capabilities and enhancing cooperation in emergency cases. (NATO 2019). During his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2007, the US Naval Forces Central Commander (NAVCENT), Vice Admiral Kevin J. Cosgriff, stated "we have learned how to continually adapt to the changes demanded by changing times, and this may be of interest to Kazakhstan" and that

“...Kazakhstan may be able to benefit from NAVCENT experience conducting Maritime Security Operations (MSO) in the Gulf” in the Caspian region (Clarke, 2007).

Nevertheless, despite active engagement within NATO, western political experts maintained the view that Moscow remained the closest security and defence partner for Kazakhstan. Richard Weitz, Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Political–Military Analysis at the Washington-based Hudson Institute, states that despite Republic’s multi-vectored foreign policy to avoid a preference for any state, Moscow is

“...undoubtedly the Astana’s premier partner in defence and security areas. The relationship resulted from the shared military heritage, culture, common threat as well as their geographical proximity, shared alliances, and similar military doctrine, strategy and tactics.” (McDermott 2012, 49).

7. 2013-2020. The Impact of Crimea Annexation on Relations Between Russia and Kazakhstan Now.

Initial reaction of Kazakhstani population to the events in Ukraine.

In this chapter, the complexity of the political relations between Russia and Kazakhstan is examined in the view of the tensions that emerged in Ukraine back in 2014. Despite mutually beneficial relations between Kazakhstan and Russia, intensified during the recent stages of cooperation, the influence of Crimean scenario raised serious concerns both in Kazakhstan and the entire post-Soviet area (let alone the US and the EU) - no state would have wanted to see Ukraine’s experience in their region.

Looking at the first reaction to the events in Ukraine, one can notice how vividly the impact was reflected across the international media, without official statements from the foreign affairs ministries of Kazakhstan and Russia, though. However, continuous press discussions led Kazakhstan's President at the time to adopt the position, stating that “Ukrainian people should solve their problems without external interference.”

(Tengrinews.Kz. 2014). The Minister of Foreign Affairs back in the day, Erlan Idrissov, explained that Kazakhstan takes “no sides” and that Russia, Ukraine, the European Union and the United States are “all good friends” of the country. Moreover, he asserted that Kazakhstan would not experience a “Ukraine scenario” with the reference to excess of an economy by 6% in 2013 and “relative stability” of multi-ethnic society under the now-former President Nursultan Nazarbayev leadership (Bases, 2014).

Kazakhstan's population opinion on the Crimea crisis and Russia's foreign policy appeared to show controversial results due to ethnic and territorial factors. For example, Northern Kazakhstan, which is mostly dominated by the Russian population, believed to support Russia in its actions in Crimea, while the rest of the country had diverse judgements upon the subject.

Opinion polls conducted in 2014 by Demoscope, Bureau of Express Monitoring, indicated that around one-third of the surveyed stated that Russia's actions towards Crimea's independence should be favoured and supported. About 61% Kazakhstani people believed that the territory historically belonged to Russia, while 73% viewed Crimea's future to be better supported by a stronger state, Russia (REGION.KG, 2014). According to an opinion poll conducted in 2015 by a global consulting company, Gallup, about 72% of Kazakhstan's population supported Putin's foreign policy, ranking the fourth and going even before Belorussia, who perceive Putin's image most favourably (365info.kz, 2015). Considering polls on integration trends, similar views were expressed in 2013, when over 73% of Kazakhstani respondents supported the Customs Union and most respondents (77.1%) unequivocally support full economic integration within the Eurasian Economic Union positively. According to Andrey Chebotaryov, director of a Center for Actual Research, Alternative, the results of sociological surveys demonstrate most respondents' support for the integration course. He concludes that opponents of the Eurasian integration are very

few, mainly those who hold patriotic views or who simply oppose the current authorities (EXPERT KAZAKHSTAN, 2014).

Similar opinion polls were conducted in Russia with regards to Kazakhstan. The country ranked second (61%) among the countries considered to be most favorable to Russia, with Belorussia (67%) placed first and China third (60%). Although 2/3 of the Russian population supported the EAEU integration, a small percentage of respondents wanted the USSR manifestation (RIA News. 2015). The sociologists at Levada Center, conducting Russian public opinion polls, found that half of the polled would like the country's territory to expand by adding lands with the Russian-speaking population. But only 8% of all respondents support military operations. The majority does not approve of territory annexation with a compact population of Russians, even if this is the will of their population (15%) (Levada-Center. 2014).

Most of the population in Northern Kazakhstan are ethnic Russians with a minority of ethnic Kazakhs. According to the Statistics Committee, the statistics demonstrate that Russian diaspora is the second prevalent national group in Kazakhstan, with 18.85% of the country's population by the beginning of 2020 (Annex 1). Russian-speaking population prevailed in the northern part of the country since the end of the 19th century – a period of massive inflow of Russians, Cossacks and Tatars, as well as periods of Collectivization or Soviet agriculture development. At the time of Russian colonization, between 1886-1916, over 1.5 million Russians were resettled into the country, whereas more than a million of Kazakh population was lost during the Turkestan famine in 1919–1922, the Goloshchyokin genocide in 1932-1933, as well as failed uprising of Kazakh people in 1916 (Kesici 2011, 38).

Accordingly, great concern has arisen over the issue of territorial integrity in northern Kazakhstan, predominantly characterized by the Russian population. In addition, the

potential threat to Kazakhstan's territorial integrity has been intensified after Ukrainian crisis and following secession demands from Russian diaspora segments and Cossack communities. Simultaneously, the politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky's statement that northern territories were randomly granted by the Bolsheviks to Kazakhstan has provoked Kazakhstan's antagonism, which later prohibited the politician from entering Kazakhstan. Another more prominent controversy erupted in 2014 by Putin's remark on denying Kazakhstan's statehood before 1991 and characterizing the country as an integral part of Russia's influence.

Consequently, all the political statements and demographic indicators demonstrated the possible repetition of the Crimean scenario. However, the experience of Ukraine seems not likely to happen in the case of Kazakhstan due to the diverse approach of the two countries towards Russia's foreign policy (Zogg 2016, 4). Even though Kazakhstan and Ukraine have a common history as the former part of the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and Eurasian space, both implement various strategies of ethno political and nation-building processes. While a new modern civilized nation of Ukraine has been increasing the potential prior to the conflict in 2014, Kazakhstan, in contrast, has been pursuing the policy of multiculturalism.

Comparative analysis between the policies of Ukraine and Kazakhstan

The process of identity formation in Ukraine.

After the independence declaration in 1991, Ukraine, as Kazakhstan, has passed through a long path of defining its modern identity. To explain political outcomes, it is important to define the main narratives that formed the modern nation of Ukraine. The narratives have gradually changed throughout the years. The initial one was perceived immediately after the independence or after the Ukraine national project was proclaimed. The project was

initiated by respective institutions of the Soviet Union by integrating ethnic elites in the Soviet republics. These elites came to power as representatives of the Communist Party in the 1990s and soon after independence played a certain role in the identity formation process. Taking all leading positions, they focused on the struggle for independence, saving Ukrainian language, culture and national traditions. Within this narrative, Russian has been considered as 'other'. Moreover, the concept of "Ukrainian national project" has been formed by the notion templates widespread in Eastern and Central Europe, according to which Russia poses a threat to European culture identity with a destructive impact of totalitarianism. However, many proponents of national ideas did not accept the 'national state ideology'. The critical attitude of right-wing opponents towards the government was due to inability of the latter to determine its position between the West and the East. The same attitude could be noticed towards President Kuchma's multi-vector foreign policy (Kiryukhin 2016, 61).

The second narrative obtained its expression in the form of suffering from "Holodomor", mass famine in 1932-1933, widely propagated under the presidency of Victor Yushchenko. The narrative was shaped by the experience of collective tragedy as well as the idea of confrontation with Russia. The last narrative appeared in the 2000s, based on the national discourse of nationally-oriented citizens, ethnicity, and radical version of national movements for recognition against the enemy. This narrative related to the general disappointment, struggle of nationally-oriented Ukrainian citizens for extending the space and rights of ethnic Ukrainians, who are limited in their own country, the fight against the corrupted government and oligarchs becoming predominant. One can consider current armed confrontation taking place in Ukraine as the outcome of this narrative (Kiryukhin 2016, 62-63).

