Hacettepe University Graduate School Of Social Sciences

Anthropology Department

NEGOTIATING DIASPORA IDENTITIES: KAZAKHS IN TURKEY

Aray RAKHIMZHANOVA

PH. D. Dissertation

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Finally, all the errors are mine.

ABSTRACT

RAKHIMZHANOVA, Aray. *NEGOTIATING DIASPORA IDENTITES: KAZAKHS IN TURKEY*, PH. D. DISSERTATION, Ankara, 2021.

This study explores the ethnic identification of Kazakhs living in Istanbul, Turkey who settled here in the beginning of the 1950s. Today their approximate number is 20.000. The work is going to discuss and analyse discourses and practices associated with their ethnic identifications. It particularly focuses on their self-identification and how they express and articulate their ethnic identity. The given work explores when and why they do so, what it means for them to be a Kazakh, and how their attitudes and opinions about their identity have been evolving over time. Kazakhs had to leave their historical homeland, Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region (Eastern Turkestan) after unsuccessful uprisings against the Chinese government in the 1930s and 1940s. After spending sometime in India, they applied for asylum in Turkey. Here they were accepted as *iskanlı goçmenler,* i.e., as migrants with Turkish ancestry and closely affiliated to Turkish culture. Therefore, analysing the ethnic identifications of Kazakhs in Turkey presents an interesting case, because on one hand they are regarded as Turks/Turkish, and on the other hand, despite this popular assumption, they still stand out from the majority of people, partially because of their physical appearance. Therefore, this ambiguous nature of being “Turk, but not quite” makes the case of Kazakhs unique and interesting. The work aims to demonstrate that like other types of identities, Kazakh ethnic identity is not fixed and bounded, instead it is flexible and fit for various negotiations and changes depending on personal and social relations of the people as well as national and international contexts.

Keywords

Kazakhs in Turkey, Ethnic identity, Nation, Diaspora, Minority

ÖZET

RAKHIMZHANOVA, Aray. *Diaspora Kimliklerinin Müzakeresi: Türkiye'deki Kazaklar Örneği*, Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2021.

Bu çalışma, 1950'lerde İstanbul'da yerleşmiş Kazakların etnik kimliklerini araştırmaktadır. Bugün yaklaşık sayıları 20.000'dir. Çalışma, etnik kimlikleriyle ilişkili söylemleri ve uygulamaları tartışacak ve analiz edecektir. Özellikle kendilerini kimliklendirme üzerine odaklanacak ve etnik kimliklerini nasıl ifade ettiklerini inceleyecektir. Söz konusu çalışma ne zaman ve neden öyle davrandıklarını, Kazak olmalarının ne anlama geldiğini ve kimlikleri hakkındaki tutumlarının ve görüşlerinin zaman içinde nasıl geliştiğini araştırıyor. Kazaklar kendi tarihi vatanı Sincan Uygur Özerk Bölgesi'ni (Doğu Türkistan). 20. yüzyılın 30'lu ve 40'lı yıllarında Çin hükümetine karşı yapılan başarısız ayaklanmalardan sonra terketmiştir. Hindistan'da biraz zaman geçirdikten sonra Türkiye'ye iltica başvurusunda bulundular. Bu nedenle, Türkiye'deki Kazakların etnik kimliklerinin analiz edilmesi ilginç bir durum teşkil etmektedir, çünkü bir yandan Türk olarak kabul edilirler, diğer yandan bu popüler varsayıma rağmen, kısmen fiziksel görünümleri nedeniyle insanların çoğunluğundan öne çıkmaktadırlar. Bu nedenle, "Türk, ama tam olarak değil" olmanın bu muğlak doğası Kazakların durumunu eşsiz ve ilginç kılmaktadır. Çalışma, diğer kimlik türlerinde olduğu gibi Kazak etnik kimliğinin de sabit ve sınırlı olmadığını, bunun yerine, insanların kişisel ve sosyal ilişkilerinin yanı sıra ulusal ve uluslararası bağlamlara bağlı olarak çeşitli müzakere ve değişimlere uygun ve esnek olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Türkiye'deki Kazaklar, Etnik kimlik, Ulus, Diaspora, Azınlık

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A NOTE ON THE USE OF TERMS

In this study I had to work through vast amounts of materials written in Kazakh, Russian and Turkish. The interview transcripts and the cited texts from languages other than English are of my translation. Readers may reach to the original text through the transliterated title, author's name and page number of the work indicated in the bibliography. The short quotations in the original language are italicised and included in the body of the work together with their translations. Kazakh or Turkish terms unknown to English readers are italicised at their first occurrences with their meanings given either in footnotes or in brackets. Place and proper names in Kazakh have not been transliterated strictly, because of the language difference and the use of the Cyrillic alphabet in Kazakhstan. Even the spelling of the term 'Kazakh' in English was problematic, because there is no agreement on the most appropriate spelling for the term. scholars such as Benson and Svanberg (1998) and Kırımlı, (1999) preferred to write it as 'Kazak' without an 'h' at the end. They did this because, firstly, they wanted it to be more accessible to an English-reading audience and secondly, they believed that the spelling with an 'h' is based on the spelling of the term in Russian rather than in original Kazakh. On the basis of a Latin alphabet used for Kazakh in 1927-1940, I would prefer to write it as 'Qazaq'. However, considering many published academic works and my passport, where the country name is spelled as 'Kazakhstan', thus for the sake of consistency I decided to use the spelling 'Kazakh'. I tried not to mention the names of the interviewees; if I did so, I changed their names except the cases when interviewees themselves were not opposed to their names appearing on the pages of this research.