Even after changing into a parliamentary-presidential system in 2005, most of the decision-makers in Ukraine were oligarchs. Whereas in the aftermath of the conflict, then-president Poroshenko and other decision-makers were mostly seen as game changers, seeking to strengthen interaction with the West, unlike the rest of the Ukrainian population, separatists and those beyond Kiev's control.

While analyzing Russia's policy in Ukraine, it is necessary to understand the components of Russia's identity too. Since the 1990s, the issue of self-determination has come forth for Russia's decision-makers and its population. Western policy was negatively interpreted and considered "consistently destroying the traditional living patterns", which consequently led to a growth of separatism and distrust in the course of Georgian war and Ukrainian conflict (Pantin and Lapkin 2015, 79). Having established itself as a regional power, Russia acted in accordance with its principle of self-determination. In addition, historical background as well as the pretext of protecting threatened Russian compatriots served as the most reasonable motive to intervene in Crimea and transform its relationships with the West.

The nation-building process of Kazakhstan.

Despite Russia's policy on the international arena as well as established concern over Ukrainian crisis, Kazakhstan, unlike Ukraine, has pursued a multicultural policy and declared the need to maintain peace and unity among nations as an essential condition of the Republic's prosperity. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the country encountered a considerable amount of interethnic challenges, which forced the government to pay particular attention to identity policy and undertake necessary emergency measures to prevent future interethnic conflicts (Pantin and Lapkin 2015, 84).

Under the leadership of Nursultan Nazarbayev, the possibility to establish a compromised identity policy turned into reality. His idea of Eurasian ideology primarily aimed at connecting Asian and European cultural practices and bringing together mutual values in

the territory. No doubt that Kazakhstan's strategy was aspired to calm Slavic minority, strengthen ties with neighbouring countries, as well as to loosen Muslim/Turkic nature, thus making the country more open to a third space, namely South Pacific region.

In 2007, Kazakh government made attempts to ensure antidiscrimination and equality through the establishment of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, a national political body, and giving the latter constitutional status. The Assembly intends to represent diverse ethnic groups of Kazakhstan, including the Russians at the national level, providing more rights and liberties to all minorities as well as their equitable participation in the Parliament (Zabortseva 2016, 134). In October 2008, the Law on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan was adopted, providing a new amendment to the Parliament: an exclusive right of Assembly Session to elect nine deputies of Mazhilis, lower Parliament (*Adilet.Zan.Kz*, Article 9).

The Assembly monitors public opinion through scientific expert groups and councils for its further implementation in the educational process. In 2010, to ensure inter-ethnic tolerance, Nazarbayev introduced this expansion idea with the National Unity Doctrine based on three principles: 'one land, one fate'; different origins – equality of chances'; and 'development of the national spirit' (Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, 2008).

Introducing the term 'Kazakhstani' in his speech on the strategy program "Kazakhstan-2030", Nursultan Nazarbayev pointed at the devastation the country experienced over the 50-year post-war period, significant decrease in population at times of the mass famine and starvation in 1930s, as well as mass repressions. He recognized that the failure to form a united union of Soviet people demonstrates how much the self-identification question is considered to be critical in creating a single united state and requires a long process of historical development. Despite these challenges he named a number of factors which unite Kazakhstanis:

“It is our land within its borders, our parents who cultivated it, it is our common history in which we together suffered from bitter failures and shared the delight of achievements. It is our children who are destined to live and work on this land together.” (Nazarbayev, 1997).

This demonstrates clear evidence of how the term ‘Kazakhstani’ is not simply tied to the country by citizenship, but by a mutual fate and strong historical link between Kazakhstan’s territory and non-Kazakh population.

As a result, for about 29 years a large number of non-Kazakh nationalities consider Kazakh land as their home, particularly Russians, the second prevalent population in the country. According to Kazakhstan’s Statistics Committee, the population of Kazakhstan by individual ethnic groups for 2020 is as follows: 68,51% of Kazakhs, 18,85% Russians, 3,25% Uzbeks, 1,42% Ukrainians, 1,47% Uighurs, 1,08% Tatars and others below 1% (Annex 1). Given the fact, one may assume that the country has managed to build a successful multi-ethnic society living in inter-ethnic harmony. However, promoting tolerance towards other nationalities may have put the country in a relatively unique but risky position and turned the country's weak national identity into advantage for other players to disrupt peace and stability.

In this regard, the National Policy Concept of the Kazakhstan Republic was adopted in 2010 to emphasize the primacy of Kazakh nation and their historical rights to Kazakh land. Furthermore, concerns in minority communities have been expressed over the country's nation-building policies, which was vividly reflected in migration trends. According to the Rosstat, Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, migration inflow from Kazakhstan became the second largest, after Ukraine, in comparison with the immigrant inflow from other CIS countries (Statistics Committee, 2020). In parallel with Russian statistics, the same trend can be seen in the external migration balance of the Kazakhstan population

which again indicates the largest outflow of population from Kazakhstan to Russia (Statistics Committee, 2020).

In addition to these demographic trends, it is important to stress an increase in ethnic Kazakh nations because of significant migration outflows from Kazakhstan as well as implementation of repatriation programs on returning native Kazakhs, *oralmans*, from abroad to their homeland. Special state assistance was provided to the newly arrived ethnic Kazakhs, which benefited over 35,000 applicants or 15, 000 families in 2005. However, such demographic distribution not only increased Kazakh population but also influenced economic and social indicators – unemployment and poverty had migrated together with the migrants. The latter is explained by the lack of any academic background as well as inability to speak both Kazakh and Russian languages (Zabortseva 2016, 137).

In 2008, the initiative to repatriate ethnic Kazakhs was modernized to a new government program ‘Nurly Kosh’ for rational resettlement of *oralmans*. Assisting *oralmans* by beneficial quotas, new immigrants were expected to be settled in the northern territory of Kazakhstan, where Russian-speaking population was the most prevalent though (PARAGRAPH, 2008). While the choice of North was explained by its significant demand for manpower, one may notice how the programme was mainly stipulated for migration purposes and reinforcing Kazakh identity in the country. The latter may also apply to the relocation of the old capital to Astana (currently renamed to ‘Nur-Sultan’), the capital city located in the northern part of Kazakhstan.

In addition to the migration politics, a concern over Kazakh language status has been finally recognized by the government since the Russian language was still prevalent. In 2005, language policy started its implementation with obligatory knowledge of the Kazakh language in all state departments as well as areas of public service, education and

jurisprudence. Intensive implementation of the policy was introduced by adoption of new legal acts and procedures (Zabortseva 2016, 133).

Another important change in language policy was initiated in 2013 by N. Nazarbayev's decision to switch to the Latin alphabet. In his speech on strategy 'Kazakhstan 2050', Nazarbayev explained translating the current alphabet into Latin as a "matter of principle that the nation must resolve" (Aytaly, 2015). The trend of Russification in Kazakhstan started in the 1930s with the decree of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) on the obligatory study of the Russian language in all republics and for all non-Russian peoples. New Cyrillic alphabet as well as compulsory knowledge of the Russian language served the goal of Soviet unification, which thereby hindered the development of national language and Kazakh identity. Therefore, the transition to the Latin alphabet is regarded as the liberation from the policy imposed by the Soviet regime and elimination of Sovietized Kazakh culture.

In this context, however, the primacy of the Kazakh language, as well as the alphabet transition, has contributed to increasing concerns of Russian-speaking communities over political and social participation of minorities in Kazakhstan, thus being seen as a policy controversial to multiculturalism.

To examine the influence of language policies on contemporary society and life of the Kazakhstani population, including the Russian diaspora, an official interview with two officials from the Institute of Linguistics of the Education and Science Ministry of Kazakhstan was conducted. Expert opinions are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Interview summary. A.Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics (translated from Russian).