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INTRODUCTION

Just before I graduated from my Master programme in May, 2015 I had a chance to participate in the annual event called *Avrupa Kazaklarinin Kurultayi* (the Reunion of European Kazakhs) in Amsterdam, Netherlands. This was the first time that I saw Kazakhs from Turkey. The official organisers of the *kurultay* were Kazakhs who came to Europe as immigrant workers and settled like many other Turkish citizens. Some participants of the kurultay were still living in Turkey and the kurultay was only a pretext for them to visit their friends and families in Europe. I failed to communicate with them, because the most of them did not speak Kazakh and Turkish was their mother tongue. At that time, I could not speak Turkish, but at least with a few of them I was able to communicate in English. This gathering made one thing clear to me. The topic for my prospective doctoral research was going to be somehow related to the Kazakhs from Turkey. Regardless of the fact that I was Kazakh too, they seemed so enigmatic to me. What made them leave behind their ancestral land, Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang in China) and cross the Himalayas where half of them died? Why did they go through such hardships? And how did they manage to establish a Kazakh community thousand of kilometres away from Kazakhstan? These were the basic questions I wanted to get answers. To tell the truth, at that point I must have exoticised them too much, similarly to some orientalist scholars who were too overwhelmed with Middle Eastern or South East Asian communities, so could not manage to look down deeper into their social environment, being content only with the cultural material constituting the facade of the aforementioned societies.

As the title of this research informs us the discussions in this work will evolve around the concept of identity. It is clear that the space of human identities in each sociocultural system has multidimensional features, because an individual in every system can have multiple identities which may exist side by side, sometimes overlapping or even conflicting. Thus, the point of departure for this

study is the fact that identity is a subjective reality, and is formed by social processes. One of the essential identity markers of modern humans is their ethnicity. Nowadays, social studies proliferate with writings about ethnic identity and yet there seems to be no ideal answer to the questions related to ethnicity. What is the role of ethnic identity in social life? Why is ethnicity so relevant and important? Why are cultural and ethnic differences organised differently in each environment? Why do people still cling to their ethnic identities when the world society goes through the process of globalisation which is supposed to erase any existing cultural boundaries? Political scientist George Schöpflin (2000) looked at this issue through Mircea Eliade's lens, suggesting that societies often apply for their ethnicity to give order to the world composed of turbulent, complex, conflicting experiences and interactions, thus aiming to create cosmos out of chaos. People create smaller worlds where they do belong so as not to lose their basic human qualities. That is why people generally seek their identities more in the periods of crisis, because the construction of identity saves them from uncertainty, they feel trapped in.

Although the concept of identity began to be extensively used since the second half of the 20th century in the social sciences and humanities, today in the 21st century the issue of identity has become even more relevant because scholars are still on the way of developing and elaborating a common approach in interpreting the identity issue. As John Baily (1994) puts it, the issue of cultural identity today is one of the major problems confronting humanity. According to Baily modern ideologies are based on the articulation a specific identity, therefore, "the amplitude of the identification models extends from the extreme ethnic nationalism, dangerously close to the odious racist and xenophobic doctrines, to cosmopolitanism as an ideology of nation-building" (Shaikemelev M. et al., 2019: 3). Anthony D. Smith (1986) interprets identity more as a historical and socio-cultural phenomenon rather than politics and ideology: "…it relates mainly to sense of community based on history and culture, rather than to any collectivity or the concept of ideology" (1986: 14). Moreover, community identification is an essential part of the socialisation process.

Stuart Hall (1992) emphasises the fact that identity is a matter of individual choice. According to him the concept of identity is not a completed reality; instead, it is a phenomenon which is never finished and always under construction. That is why cultural identities can never be stable and fixed. With regards to the impact of globalisation, Hall talks about the transition of minor dependent ethnic cultures to bigger and dominant cultures. To describe this transition, he uses the term *hybrid cultures* and illustrates his ideas through analysing Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities living in the UK. It must be underlined that Hall does not interpret hybridity as weakness; instead, he praises it as a method for easy adaptation to a new environment, continuously changing realities and contexts. Similarly, to Hall, Tea Golob (2014: 124) claims that an "… important dimension of identity is their ambiguous and ambivalent nature. Identities are often hybrid, transversal and multi-layered" (cited in Shaikemelev M. et al., 2019: 3). Golob continues: "Transnationality embraces the construction of identities which are not only limited by local and national boundaries, but are shaped within social spaces which extend beyond those frames" (2014: 124). Moreover, I would underline here that today due to advanced technology and easy travelling conditions we are surrounded with "transnational and hybrid identities" more than ever.

From what has been said above we do see how complex is the concept of 'identity'. This complexity has made many scholars question its ability to function as an analytical category. For example, Brubaker and Cooper (2000) and their followers (Slootman, 2014, 58-59; 2018, 45) argue that the concept of identity is too weak to be an analytical concept. This is because the use of (ethnic) identity has essentialising tendencies, which makes us assume that identity is acquired through one's background or cultural traits. However, instead of assuming that individuals have a given identity, this work prefers to focus on *processes of identification* which is close to Slootman's approach. This will allow to recognise different aspects of identification including temporal and interrelational characteristics. In Slootman's vision ethnic identification, implies the self-identification of individuals which sometimes is influenced by the external ascriptions or existing stereotypes expressed by others. Self-

identification mainly deals with how people position themselves in society and how they apply available identity labels (for example, ‘Kazakh’, ‘Turkish’, and ‘Kazakh-Turk’), while identification as an analytical tool deals with people’s relation to different ethnic labels and understanding of how they experience and define their ethnic belonging (Slootman, 2014, 59). This work aims to emphasise that individual identification does not simply exist, but it is created and asserted in many different ways. Thus, instead of assuming that people with certain ethnic backgrounds are called and identified so because of their ancestors, traditions, language, country of birth or origin, this work tries to identify aspects of ethnic identity when they are emphasised by people themselves. It should show how identifications can vary depending on context and over time (Slootman, 2018, 45).

Taking into consideration everything that has been discussed above I hope that the given research will not only shed some light on the ethnic identifications of Kazakhs living in Turkey, but also contribute to the worldwide scientific discourse about ethnic identification processes of hybrid and transnational identities. Before moving to the aims and focus of the given research it is important first to clarify briefly the history of Kazakh emigration in order to understand how Kazakhs, once nomadic Central Asian people, ended up settling in Turkey and have been living there for more than six decades. In this way, the reader can have a better understanding of the central ideas discussed in the Chapters from 1 to 7.

The Periods of Kazakh Emigration. The Birth of the Kazakh Diaspora

Before Kazakhstani independence, the problem of Kazakh emigrants was hardly addressed by scholars in Kazakhstan. Although the Kazakh diaspora was one of the largest in the world, it was forbidden to talk about this topic, not even mentioning about studying it. One of the reasons for this was the consequence of the iron curtain policy. Until the 1990s researchers in Kazakhstan were officially prohibited from writing about Kazakh emigration and diaspora, thus scholars knew too little about Kazakh emigration. Another reason was related to the inner Soviet politics, when any person leaving for a foreign

country was regarded as an archenemy of revolution, socialism and people. However, today the situation has profoundly changed. Kazakhstani independence dictated new rules of studying and interpreting Kazakh emigration. As a matter of fact, Kazakh emigrants who were once regarded as run-away, traitor and enemy of the people, today began to be praised and admired as an example of "authentic" Kazakhs, who despite experiencing many hardships and living in a foreign environment, managed to save their culture and identity, being loyal to their true selves.

According to the estimations there are 4.1 million Kazakhs who live outside Kazakhstan. These people, due to their fate in different times, found themselves in neighbouring republics, near and far abroad; today they are scattered in over fifty countries around the world. Taking into consideration the fact that the Kazakh population of the world constitutes 12 million, it is clear that every third Kazakh lives outside Kazakhstan. The majority of those Kazakhs live in China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Mongolia and Turkey. In order to be able to understand better the reasons why many Kazakhs live in foreign lands Kazakhstani historian Abdizhapar Abdakimov (1999) advised to start with focusing on the concepts 'Kazakh emigration' and 'Kazakh diaspora'. Taking into account major events in the Kazakh history Abdakimov (1999, p.317-319) divided Kazakh emigration into six periods. These periods cover five centuries, beginning with the establishment of Kazakh statehood in the 15th century and ending with the events in the 1940s related to the World War II.

The first period took place between 1720 and 1750s, the onslaught of the Dzungars[1] had resulted in a great calamity for Kazakhs which was called *'Aktaban shybyryndy, alkakol sulama'* (Barefooted Flight of Kazakhs).

[1] The Dzungar Khanate was a confederation of several Tibetan Buddhist Oirat Mongol tribes that emerged in the early 17th century. Its territory covered an area from southern Siberia in the north to present-day Kyrgyzstan in the south, and from the Great Wall of China in the east to present-day Kazakhstan in the west. The core of the Dzungar state was current-day northern Xinjiang. However, Dzungar people were massively exterminated in the genocide organised by the Qing dynasty of China during 1755-57. Some scholars estimate that about 80% of the Dzungar population, or around 500,000 to 800,000 people, were killed by a combination of warfare and disease after the Qing conquest.

The second period was the beginning of the 19th century when Kazakhs were experiencing pressure from both sides: Tsarist Russia in the north and the Khanate of Kokand, an Uzbek State in Fergana Valley which existed 1709-1876. Therefore, the Kazakhs had to move to the north of Tian Shan mountains.