Questions:	Respondent 1	Respondent 2
	Anar Fazylzhanova <i>Candidate of Philological Sciences, Director of the A.Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan</i>	Kyzdarkhan Rysbergen <i>Doctor of Sciences in Philology, Professor, Head of Division, A.Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan</i>
1. Would you agree that the increased attention to the Kazakh language has become very visible today?	Yes, every year the demand for high-quality Kazakh content and service is growing.	Yes. Kazakh-speaking intelligentsia in particular is concerned that the Kazakh language is not fully introduced into the fundamental spheres of public life, namely science, administration, government, politics and so on.
2. To what extent has the role of the Russian language in management and education been reduced to date?	The Russian language has not lost its position due to its inert development since the Soviet Union. Huge resources were invested in its development during the Soviet period, and this gives it the opportunity to develop inertly for several centuries ahead, without much special effort.	There is a powerful advantage of the Russian language in lawmaking and governance. Documents of legal character are created in Russian, then translated into Kazakh. Parliament sessions are mostly held in Russian. This causes a lot of criticism among the population. The translation of legal documents is often of poor quality, does not adequately reflect the content of the document, resulting in ambiguity and meaning distortion.
3. How do you assess the attitude of the population to the modern language policy (Latinization, the State Language Program, renaming of streets, businesses and structures, as well as preference of the Kazakh language in the sphere of public administration and education)?	Since the policy is liberal, the requirement of the state language is soft. The population has a positive attitude towards the Latinization and restoration of the national onomastic space. At the same time, there are factors of discontent with the quality and limited use of the state language.	The young and middle generation, familiar with Latin graphics and the English language, positively perceive the transition. The older generation is mostly concerned, while the population at the ordinary level is critical to all kinds of language innovations.
4. What is the percentage of Kazakh language proficiency among the Kazakh and Russian populations today?	Today, the level of state language proficiency is increasing - about 12 % of ethnic groups speak state language and 90 % of Kazakhs speak their native language. However, the quality of literary language proficiency of the entire population remains poor.	The percentage has significantly increased with the acquisition of independence and due to the revival of national consciousness. Moreover, the share of Russian-speaking Kazakhs studying Kazakh has increased, both for patriotic reasons and building a career in the public sector. Meanwhile, the same cannot be said about the Russian population – state language proficiency remains at the same low level.
5. How strong is the dominance of the Russian language in the mass media?	Approximately 60 % for today.	The dominance of the Russian language in the media is perceived less acute since the abolishment of some Russian TV channels by the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan.
6. To what extent does the language policy go along with the policy of multiculturalism in Kazakhstan? Do they not conflict with each other?	No, a special type of ethnic multiculturalism has been formed in Kazakhstan - it is distinguished by the tolerance not only of the titular nation - the Kazakhs, but also of Kazakhs as a mass phenomenon.	In terms of multiculturalism, the language policy is very loyal which is expected to remain for a longer time, as representatives of other numerous diasporas are settled in a comfortable environment. However, some interethnic conflicts erupt when representatives of diasporas demonstrate open disrespect to culture, traditions and the Kazakh language.
7. Does the transition to the Latin alphabet serve as a tool to displace	No. The change of the alphabet concerns only this language and the alphabet functions only in written communication. Such issues are often considered as politicized messages. The	The transition to the Latin is not an instrument of pressure or displacement of the Russian language or any other languages of diasporas since the Latin alphabet concerns only the Kazakh-speaking part of

another language, namely Russian?	Russian language will function at such a high level. But now the process is being changed - the ethno-cultural Kazakh society often raise the issue on the importance of preserving the state language. However, again, this natural process is often politicized, whereas in fact it is a natural desire of ethno-cultural community to preserve and increase its linguistic wealth. Therefore, the issue on Constitution amendments is being raised - to leave an article concerning the State language only. The same experience has been applied in all other developed unitary states, like France for example. Kazakhstan also aims to develop in the mainstream of developed economic countries	the population. Cyrillic alphabet will continue to be used in Russian-language documents and textbooks but in the Kazakh-speaking sphere the changes will be reflected in the Latin alphabet, without any harm to the Russian-speaking population.
8. Does the Latinization promote the learning of Kazakh language and increase its prestige in the communication space?	Yes. Latin alphabet has a high level of recognition in the global world, which will certainly affect the prestige of Kazakh texts. However, the latter cannot be promoted without complex supporting measures.	Yes. Latinization will contribute to the Kazakh language acquisition and increase its prestige in the communication space not only in Kazakhstan, but also abroad.
9. To what extent does the Latinization meet the interests of diasporas and members of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APN)?	The Assembly at all times of its activity aimed at popularization of the state language among other ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, since the state language is a universal means for formation of national state identity.	Latinization is in the interests of many diasporas, as in their historical homelands writing is based on Latin script, as in Turkey, Uzbekistan and Poland. For instance, the Uyghur diaspora is developing its own version of the Latin alphabet.
10. Does the practice of bilingual education enhance language rivalry, weaken the Kazakh language?	Polylinguistic is an advantage - all Kazakhs have an excellent command of Russian, and the diasporas intend to study the state language. However, the Russian- Kazakh bilingualism is unbalanced, while the Kazakh-Russian is balanced due to Russian native speakers who have a much worse command of Kazakh.	Legislation on the use of Kazakh language in public service, the media, and other spheres will clearly state provisions protecting the state language.
11. Is there an intention to preserve the function of the Russian language?	Yes. However, weak to take it into account.	Despite the desire of the authorities or population, the objective situation indicates a long-lasting function of the Russian language in Kazakhstan.
12. Given that the choice of language of education is a constitutional right of every citizen, is it not likely that most Kazakhs will continue to use Russian and Cyrillic for a long time?	It is unlikely. Kazakhization as a manifestation of ethnization tendency - inherent in the entire global world - is gaining traction, and will only increase in the near future.	Yes, the likelihood that Russian and the Cyrillic alphabet will be used for a long time is very high.

Interviews, translated and adapted by the author to exclude any possibility of ambiguity or interpretation error. For full disclosure please see Annex 2.

According to the survey, it can be concluded that the prevalence of the Russian language is the result of a long and intensive policy initiated back in the Soviet Union times. Due to

inert development and strong presence of Russian media in the country, both respondents believe that dominance of the Russian language in the local media, lawmaking and governance is still respectively high. This alters the Republic's government and causes the abolishment of some Russian TV channels as well as the inclusion of Constitution amendments on the status of Kazakh language. Moreover, the respondents reported the percentage of the state language proficiency increased significantly thanks to the revival of national consciousness and patriotic reasons.

In this respect, the core question addressed by various international experts concerns the nature of the policy: namely, if the latter pursues the objective of eliminating the influence of Russia in the country. In this regard, the views expressed by two officials proved to oppose the latter. Both claimed that Latinization will not affect the status of the Russian language and that such issues are perceived as politicized messages. The process of language innovations is often politicized, whereas in fact it is a natural desire of the ethno-cultural community to preserve and increase its linguistic wealth. Furthermore, both respondents expressed a similar view on the subsequent long-lasting functionality of the Russian language in the country.

In terms of multiculturalism, the interview discovers that the language policy is quite liberal, operating without any harm to the Russian-speaking population. Since the state language serves as a fundamental tool for formation of national state identity, many ethnic groups, including the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, aim at popularization of the Kazakh language. Therefore, a general population has a positive attitude towards the policy and Latinization, despite those who critically view any kinds of language innovations.

To conclude, nation-building initiatives have raised serious concerns among ethnic Russians in Kazakhstan. Nevertheless, the Republic demonstrated its intention to consider interests of country's all ethnic groups by reinforcing minority rights, implementing

‘liberal’ and flexible language policies, as well as establishing a unique model of national unity, such as the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.

Despite political tensions after the Ukrainian case, military cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia continued to progress due to other tensions, in which the country was still involved. This was vivid in the example with China – various agreements on border division were signed between the Republic and China. Further, with regard to relations with the West, the President repeatedly claimed that close ties with NATO would not reduce the role of Russia in the area of military and security cooperation. The latter was evident in 2013 when the leaders of Kazakhstan and Russia signed a new Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation in Moscow and the Agreement on Good-Neighbourliness and Alliance in the 21st Century in Yekaterinburg (President of Russia, 2014). New opportunities were offered in space cooperation – a three-year road map on joint use of Baikonur site for 2014-2016. The Baikonur Cosmodrome is the first and the largest launching space facility in the world, which is leased to Russia until 2050 (Jafarova 2014). Moreover, following the departure of NATO’s mission from Afghanistan, Russia had tested its military potential and combat readiness through large-scale military exercises and troop deployment to Central Asia. In 2014, with the objective to counter foreign threat and prevent incidents, four CSTO states – Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan – held Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) in Chelyabinsk (Ziegler 2014, 601-602).