The third period includes the years 1860-80s when there was a redivision of the borders between Tsarist Russia and the Chinese Empire ruled by the Qing dynasty. As a result of the Saints-Petersburg agreement from 1881 thousands of Kazakhs found themselves under the rule of China, and some more were scattered around Mongolia. This period was especially difficult for Kazakhs living in the Altay and Zhetisu regions.

The fourth period of Kazakh emigration coincided with the freedom fighting movements of Kazakh and Kyrgyz groups against the policy of Tsarist Russia. There were massive repressions of its participants. Later, the October Revolution in 1917 Russia, which overthrew the Romanov dynasty and Bolshevik “red terror” began to persecute wealthy Kazakhs, thus half of them escaped to China and Mongolia. The total loss of the Kazakh population in the country in those years constituted 1 million 350 thousand people, or one quarter of the whole population.

The fifth period was a result of the cruel policy called ‘Malyi Oktyabr’ (Small October) in 1929-33 organised by F.I. Goloschekin against nomadic Kazakhs to forcibly sedentarise them. The Soviet government confiscated all the cattle of the Kazakh people and left many of them to starve to death. Because of this policy Kazakhs once more set out on a journey to foreign countries in the hope to save their lives.

The sixth period of Kazakh emigration Abdakimov (1999) associated with the events of World War II. More than 1.5 million Kazakhs lost their lives in this war. Some of the soldiers who were captives on the German side decided not to return to their homeland because of their fear of Stalinist repressions.

In this way Abdakimov (1999) presents the historical events in Kazakhstan that forced Kazakhs to cross the border. Further, he divided Kazakh emigrants into two groups. The first group of Kazakh emigrants are those who escaped from political clashes and conflicts. The second and larger group is the Kazakhs who found themselves on the other side of Kazakhstani territory due to different geopolitical divisions of borders. This is the case of the migration of borders instead of people. Therefore, Kazakhstani migration expert Gulnara Mendikulova (2014) prefers to call this group not a diaspora (a people settled far from their ancestral homelands) but an *irredenta*, a territory historically or ethnically related to one political unit but which stays under the political control of another. As a result, many Kazakhs today are citizens of other states though they still live in their historical homeland. For instance, Kazakhs of Ili, Tarbagatay, Altay and Barköl regions, Dzungarian mountain slopes in the East Turkestan (Xinjiang) live in their ancestral lands. For the last two hundred centuries they have been living under the rule of China. The same is true for Kazakhs living in Bayan-Olgii region in Mongolia.

In Abdakimov's arguments Kazakhstan played a central role as a binding power, a connecting element for all of those scattered Kazakhs. To emphasise this fact he referred to Kazakh emigrants as a *diaspora*, a people settled far from their ancestral homeland. However, it is clear that some Kazakhs have become diaspora not because they once left Kazakhstani territory, but because historical circumstances made their homeland regions subject to different states. Furthermore, it has to be added that most Kazakhs before emigration used to live as nomadic pastoralists. Thus, constant migration was part of their life-style. The seasonal migration meant that pastoralists were not bound to a specific territory or region, but rather they were in constant search of better pastures for their cattle. Therefore, a bordered territory was not the only unifying factor of historical Kazakhs; rather they must have relied upon other instruments to maintain their social coherency. Despite these facts, in the current discourse it is possible to see how the image of Kazakhstan among the Kazakh diaspora is engineered to be the one and only homeland and country for all the scattered Kazakhs. Since the days of independence Kazakh diaspora was mentioned

alongside the idea of Kazakhness. The birth of the Kazakhstani state meant also the birth of a Kazakh diaspora; until independence there were only minority Kazakh groups living in different countries, but Kazakhstani sovereignty gave them diaspora status. Moreover, the independence of Kazakhstan emphasised the beginning of the Kazakh nationhood era. This in turn deeply affected self-identification, particularly the ethnic identification processes of many Kazakhs living outside Kazakhstan. This study will particularly focus on Kazakhs in Turkey. It attempts to explain their ethnic identification processes before and after the independence of Kazakhstan and demonstrate how they have been negotiating their ethnicity as a minority group in the Turkish context.

The Research Focus

As it has been already stated above, the focus of this research is Kazakhs in Turkey who came here as settled migrants in the beginning of 1950s and their descendants. Today their number is roughly estimated as 20.000[2] people. This work will analyse Kazakh ethnic identity problems on the basis of the Kazakh community living in Zeytinburnu district, Istanbul. The original homeland of Kazakhs in Turkey is Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous region in the People's Republic of China. In some literature and by most of Kazakhs themselves, this region is referred to as East Turkestan. According to the Migration Law of Turkey, only the immigrants and refugees who were of Turkish descent and tied to Turkish culture (*Türk soyundan ve Türk kültürüne bağlı kisİler*) were assigned the status of *iskanlı göçmenler* (settled/privileged migrants) (Kusçu, 2016, 384). This means that upon their arrival in Turkey, the Kazakhs were provided with special benefits by the Turkish government. At the beginning they were hosted in refugee camps in Istanbul and later were allocated to different rural parts of Turkey. Over the years, many Kazakh families left their primary settlement