Post-Ukraine developments in Kazakhstan (2015-2020).

Looking at later reactions followed after the events in Ukraine, it is important to analyze the subsequent developments in the both counties.

In response to Putin’s remark on Kazakhstan’s statehood status during the USSR period, Kazakhstan’s position was vividly revealed in the subsequent steps taken by Nursultan Nazarbayev. The decision to celebrate the 550th anniversary of Kazakh statehood can serve

as a vivid proof of Nazarbayev's position on the nation's legitimacy. In his speech at the opening ceremony "the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate", Nazarbayev referred to the date of Kazakh statehood to the times when Kazakh Khanate was formed as a unifying entity in 1465, which was then abolished by Russian imperialism in 1824. According to Nazarbayev, it might not have become a modern Kazakh state without the foundation of the Khanate, and the current nation stands as successor of their great ancestors (Lillis, 2015).

In addition to the language policy and state programme on resettlement of ethnic Kazakhs, new legislation was introduced in Kazakhstan on norms regulating responsibility for both separatist and non-violent separatist actions. Interethnic conflicts have been taken under strict consideration of Republic's authorities. A great example would be a case of social media posts on Russian propaganda which subsequently became the subject of a judicial investigation in Almaty.

After 2015, economic integration between Russia and Kazakhstan was mainly associated with the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), including the controversies the Union experienced after the conflict in Ukraine. On the one hand, unlike the previous post-Soviet integration structures, the main feature of the EEU lies on its common macroeconomic policy and specific legal character. Since the establishment of the Union the main problem on easing border crossing for trade operations has finally been resolved. On the other hand, the impact of Ukrainian crisis on the economic relations of Kazakhstan-Russia should be considered an important aspect. Criticism is regularly expressed about the Union, which pursues rather political goals than economic, and that the economic dimension is often considered less important. Another criticism falls on Russia's leading role in the EEU's main bodies and the country's intention to reestablish its Soviet influence through economic integration.

As described before, Nazarbayev's personal role in the establishment of EurAsEC has been always highlighted by many experts as well as by President Putin. However, it is unlikely to form a mutually beneficial relationship if the economic Union pursues only political interests. Therefore, the proposal to create a parliament for all Member States has not been proved by Kazakhstan's government. Moreover, following the events of Ukraine and controversial remarks of some officials, Nursultan Nazarbayev stated that Kazakhstan may withdraw from the EEU, should the Union convert to a political project and thereby threaten Republic's independence or territorial integrity (Tengrinews, 2014).

In addition, the implications of the crisis in Ukraine on Kazakhstan-Russia economic relations have particularly affected Kazakhstan's economy. During the post-Ukrainian crisis period, the Kazakhstan government expressed serious concerns over imposed sanctions against Russia. Given that Kazakhstan remains the key trade partner of Russia, where the latter is responsible for over 30% of Republic's imports, Kazakhstan witnessed a considerable outflow of capital in this period. Moreover, taking Kazakhstan's oil trade into account, including its import through Russia's pipelines and ports, one could notice that any further tight sanctions on Russia would negatively affect Kazakhstan's economy (Zabortseva 2016, 167-168).

At the same time, an important positive impact of sanctions for Kazakhstan's economy was the potential reorientation of investments to Kazakhstan. In the study on analysis of Russo-Kazakh relations, Yelena Zabortseva pointed at controversial aspects of trade integration between the two countries, with the statement that EU's leading trade partner in 2013 has become Kazakhstan, namely the third largest in the post-Soviet space (Zabortseva 2016, 168).

Thus, although the conflict in Ukraine has influenced Kazakhstan's position in the Eurasian Economic Union, there is clearly a complex of reasons why both countries should operate

in cooperation within the Union. One key reason important for Kazakhstan is military relations with its main ally, particularly due to the possibility of territorial disputes with China. Kazakhstan is an active regional player and active participant of various organizations. In this regard, the EEU often constitutes a bargain, according to which a certain level of military security and loyalty is granted in exchange for preferential economic benefits.

Change of Kazakhstan leadership (2019-2020).

Pre-2019, international discourse as well as Kazakh society itself was uncertain about the near future of Kazakhstan and the whole Eurasian space - will it remain stable, particularly if the Republic's leader leaves the presidency.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was the first person in the state for almost 30 years, resigned in March 2019, handing over the post of president to the former Senate Speaker, Kasym-Jomart Tokayev. With the experience of foreign minister and director general of the UN Geneva Office, the President demonstrated skills of a real diplomat. Two weeks after his predecessor's resignation, Tokayev traveled to Moscow, made his first visit to China after elections, conducted a brief talk with the US President, and finally visited Germany (*Akorda.kz*).

In December 2019, the President refused to consider Crimean crisis in 2014 as 'annexation' which almost caused scandal and criticism, particularly in Ukraine. Similar to his predecessor, Tokayev pursues policy of preserving close relations with both allies, Russia and China. Simultaneously, he wants to stay in good business relations with the United States and Europe (The Jamestown Foundation, 2020). Meanwhile, domestically N. Nazarbayev still retains decision-making power due to his position as the Leader of the Nation (local, "Yelbasy"), the Chair of the ruling party, and most importantly life-long chairpersonship of the Security Council. Many local and foreign analysts predicted that

Dariga Nazarbayeva, the eldest daughter of Nursultan Nazarbayev, would become the future president and that the current president is only a transitional figure. However, on May 2, 2020 Tokayev, by his decree, terminated Nazarbayeva's authority as Senate Speaker. There is no surprise that the news on the dismissal was quickly followed by international discourse on potential struggle between the previous and current presidents. Nevertheless, according to Paul Stronski, a senior fellow in Carnegie's Russia and Eurasia Program, Tokayev's decision could not be taken "without Nazarbayev's consent or at least knowledge." (The Diplomat, 2020).

Visiting Kazakhstan on 1 February 2020, the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo repeated his message, delivered in other countries, on caution about China's influence and recalled what the US has to offer. The reason for this visit and interest in Central Asian countries is simply caused by the confrontation with China, which is gaining its influence by the Silk Road Economic Belt, a part of China's 'Belt and Road Initiative' (BRI). The Initiative aims at building a single major market across Central and West Asia, East Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, in which Kazakhstan will integrate as a transition hub by means of its Nurly Zhol infrastructure program. BRI would allow for the use of both domestic and international market opportunities by means of integration and cultural exchange in order to strengthen mutual trust and understanding among member states. Moreover, the project estimates to become the largest infrastructure project, encompassing 40% of the global GDP and thus already shaping a certain form of power competition and economic dominance (Griffiths, 2017).

Surprisingly the Initiative has been praised by Vladimir Putin who also declared its compatibility with the Eurasian Economic Union, expressing no concerns on China's intention to spread its dominance in the region, where Russia has a long-lasting sphere of influence.

Meanwhile, the US remains concerned about how China is promoting its interests in Eurasian region. Hence Michael Pompeo's visit, seen as an element of building some kind of deterrent system for China. The U.S Secretary urges all nations of Central Asia to demand an end to China's minority repression in the western Xinjiang region. China, so far, has been regularly urged by Human Rights and UN officials, foreign governments, particularly the US, to end its repression policy towards Muslim minorities, who have been reportedly detained in the reeducation camps.

In this context, the increasing interest of the U.S., with its focus on the Strategy for Central Asia 2019-2025, can be estimated as the step of "pushback against China" (The Diplomat, 2020). The main topic of negotiations of this Strategy is to discuss security issues through the regional dialogue platform 'C5+1' which include five Central Asian republics: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan. Through the C5+1 platform, all participating states affirm their commitment to bolster security cooperation, exchange best practices in countering terrorism and violent extremism, and explore ways to enhance the promotion of stable and peaceful Afghanistan. That is to say, the main topic remained to be the security sphere (United States Department of State, 2020).