[2] In some sources this number is given as 15.000 (Abdakimov, 1999, 355; Mendikulova, 2014,77). It is known for me that no official census has been carried out on Kazakhs in Turkey in recent years. Therefore, today there are no available sources about the exact number, occupation, gender, income etc. of Kazakhs living in Turkey. These 20.000 do not include Kazakhs who migrated to Turkey from Kazakhstan after independence. Unlike the Kazakhs from Xinjiang, most of these Kazakhs are temporary migrants, except some Kazakh women who marry Turkish citizens and decide to reside permanently in this country. Others are students and business people, working mainly in tourism and trading sectors.

areas and decided to move to bigger cities, most of them choosing Istanbul. Moreover, from the 1960s onwards within the framework of labor migration agreements between the Turkish government and European countries, Kazakhs from Turkey migrated to Europe as guest workers, alongside Turks.

As Kuşçu (2016, 381) argued, once Kazakhs adapted to their new lives both in Turkey and Europe, they started to be involved in different activities which aimed at preserving their group's boundaries. Therefore, throughout many years the Kazakhs constantly formulated and reformulated their identities depending on the context. As it has been written above, many Kazakhs in Turkey migrated from the Xinjiang region in China and thus considered this area their homeland. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and with the independence of Kazakhstan, they began to shape their identities and loyalties in different manner. After 1991 the Kazakhs in Turkey, especially the younger generation, began to orient themselves towards Kazakhstan. As a result, they established close economic and cultural relations with their new homeland. Kazakhstani foreign policies also essentially contributed to the promotion of Kazakhstan as the homeland for Kazakhs living abroad. Even the labelling of Kazakhs living abroad as a diaspora is largely a product of the Kazakhstani state policy. The concept of homeland here is essential, because the phenomenon of diaspora itself would not exist without it. A group of people can be called 'diaspora' only when they are dispersed or spread from their original homeland. If ethnic identity is interpreted not as dogma, but instead as human relationships, compromises, personal choices and principles, it is possible to see how the ethnic identification of Kazakhs in Turkey was changing throughout the time depending on the local, national and international contexts. Particularly, their case indicates to the fact that even a central element of diasporic identity like homeland is not stable and can change over time.

The Research Aims

This work aims at addressing the problematics of Kazakhs' ethnic identity in Turkey. From anthropological perspectives, Kazakh identity is created not only through nation building projects initiated by the Kazakhstani government, but

also through everyday interactions of Kazakh community members living both in Kazakhstan and abroad. These interactions in fact create dichotomies such as “We - Kazakhs” and “They - Other”. Usually, the government produces decrees to ensure the sustainment of Kazakh identity, but it is important to consider how Kazakh people themselves react to those politics at grass-roots level and how well they enact those culturally preferred identities on the social stage. The field data of this research showed how some Kazakhs used their ethnic identity as an instrument to achieve their personal goals. This work will argue that like other types of identities, Kazakh ethnic identity is not fixed and bounded; rather, it is flexible and fit for various negotiations and changes depending on the personal and social relations of the people. The work will take into account various historical and political discourses characteristic to both Turkish and Kazakhstani societies while discussing its main research question: “How have Kazakhs been negotiating their ethnic identity since their settlement in Turkey?”

The Literature Review

The initial step in any scientific research is to review and critically analyse the works of other researchers on the same theme. The given section reviews the studies about the Kazakhs in Turkey as well as works on Kazakh national and ethnic identities. Since the 1950s several works have been published on the life and culture of the Kazakhs in Turkey by Turkish and non-Turkish authors. There are also first-generation Kazakh migrant authors in Turkey such as Hasan Oraltay (1961, 1976, 2005), Halife Altay (1981), and Hızırbek Gayretullah (2017) who themselves witnessed and experienced hardships of migrations of Kazakhs between 1930s and 1950s. Most of these works were memoirs written by individuals rather than objective studies of communities, while others were publications intended to familiarise Turkish readers with Kazakh culture. The first studies which discussed the fate of Kazakhs who fled from Communist China belonged to American social anthropologist Milton Clark (1954) and British journalist Godfrey Lias (1956). Clark (1954) spent a year with Kazakhs while they were in Pakistan preparing to leave for Turkey, whereas Lias collected his material when Kazakhs were already in Turkey. Both authors

relied much on Qalibek Hakim as a key informant, a much respected and reputable Kazakh chieftain who led the Kazakh exodus from China between 1949 and 1951. As a part of his doctoral research Clark (1954) published an article in *The National Geographic Magazine* which allowed a wider audience to learn about Kazakhs as a nation.