Kazakhstan alone could be of interest to the US as a springboard for pressure on the two powers - Russia and China. But the Republic extremely cautiously treats maintaining a balance in its foreign policy, especially under the new leadership. President Kasym-Jomart Tokayev is a well-known diplomat and professional politician both in domestic and international circles. After his inauguration, he managed to successfully deal with protests emerging after the capital's renaming after the First President, Nursultan Nazarbayev: Astana into Nur-Sultan. Tokayev ordered the Interior Ministry to resist protestors without the use of brutal force and detain only those who endanger public order, with the claim to

improve the provisions of the Law on Demonstrations that would allow Kazakhstan's citizens to express the discontent without any fear of detention.

Another President's advantage stems from his approach to public discontent in 2019. Putin's offer to construct a nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan caused great anxiety among the Kazakh people, followed by protests against any nuclear projects. It is no wonder that the Kazakhstanis were extremely concerned about selling the land, where almost 460 nuclear tests were conducted – more than anywhere else on the planet. In his interview to Deutsche Welle, the President highlighted the cautious attitude of the people towards nuclear projects - nuclear weapons tests conducted in Semipalatinsk since 1949 have severely affected the people of Kazakhstan. Therefore, Tokayev concludes that the government is sympathetic to the fears of the people and, before making a decision, he - as the Head of the State - would consult the public first about building such a mega-project (Egemen Qazaqstan, 2019).

It is worth noting that in light of his international experience, Kazakh President is open for changes and modernization. At the same time, the President is well-balanced between conservative and modern visions of the Republic's future. International observers as well as civil society have welcomed the country's reforms and ongoing changes – a relative decline in protest activities has been observed up to May 2020.

The President's intention to introduce new changes in the system are strong but gradual. For example, at the meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council in May 2020, Tokayev spoke sharply about the proposed EAEU development strategy, seeing it as a limitation of sovereignty. According to him, to reach harmonization and unification of national legislation, integration work should take the peculiarities of the national legal system into account; otherwise, the Strategy will limit the sovereign rights of governments and parliament. According to Dosym Satpayev, a political analyst and director of the

Kazakhstan Risks Assessment Group, the strategy failed and once again Russia tried to lobby for points that could further strengthen its economic control over the member states (Yergaliyev, Gimran. 2020). Obviously, other EAEU countries did not accept that due to a direct infringement of the national interests.

Moreover, the Kazakh audience was critical about joining the EAEU, especially after the annexation of Crimea. Therefore, Tokayev's stand is now essential - Kazakhstan needs to demonstrate a certain degree of confidence to strengthen the independent status of its position across Eurasia.

Indeed, the role of the state's leadership is paramount. This raises further debate over possible scenarios following the leave of Russia's President in 2024 - whether or not Putin's replacement will pursue a more aggressive policy towards the Eurasian space to restore Soviet influence.

8. CONCLUSION

To sum up, before the international disputes over the Ukraine conflict, Russia and Kazakhstan have had relatively stable relations considering both international and bilateral levels. However, several challenges over ethnic, economic and security issues appeared to affect the general development of bilateral relationships. Following the Soviet Union collapse, Russia has transformed into the key military partner of Kazakhstan, securing the region from any possible disputes, in particular with China. Along with security issues, Russia gained a reputation of a business supporter both in trade and investment areas. Another aspect of Russia's interest in the country has always been the status of the Russian language and a relatively high concentration of Russian minority, which Moscow considers in its favour. Finally, the crisis in Ukraine has exacerbated regional tension, expecting

Kazakhstan to be the next potential candidate for confrontation. This assumption inevitably raised questions about Kazakhstan's defensive reaction.

In this regard, this paper examined Kazakhstan's defensive policy towards the Russian Federation through a complex set of nation-building processes in both domestic and international levels.

Theoretically, the policy of Kazakhstan towards Russia fell within the horizon of defensive neorealism, in which the theory of balance of power is relevant. According to Kenneth Waltz, the state is encouraged to seek security and join a coalition with defensive strength to deter adversaries from attack. Kazakhstan's multi-vector policy by maintaining peace and stability in the region clearly features the above mentioned theory.

Methodologically, to test the theory a deductive approach has been applied. The case study was explored with regard to the fields of International Relations and History, based on various multilingual literature sources. The research considered data offered by the Statistics Committee of the National Economy Ministry of Kazakhstan, the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, and analyst groups such as Demoscope, Gallup, and Levada Center. In addition, an official interview with the two officials from the Institute of Linguistics of the Education and Science Ministry of Kazakhstan was conducted, which provided valuable insights on language policy implementation and its influence on Russian-speaking population. Lastly, the comparative analysis approach was used to differentiate the policies of Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

The bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and Russia were examined in chronological sequence of events over the period 1991-2020, with the following conclusions:

The first stage demonstrated the new stage of Kazakhstan after independence, with the complex process of political system formation. In 1992 the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the Kazakhstan Republic and the Russian

Federation became the foundation for new relations. This stage laid the groundwork for the relations on the military-political aspect, including the agreements on strategic nuclear forces and the legal status of Russian citizens permanently residing in Kazakhstan. Since the independence declaration, Kazakhstan had prioritized the task to ensure external security. As a result, Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances was signed by Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus in December 1995. The three powers of the Non-Proliferation Treaty – the US, UK and Russia - had collectively pledged to ensure Kazakhstan's sovereignty, its territorial integrity and guarantee security against economic coercion. Signing the agreement on the seabed delineation in the northern part of the Caspian Sea in 1998, Kazakhstan and Russia brought some certainty to the northern Caspian Sea legal status.

The second period reviewed rapid economic growth in the both countries. Favorable economic and political factors contributed massively to the rapid growth of trade turnover. Since 2003, bilateral trade had been growing rapidly, and by the end of 2007 it had increased four times. Actively participating in joint projects with Russia, Kazakhstan did not abandon its multi-vector policy, maneuvering between Russia, China, USA, EU and trying to avoid excessive dependence upon any of them. Kazakhstan sought to find alternative routes and markets, and in 2006, the first phase of the Atasu-Alashankou-Dushanzi oil pipeline project was launched with China. However, caused by the border delineation with China, Russia was perceived as a guarantor of Kazakhstan's national security. Increased cooperation was also supported by Putin. Some progress was achieved over military issues - Kazakh officers training in common programmes under Russia's conditions and military model. During this period, a greater collaboration was intensified within the CSTO and the SCO. Interestingly, despite close ties with Russia, Kazakh government continued maintaining relations with the US.

Practical cooperation started when Kazakhstan decided to enter the Partnership for Peace programme (PfP). Thus, such initiatives demonstrated the eagerness of Kazakhstan to engage with key strategic allies and maintain security and independence.

The third stage is characterized as the most intensive period in bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and Russia. Past disagreements and difficulties, particularly in the border division, were solved after the border delimitation. In 2012, the initial Treaty of Friendship was updated. The integration intensification trends were reflected within the organizations framework, including the CSTO, SCO, and EurAsEC. Moreover, Kazakhstan was at a stage of becoming a member of the WTO. China's economic cooperation with Kazakhstan was intensified through capital investment in regional development. Meanwhile, 2005-2008 period was linked to the threats of instability in Kazakhstan, yet Russia gained the status of strategic guarantor of Kazakhstan's national security thanks to the 2005 border agreement, diminishing concerns about northern territories of Kazakhstan and China 's possible intention to threat Republic's national security. Military cooperation over the period was intensified simultaneously within the CSTO framework. Simultaneously, prioritizing Russia in military affairs did not stop Kazakhstan from cooperating with the US and NATO and implementing the initiatives of the PfP program.

Confrontation of the political relations occurred within the **last stage** in view of the tensions emerged in Ukraine in 2014. Due to political statements and demographic indicators intensified after Ukrainian crisis, Kazakhstan has been regularly positioned as the next potential for confrontation. To oppose this assumption, it is worth noting that Kazakhstan, unlike Ukraine, has pursued a multicultural policy and declared the need to maintain peace and unity among nations as an essential condition of the Republic's prosperity. However, promoting tolerance policy may have put the country in a relatively unique but risky

position. In this regard, the Republic of Kazakhstan initiated a number of nation-building processes, including language policies, state programme on resettlement of ethnic Kazakhs, new legislation on norms regulating responsibility for separatist actions. All this contributed to increasing concerns for Russian-speaking communities.

To examine the influence of language policies on the Kazakhstani population, including the Russian diaspora, there are formal interviews with two officials from the Institute of Linguistics of the Education and Science Ministry of Kazakhstan. To the core question addressed by various international experts concerns the nature of the policy: namely, if the latter pursues the objective of eliminating the influence of Russia in the country. Both officials claimed that Latinization will not affect the status of the Russian language and that the process of language innovations is often politicized, whereas in fact it is a natural desire of ethno-cultural community to preserve and increase its linguistic wealth. In terms of multiculturalism, the interview discovers that the language policy is quite liberal, operating without any harm to the Russian-speaking population. Since the state language serves as a fundamental tool for formation of national state identity, a general population has a positive attitude towards the policy and Latinization.

After the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015, criticism fell on Russia for its leading role in the Union and the intention to reestablish its Soviet influence through economic integration. However, both countries should operate in cooperation within the Union. The EEU is often constitutes a bargain, according to which a certain level of military security and loyalty is granted in exchange for preferential economic benefits.

Before 2019 international discourse was uncertain if Kazakhstan remains stable after Nazarbayev's resignation. However, this paper reveals that current President Kasym-Jomart Tokayev is a professional and well-balanced politician both in domestic and international circles. Tokayev's stand is essential to demonstrate a certain degree of

confidence and strengthen the country's independent position in the Eurasian space. Indeed, the role of the state's leadership is paramount. This raises further debate over possible scenarios following the leave of Russia's President in 2024 - whether Putin's replacement will pursue a more aggressive policy towards the Eurasian space to restore the Soviet influence.

Thus, Kazakhstan is an active player in the Eurasian space, with the desire to maintain peace and stability and simultaneously establish a strong, tolerant, and economically successful state. The country is often associated with a Central-Asian snow leopard who is considered as a stranger in the global community with the sense of independence and courage. The “Kazakhstani Leopard” will never attack first to avoid direct confrontation but should the animal's “freedom” or “habitation” ever be threatened, it will defend its values with the utmost force (Nazarbayev, 1997).

To conclude, the study contributed to the case of Russian-Kazakh relations by including recent developments in the Eurasian space, namely post-Crimea period and the time of leadership change in Kazakhstan. However, the present study has limitations due to the implications caused by COVID-19. The author suggests analyzing the changing relations between Russia and Kazakhstan again after the 2024 Russian presidential election.

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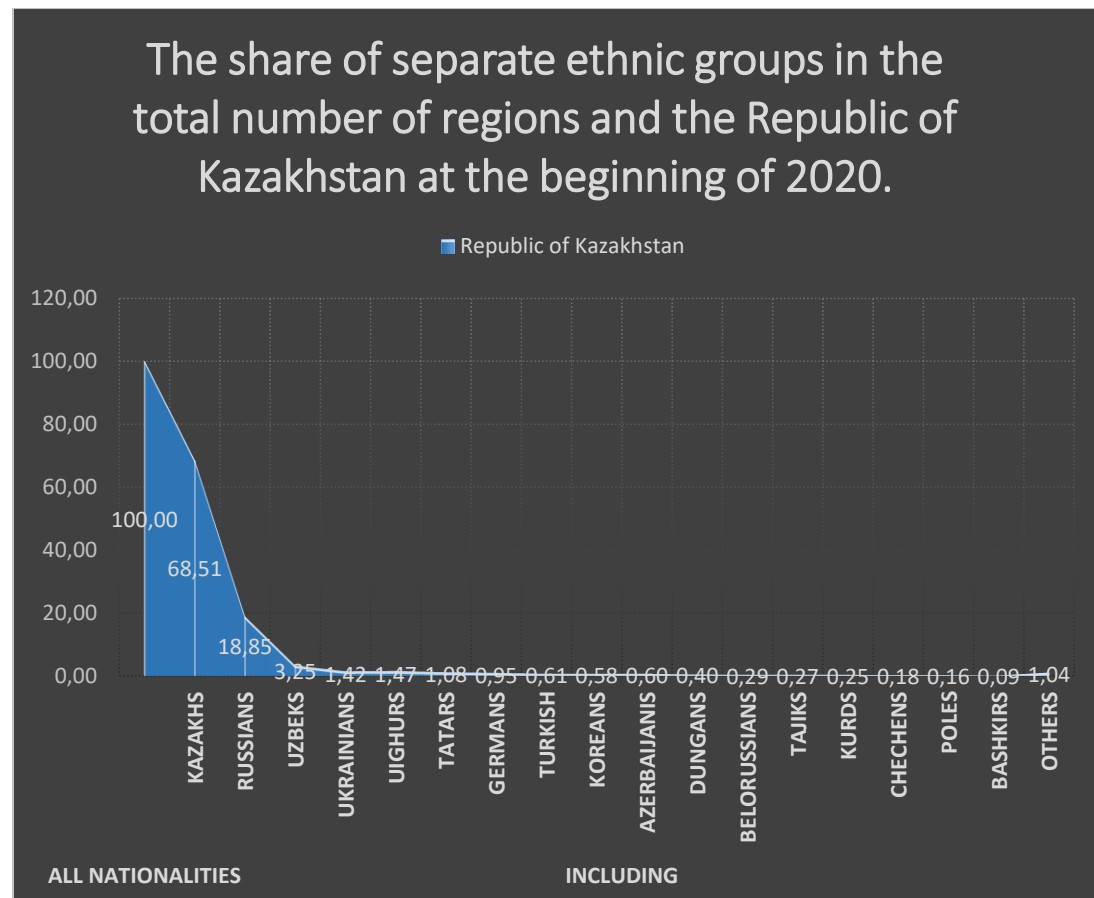
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10. Appendices

Annex 1.



Statistics committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
May, 2020.

Annex 2

Interview summary on the topic “The influence of recent language policies on the population of Kazakhstan”. The interview was conducted with Anar Fazylzhanova, Director of the A.Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics and Kyzdarkhan Rysbergen, Doctor of Sciences in Philology, Professor, Head of Division at the A.Baitursynov Institute of Linguistics. Interviewed by Symbat Tanaguzova. May, 2020 (translated from Russian).

Question List (in Russian):

- 1) Согласитесь, ли Вы с тем, что повышенное внимание к казахскому языку стало очень заметным сегодня?
- 2) На сколько снижена роль русского языка в сфере управления и образования на сегодняшний день?
- 3) Как Вы оцениваете отношение населения к современной языковой политике (латинизация, Государственная языковая программа, переименование улиц, предпринимательств и структур, а также предпочтение казахского языка в сфере государственного управления и образования)?
- 4) Каков сегодня процент владения казахским языком среди казахского и русского населения?
- 5) На сколько сильно доминирование русского языка в средствах массовой информации?
- 6) В какой степени языковая политика идет наравне с политикой мультикультурализма в Казахстане? Не противоречат ли они друг другу?
- 7) Является ли переход латиницы орудием вытеснения другого языка, а именно русского?
- 8) Способствует ли латинизация усвоению казахского языка и росту его престижа в коммуникативном пространстве?
- 9) В какой мере латинизация отвечает интересам диаспор и членов Ассамблеи народа Казахстана?
- 10) Усиливает ли практика двуязычного образования языковое соперничество, ослабляет ли эта практика казахский язык?
- 11) Есть ли стремление сохранить функцию русского языка?
- 12) Если учесть, что выбор языка обучения — это конституционное право каждого гражданина, не вероятно ли, что большинство казахов еще долго будут продолжать пользоваться русским языком и кириллицей?

Question List (in English):

- [1) Would you agree that the increased attention to the Kazakh language has become very visible today?
- 2) To what extent has the role of the Russian language in management and education been reduced to date?
- 3) How do you assess the attitude of the population to the modern language policy (Latinization, the State Language Program, renaming of streets, businesses and structures, as well as preference of the Kazakh language in the sphere of public administration and education)?
- 4) What is the percentage of Kazakh language proficiency among the Kazakh and Russian populations today?
- 5) How strong is the dominance of the Russian language in the mass media?
- 6) To what extent does the language policy go along with the policy of multiculturalism in Kazakhstan? Do they not conflict with each other?