In the mid 1970s and beginning of the 1980s Swedish ethnographer Ingvar Svanberg carried out another research among Kazakhs in Turkey. He travelled to the regions where Kazakhs settled and analysed their lifestyles and adaptation to the Turkish environment. An ethnographic work called *Kazak Türkleri ve Salihli Yöresi Kazak Yerleşmesi* (Kazakh Turks and Kazakh Settlement in Salihli region) (1975) by M. Rifat Çelebi and the master thesis by Mikiko Uehara (1992) describing Kazakhs living in Ankara are also important anthropological sources written about Kazakhs in Turkey. Notwithstanding the value of these works, it must be clear that they mainly described who the Kazakhs are and essential elements of their culture such as folklore, food, occupation, religion etc., rarely addressing or analysing the mechanisms which helped them to maintain their Kazakhness. Moreover, many of those works were written before the collapse of the Soviets whereas works after Kazakhstani independence mainly focused on the ethnicity issues and nation-building processes taking place in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The researchers analysed the ethnic identification processes of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan from various perspectives including national ideology (Olcott, 2002; Mkrtchyan, 2014; Aitymbetov et al., 2015; Ametbek, 2015; 2017; Shakirova, 2015), historiography (Usta, 2007; Gürbüz, 2014) and language policies (Güney, 2007; Doğanaksoy, 2008; Smagulova, 2008; Abdramanova, 2017). As two key nation-building strategies in Kazakhstan they identified civic and ethnic approaches: Kazakhstani and Kazakh respectively (O Beachain & Kevlihan, 2011; Kesici, 2011; Aitymbetov et al., 2015; Sharipova, D. et al., 2017). Kazakhstani here means that more than one hundred and thirty ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan should be covered in the nation-building process, whereas Kazakh national identity engineered by Kazakhstani government is exclusively

focused on Kazakhs, who are the titular nation of Kazakhstan. Besides, the term “Kazakh” refers to the Kazakh ethnic descent of Kazakhs living anywhere in the world not only in the Republic of Kazakhstan, whereas “Kazakhstani” denotes citizenship in the Republic of Kazakhstan, and this status can be acquired.

Consequently, if we talk about the ethnic identity of Kazakhs in Turkey, we also address the issues of Kazakhstani nationhood. Since the independence days Kazakhstan made an effort to establish economic and cultural relations with Kazakhs from around the world. This was because Kazakhs from abroad were imagined as more “authentic” and “real” Kazakhs compared to the ones in Kazakhstan who were Russified and were led astray by communist ideologies. For example, in the 1990s the Kazakhstani government initiated a repatriation programme for Kazakh emigrants who intended to return to Kazakhstan. Within the framework of this policy tens of thousands of ethnic Kazakhs were encouraged by the government of Kazakhstan to migrate to their ancestors’ land (O Beachain & Kevlihan, 2011:8; Mkrtchyan, 2014: 19; Diener, 2009). This political initiative had an impact on the ethnic identifications processes of Kazakhs in Turkey too. For example, once a young Kazakh man told me that he began to feel himself Kazakh only after he had gone to study in Kazakhstan. Therefore, steps undertaken towards building a strong national identity after independence in Kazakhstan inevitably affected Kazakh diaspora communities throughout the world.

However, it is important to underline that the problems of Kazakh nationhood addressed by most scholars were limited only to Kazakhstan, largely ignoring the ethnic and national identifications of Kazakh communities living abroad. The impact of macro-processes in the 1990s on the ethnic identifications of Kazakhs in Turkey also have not been appropriately addressed by researchers. There are only a few works which focused on similar issues, but many of them examined people’s past rather than the present. The authors of such research define themselves as Kazakh diaspora specialists:

> …we created a new field in Kazakhstan social science, Diaspora Studies, with specialists examining the history of the Kazakh diaspora and irredenta worldwide (G. Mendikulova), in Uzbekistan (K. Koblandin), China (B. Atantyaeva and A. Samaev), and European and Arabic countries. Thanks to the State Program of the Formation of the National Idea, we had a marvellous opportunity in 2007-2009 to conduct various researches including field works and the collection of archival documents in several countries (Mendikulova, 2014: pp.82-83).

Additionally, there were several attempts to assess the effect of repatriated Kazakhs in nation-building policies. International relations experts such as Kuzembayeva et al. (2014) rightly pointed out that returnees had crucial input in Kazakhstani nation building.

> Kazakhstan has been conducting an active policy towards its diaspora, taking German and Israeli experience as an example. Contrary to many other empirical cases, instead of using its diaspora to promote its foreign policy interests abroad, the Kazakhstani authorities have attempted to use the diaspora to solve the country's demographic and nation-building problems. Since independence, Kazakhstan has become home to more than 1.1 million immigrants, of which over 464,000 are ethnic Kazakhs or *oralmans* (repatriate; returnee). Oralmans also influenced on the dynamics of ethnodemographic development in the country where Kazakhs are the dominant ethnical group (Kuzembayeva et al., 2014: 25).

It is clear that policies directed towards the diaspora were aimed at building the ethnic Kazakh nation, but until now scholars tend to fail to answer the question of how these initiatives affected the lives of Kazakh people at the individual level. As we can see Kazakhstani academia and media did not really go far beyond the simple statement of facts and figures.