- 7) Does the transition to the Latin alphabet serve as a tool to displace another language, namely Russian?
- 8) Does the Latinization promote the learning of Kazakh language and increase its prestige in the communication space?
- 9) To what extent does the Latinization meet the interests of diasporas and members of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APN)?
- 10) Does the practice of bilingual education enhance language rivalry, weaken the Kazakh language?
- 11) Is there an intention to preserve the function of the Russian language?
- 12) Given that the choice of language of education is a constitutional right of every citizen, is it not likely that most Kazakhs will continue to use Russian and Cyrillic for a long time?]

Respondent 1: Rysbergen Kyzdarkhan.

1. Да, с этим можно согласиться. Особенно казахскоязычная часть интеллигенции обеспокоены тем, что казахский язык не в полной мере внедряется в основные сферы жизнедеятельности общества, в первую очередь, это наука, делопроизводство, исполнительная власть, политика и прочее.

[Yes. Kazakh-speaking intelligentsia in particular is concerned that the Kazakh language is not fully introduced into the fundamental spheres of public life, namely science, administration, government, politics and so on.]

2. Как раз – таки не приходится говорить о каком-либо снижении роли русского языка в сфере управления и образования. Наоборот, в законотворчестве, в управлении, начиная с самого Парламента, наблюдается мощное преимущество русского языка. Законы, юридические акты, документы правового характера создаются на русском языке, затем переводятся на казахский язык. Заседания Парламента в основном проводятся на русском языке, так некоторые молодые управленцы, министры плохо владеют государственным языком. Это вызывает очень много нареканий у населения, творческой, научной интеллигенции. Перевод правовых документов на государственный язык часто некачественный, адекватно не отражает содержание документа, отсюда двусмысленность, искажение смысла отдельных статей, предложений. Легче ознакомиться с русскоязычной версией.

[There is no need to talk about any reduction of the role of the Russian language in the sphere of management and education. On the contrary, there is a powerful advantage of the Russian language in lawmaking and governance, starting from the Parliament itself. Laws, legal acts, documents of legal character are created in Russian, then translated into Kazakh. Parliament sessions are mostly held in Russian, as some young managers and ministers have poor knowledge of the state language. This causes a lot of criticism among the population, artists, and scientific intelligentsia. The translation of legal documents into the state language is often of poor quality, does not adequately reflect the content of the document, resulting in ambiguity, meaning distortion of individual articles and proposals. It is easier to get acquainted with the Russian language version.]

3. Неоднозначно. Молодое, среднее поколение населения, знакомые с современной IT технологией, латинской графикой, английским языком позитивно воспринимают переход казахского языка на латинский алфавит, так как видят в этом очень много плюсов, нежели минусов. Старшее поколение в большинстве обеспокоены тем, что будет потерян целый пласт национальной литературы, классики, созданный на основе кириллицы. К переименованиям и всяческим языковым новациям население на бытовательском уровне относится критически, считают целесообразным направление

потраченных финансовых средств на социальные нужды населения, района, провинции, города и т.д.

[It is not clear. The young, middle generation of the population, familiar with modern IT technology, Latin graphics, and the English language positively perceive the transition of the Kazakh language to the Latin alphabet, as they see a lot of advantages rather than disadvantages. The older generation is mostly concerned that a whole reservoir of national literature, classics based on the Cyrillic alphabet, will be lost. The population at the ordinary level is critical to renaming, all kinds of language innovations, and consider it reasonable to direct the spent financial resources to social needs of the population, districts, provinces, cities, etc.]

4. Точные статистическими данными не располагаю. Но процент владения казахским языком казахским населением значительно возросло с приобретением независимости. Это связано с возрождением национального самосознания, обращения к своим традиционным духовным ценностям, предков, истории. Возросла доля русскоязычных казахов, изучающих казахский язык, как из патриотических побуждений, так и из-за построения карьеры в госсекторе. А знание казахского языка среди русского населения крайне низкое, осталось на прежнем уровне, так как для существования в социокультурном пространстве современных мегаполисов, знание русского языка достаточно в полной мере.

[No exact statistics. But the percentage of the Kazakh language proficiency of the Kazakh population has significantly increased with the acquisition of independence. This is due to the revival of national consciousness, appeal to their traditional spiritual values, ancestors and history. The share of Russian-speaking Kazakhs studying Kazakh has increased, both for patriotic reasons and building a career in the public sector.

Whereas Kazakh language proficiency among the Russian population is extremely low - remained at the same level- as for existence in the socio-cultural space of modern megacities, knowledge of the Russian language is enough to the full extent.]

5. В СМИ доминирование русского языка чувствуется менее болезненно, так как ранее Министерством культуры была отменена часть российских телевизионных каналов. Казахскоязычный контент составляет больше половины республиканского телерадиовещания.

[The dominance of the Russian language in the media is viewed less painfully, as the Ministry of Culture has previously abolished some Russian television channels. Kazakh language content accounts for more than half of the national television and radio broadcasting.]

6. Языковая политика по своему характеру очень лояльна в срезе политики мультикультуризма по сравнению с языковой политикой других постсоветских государств СНГ, и думаем, данное положение сохранится надолго, поскольку представители других многочисленных диаспор проживают в комфортной среде. Однако отдельные межэтнические конфликты в регионах как раз таки вспыхивают, когда представители диаспор демонстрируют открытое неуважение к культуре, традициям, пренебрежение к казахскому языку на бытовом уровне.

[In terms of multiculturalism, the language policy is very loyal compared to the language policies of other post-Soviet CIS states, and we believe this position will remain for a longer time, as representatives of other numerous diasporas are settled in a comfortable environment. However, some interethnic conflicts erupt when representatives of diasporas demonstrate open disrespect to culture, traditions and neglect of the Kazakh language at the domestic level.]

7. Переход казахского языка на латиницу не является орудием давления или вытеснения русского языка, либо какого-либо другого языка диаспор республики,

так как латиница касается только казахоязычной части населения. В русскоязычных документах и учебниках будет продолжаться употребляться кириллица, но в казахоязычной сфере русские фамилии и экзонимы (географические названия зарубежных стран) будут отражаться на латинице без всякого ущерба русскоязычному населению. Это означает, что русская фамилия 'Константинов', ойконим 'Москва' в казахских газетах и учебниках будут передаваться на латинице согласно разрабатываемым орфографическим правилам казахского языка.

[The transition to Latin is not an instrument of pressure or displacement of Russian language or any other languages of diasporas since the Latin alphabet concerns only the Kazakh-speaking part of the population. Cyrillic alphabet will continue to be used in Russian-language documents and textbooks but in the Kazakh-speaking sphere Russian surnames and exonyms (geographical names of foreign countries) will be reflected in the Latin alphabet, without any harm to the Russian-speaking population. It means that Russian surname 'Konstantinov', oikonym 'Moscow' in Kazakh newspapers and textbooks will be transmitted in Latin according to developed spelling rules of Kazakh language.]

8. Да. Считаем, что латинизация будет способствовать усвоению казахского языка и росту престижа в коммуникативном пространстве не только Казахстана, но и за рубежом. Так, например, ведутся онлайн-лекции с трансляцией для зарубежных пользователей, таких как Аргентина, США, Польша и в других странах. Существуют также кафедры казахского языка в университетах некоторых европейских стран.

[Yes. We believe that Latinization will contribute to the Kazakh language acquisition and increase its prestige in the communication space not only in Kazakhstan, but also abroad. For example, there are online lectures with broadcasts for foreign users, such as Argentina, the United States, Poland and other countries. There are Kazakh language departments at European universities too.]

9. Латинизация отвечает интересам многих диаспор, так как на исторической родине многих из них письменность основана на латинице, как например Турция, Узбекистан, Польша. Уйгурская диаспора разрабатывает свою версию латиницы.

[Latinization is in the interests of many diasporas, as in their historical homelands writing is based on Latin script, as in Turkey, Uzbekistan and Poland. The Uyghur diaspora is developing its own version of the Latin alphabet.]

10. Практика двуязычного образования, казахско-русское или казахско-английское соперничество не может ослабить казахский язык. Так как в законодательных актах, касающихся употребления казахского языка на госслужбе, в СМИ, и прочих сферах четко прописаны пункты, защищающие казахский язык. Например, это требование присутствует при поступлении на государственную службу - проводится аттестация на поуровневое знание государственного языка.