Besides, what is striking is that the ethnic identity issues of Kazakhs were frequently in the domain of political scientists (Güney, 2007; Doğanaksoy, 2008; Çelik, 2014; Mkrtchyan, 2014; Aitymbetov et al., 2015; Ametbek, 2015; 2017; Rees & Burkhanov, 2019; Rees & Williams, 2019; O Beachain & Kevlihan, 2011) and a small number of historians (Kesici, 2011; Mendikulova, 2014; 2019), whereas local and foreign sociologists and anthropologists seem to be quite silent on the given topic apart from a few exceptions (Svanberg, 1994). Consequently, the methods used in most of the completed studies are

predominantly top-down and based heavily on statistical surveys with few exceptions where researchers used ethnographic methods, particularly semi-structured interviews and observations to consider community members' opinions (Sharipova, D. et al., 2017; Rees & Burkhanov, 2019). Nevertheless, a small number of political scientists realise that focusing exclusively on the state policies of nation-building and ideologies does not allow answering vital questions on how those policies are accepted and interpreted by ordinary people, but again their research has been restricted to people exclusively living in Kazakhstan.

Therefore, it is time for researchers to understand that Kazakh identity is executed not only through the bigger nation building policies of Kazakhstan resonating in other countries where Kazakhs live, but also through everyday interactions of community members. The reader should understand that the given research being an anthropological work in essence uses a bottom-up method in addressing the issues related to Kazakh ethnic identity. This means that the given work has relied on a qualitative approach rather than quantitative methods, and the opinions of local community members were emphasised in the main arguments. Furthermore, the difference of this work from prior works on Kazakh national and ethnic identity includes the fact that it focuses on a Kazakh community living outside of Kazakhstan, specifically in Turkey. On one hand, this will contribute to the understanding of how nation-building processes taking place in Kazakhstan since the 1990s are reflected in the ethnic identification of Kazakhs living in a foreign context, i.e., the Turkish environment. On the other hand, this work attempts to demonstrate how Kazakhs, being a minority in Istanbul with outstanding facial features, have been negotiating their ethnic identity while encountering other ethnic groups for almost seventy years since their first settlement in Turkey.

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Chapter 1 reviews the trends in ethnicity research. It begins with the discussion of primordial ideas widespread in the early 20th century, the approach that later had been deeply criticised by various authors which led to the emergence of another approach called constructivism. In contrast to primordialists, constructivist researchers focus on the dynamic and processual aspects of ethnicity. This chapter underlines the current academic consensus on treating ethnicity as a social construct. The theoretical stance of the given research was mainly informed by the writings of such authors as John W. Meyer, Marieke Slootman and Rogers Brubaker.

1.1. THE CORE CONCEPTS

In this work there are three basic analytical categories. They are *ethnic identity, national identity* and *diaspora*. These concepts are going to be used as analytical tools in the discussion of Kazakhs' ethnic identifications. Since the work's main arguments will be developed around these concepts, it is crucial first to understand their definitions and interpretations. The following three sections will demonstrate how these categories have been treated by different scholars and how their meanings have transformed throughout history.

1.1.1. Ethnicity

The term 'ethnicity' was first used by Lloyd Warner and David Riesman in the middle of the 20th century. First and foremost, the researchers from the Chicago school used the term to demonstrate different settlement patterns existing in the USA. In this context ethnic was used to define the "other" - Black, Spanish, Jewish, Irish etc. - groups against the "we", white Anglo-Saxon Protestant groups. However, it must be mentioned here that the terms ethnicity and ethnic have a long history. In ancient Greek the word *etnik/ethnikos* had the meaning of pagan and heretic, whereas the term *genos* was used to denote

groups who have common ancestors. In contrast to the genos, the ethnos emphasised the cultural differences rather than biological and kinship characteristics. As Anthony Smith (1986) pointed out, modern French has the closest alternative to the old Greek meaning of ethnic, because the word *ethnie* in French covers the common history and cultural specificity of ethnicity. That is why Smith (1986), while analysing problems of ethnicity, used the term ethnie borrowed from French.

> Ethnicity is largely 'mythic' and 'symbolic' in character, and because myths, symbols, memories and values are 'carried' in and by forms and genres of artefacts and activities which change only very slowly, so 'ethnie', once formed tend to be exceptionally durable under 'normal' vicissitudes and to persist over many generations, even centuries, forming 'moulds' within which all kinds of circumstances and pressures can exert an impact. (Smith, 1986, p. 16)

The concept of ethnic group has various definitions. The anthropologist Manning Nash (1989) underlined that the terms ethnic, ethnicity and ethnic group were the most complex, erratic and emotionally charged concepts. The researchers such as Steve Fenton (2001; 2003), Francesco Pellizzi (1988) and Thomas Eriksen (2010) argued that migration functioned as a mechanism for creating ethnicity. They defined ethnic group as political minority in nation state segregated from dominant group which has important cultural differences (Pelizzi, 1988). Pelizzi (1988), who studied problems of ethnic groups from South America, stated that ethnicity is created in exile and it is either a demographic or social minority. For example, in countries such as Guatemala, Peru and Bolivia with a colonial past, there are ethnic groups who are socially humiliated regardless of their large number in the overall population. He also underlined that exiled nations have the potential to transform into ethnicities (Polish, Italians, Irish, Mexicans etc. in the USA), although some cultural and historical groups can move to the position of nation (Palestinians or Jewish). Hence migration is a determiner for the political and social organisation of ethnicity.