[Practice of bilingual education, Kazakh-Russian or Kazakh-English language rivalry cannot weaken the Kazakh language. Legislation on the use of Kazakh language in public service, the media, and other spheres clearly state provisions protecting the state language. For example, this requirement is included in the criteria for civil service entry- certification for the state language competency shall be conducted.]

11. Вне зависимости от стремления властей или населения объективная ситуация с русским языком указывает на то, что функция русского языка надолго сохранится в Казахстане.

[Despite the desire of the authorities or population, the objective situation indicates a long-lasting function of the Russian language in Kazakhstan.]

12. Да, вероятность того, что какая-то часть казахов, включая их детей, сами будут долго пользоваться русским языком и кириллицей.

[Yes, the likelihood that a certain part of Kazakhs themselves, as well as their children, will use Russian and the Cyrillic alphabet for a long time is very high.]

Respondent 2: Fazylzhanova Anar Muratqyzu.

1. Да, с каждым годом растет спрос общества на качественный казахский контент, качественное обслуживание на государственном языке.

[Yes, every year the demand for high-quality Kazakh content and service is growing.]

2. Роль русского языка в управлении и образовании не снижена. Русский язык не теряет своих позиции в Казахстане за счет инертного развития со времен Советского Союза. Потому как в Советское время в его развитие было вложены огромные ресурсы, и это дает ему развиваться инертно на несколько столетий вперед без особых специальных усилий.

[The role of the Russian language in management and education has not been diminished. The Russian language has not lost its position due to inert development since the Soviet Union. Huge resources were invested in its development during the Soviet period, and this gives it the opportunity to develop inertly for several centuries ahead, without much special effort.]

3. Основная масса населения положительно относится к современной политике. Так как она либеральна, требование государственного языка носит мягкий характер. Население положительно относится к латинизации и восстановлению национального ономастического пространства. В то же время есть факты недовольства качеством и ограниченностью сферы употребления государственного языка особенно в финансовой, банковской, политической, научной, информационной сферах, а также в бизнес-секторе.

[The majority of the population has a positive attitude towards modern politics. Since it is liberal, the requirement of the state language is soft. The population has a positive attitude towards the Latinization and restoration of the national onomastic space. At the same time, there are factors of discontent with the quality and limited use of the state language, especially in the financial, banking, political, scientific, information and business sectors.]

4. Ныне уровень владения госязыком повышается, около 12 процентов других этносов хорошо владеют им, а 90 процентов казахов владеют своим родным языком. Однако оставляет желать лучшего качество владения литературным языком всего населения. Так как такой высокий уровень владения госязыком предполагает освоение трех и более стилей (разговорный, публицистический, научный, художественной литературы, и официально деловой) языка.

[Today, the level of state language proficiency is increasing, about 12 % of other ethnic groups have a good command of it, and 90 % of Kazakhs speak their native language. However, the quality of literary language proficiency of the entire population remains poor, as such a high-level of language command implies the mastering of three or more styles (conversational, journalistic, scientific, literature, and official business.)

5. Я считаю на сегодня на 60 процентов

[I estimate the figure to be 60 % for today.]

6. Нет. В Казахстане сформировался особый тип этнического мультикультурализма, он отличается толерантностью не только титульной нации – казахов, но и ответной реакцией на толерантность казахов как массового явления.

[No. A special type of ethnic multiculturalism has been formed in Kazakhstan, it is distinguished by the tolerance not only of the titular nation - the Kazakhs, but also by the response to the tolerance of the Kazakhs as a mass phenomenon.]

7. Нет. Латинизация не отразится на статусе русского языка, так как смена алфавита касается только этого языка. Алфавит функционирует только в письменной

коммуникации. Такого рода вопроса мы рассматриваем как политизированные меседжи. Русский язык довольно долго будет функционировать на таком высоком уровне из-за инертного развития, более того, информационное пространство Казахстана даёт возможность русским СМИ работать в полном режиме. Но сейчас идёт процесс, что этнокультурное казахо-язычное общество поднимает вопрос важности сохранения государственного языка. Однако опять-таки этот естественный процесс многие хотят политизировать, а на самом деле это естественное желание этнокультурного языкового сообщества сохранить и приумножить своё языковое достояние. Поэтому поднимается вопрос внесения изменений в Конституцию, где самым главным и основным языком будет являться только казахский. На данный момент в функционирующих законодательствах после определения статуса казахского языка как государственного всегда следует статья об определении официальной роли русского языка. Поэтому сейчас поднимается вопрос как и во всех развитых странах оставить только одну статью, касающуюся только государственного языка. Это мировой опыт. Например во Франции закон Тубоно (Loi Toubon) ярко демонстрирует законодательную фиксацию статуса французского языка как основного официального. Такой же опыт применяется во всех других развитых унитарных государствах. Этого нельзя отрицать .Казахстан тоже ставит целью развиваться в русле развитых экономических стран.

[No. Latinization will not affect the status of the Russian language, as the change of the alphabet concerns only this language. The alphabet functions only in written communication. We consider such issues as politicized messages. The Russian language will function at such a high level for quite a long time due to its inert development, moreover, the information space of Kazakhstan enables the Russian media to operate in full mode. But now the process is being changed - the ethno-cultural Kazakh society often raise the issue on the importance of preserving the state language. However, again, this natural process is often politicized, whereas in fact it is a natural desire of ethno-cultural community to preserve and increase its linguistic wealth. Therefore, the issue on Constitution amendments is being raised. In the present functioning legislation, after determining the status of Kazakh as the State language, there always follows an article on the official role of the Russian language. Therefore, as in all developed countries, the issue is being raised - to leave an article concerning the State language only. This is a world experience. For example, in France, the Loi Toubon law clearly demonstrates the legal fixation of the status of French as the main official language. The same experience has been applied in all other developed unitary states. Kazakhstan also aims to develop in the mainstream of developed economic countries.]

8. Да.можно повысить уровень владения госязыком посредством обучения населения новому казахскому алфавиту. Латиница имеет высокий уровень узнаваемости в глобальном мире, что непременно скажется и на престиже казахских текстов. Однако сама по себе латиница не может повысить престиж государственного языка без комплексных поддерживающих мер. Необходимо расширить сферу и повысить культуру употребления языка.

[Yes. It is possible to increase the level of mastering state language by teaching the population a new Kazakh alphabet. Latin alphabet has a high level of recognition in the global world, which will certainly affect the prestige of Kazakh texts. However, the Latin alphabet cannot increase the prestige of the state language without complex supporting measures. It is necessary to expand the sphere and improve the culture of language use.]

9. Ассамблея Народов Казахстана во всем времена своей деятельности занималась популяризацией государственного языка среди представителей других

этносов Казахстана, так как государственный язык – универсальное средство формирования общенациональной государственной идентичности.

[The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan at all times of its activity was engaged in popularization of the state language among representatives of other ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, since the state language is a universal means for formation of national state identity.]

10. Сама по себе полиязычие это преимущество казахстанского языкового пространства. Все казахи прекрасно владеют русским языком, а диаспоры намерены изучать госязык. Однако казахстанское русско-казахское двухъязычие несбалансировано, тогда как казахско-русское сбалансировано. Последнее является причиной того, что носители русского языка владеют казахским намного хуже. Поэтому языковая политика должна развивать сбалансированность русско-казахского двухъязычия.

[Polylinguistic is an advantage of the Kazakh language space - all Kazakhs have an excellent command of Russian, and the diasporas intend to study the state language. However, the Russian- Kazakh bilingualism is unbalanced, while the Kazakh-Russian is balanced. The latter is because Russian native speakers have a much worse command of Kazakh. Therefore, the language policy should develop a balanced Russian-Kazakh bilingualism.]

11. Есть. Однако слабое, для того чтобы его учесть.

[Yes. However, weak to take it into account.]

12. Такое маловероятно. Казахизация как проявление тенденции этнизации, которая ныне присуща всему глобальному миру, набирает обороты, и в ближайшем будущем будет только усиливаться.

[It is unlikely. Kazakhization as a manifestation of ethnization tendency - inherent in the entire global world - is gaining traction, and will only increase in the near future.]