Others viewed ethnic groups in romantic terms as *volk*, colourful remnants of old times. In anthropology, generally ethnic groups are defined as communities

which continue their existence as biological entity, share basic cultural values, realise communication and interaction, have membership recognised by themselves and others (Foltz, 1974). For historians like Adrian Hastings (1997), ethnicity is a group of people who share a common cultural identity and language. He, similarly to Nash (1989), claims that ethnicity is a common culture where people share the basics of life such as language, food or clothes. According to Hastings, even if people lose their state or nation, they never tend to lose their ethnicities. As can be seen there are various definitions of ethnicity. But, the variety of definitions is not the only problem associated with the concept of ethnicity.

Another problem of using ethnicity as an analytical category derives from the fact that it is sometimes used interchangeably with categories such as nation or race, which means that the meaning of the term ethnicity is quite vague. Thus, there are no clear-cut borders between terms such as ethnicity, nation or race (Brubaker, 2009). However, while reviewing the current trends in ethnicity research, sociologist Rogers Brubaker (2009) noted that in recent times to overcome this problem the studies of ethnicity, race and nationalism have become broader and more integrated. As he writes, it is better for us to treat all these concepts as *single integrated family of forms*. Moreover, instead of trying to demarcate precise boundaries between ethnicity, race and nationalism, it is better to focus on identifying and explaining patterns of their variations thus, "… without worrying too much about where exactly race stops and ethnicity begins" (Brubaker, 2009, p. 28). In fact, the categories of ethnic and national identities create much confusion. I decided to call them twin concepts, because they each have a variety of meanings and ambivalent nature. In some interpretations and contexts, they are complete opposites, while in others they can easily be substituted for each other and have overlapping meanings. This in turn makes it difficult for researchers to produce quality analysis.

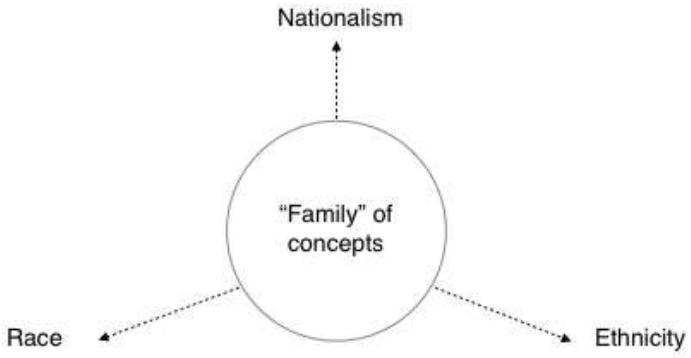


Fig. 1 A scheme inspired by Brubaker's (2009) article Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism The *Annual Review of Sociology*. pp. 21-42

The only way to overcome this issue is to follow Brubaker's advice: worrying less about the precise boundaries of these concepts and working more on identifying and explaining their various patterns. However, for the sake of analysis it is still useful to look at the terminology. Therefore, the next section is dedicated to a review of the concepts 'nation' and 'nationalism'.

1.1.2. Nation

What is nation? What are the models and ethnic foundations of the modern nation? How did nations appear? What are the reasons and conditions for the birth of a nation? What are the general reasons and stimulating mechanisms of the nation formation process based on ethnic bonds and memories? Many researchers from different fields have tried to answer these sorts of questions. While discussing the problem of national identity, Smith (2006), the proponent of ethnic foundations of the nations, used the ancient Greek tragedy Oedipus written by Sophocles as a metaphor to demonstrate the multiplicity of identity. According to Smith, Oedipus in the story has several identities and roles including familial, regional, class, ethnic and gender. The disclosure of the secret about Oedipus' birth teaches people how an unseen world can affect our

material world, turn upside down existing social categories, and demolish all family identities.

However, as Smith argued, none of the aforementioned identity categories including class, religion or gender are able to cover as many people as national identity does. For Smith national identity is multidimensional; he defined it in the following way: “a nation is a community of people who shares a historical land/country, common myths and historical memory, a massive public culture, a common economy, common legal rights and duties.” (2006: 32). Differently from Smith, historian Adrian Hastings (1997) sees the fundamentals of ‘nation’ in written language. In his view, as long as the language of community takes the written form, the community transforms into a nation. For Hastings the nation is a more self-conscious community than ethnicity, which may consist of one or more ethnicities. Besides, the former has a literature, political identity, and can be identified with a specific territory (Hastings, 1997).

Scholars who argued for an ethnic ground of nations claimed that the process of becoming a nation would be incomplete without ethnicity. In the communities where ethnic roots are absent or ethnic bonds are blurred, there is an urge to create a mythology and symbolism about the community, using the available historical and cultural materials. This need has become the main condition of national survival and unity almost everywhere in the world. Therefore, the researchers from philology, archeology, anthropology and other scientific disciplines search for pedigrees and ancient origins. Max Müller’s pan-Aryanist Solar Mythology, the use of Babylonian and Sumerian civilisation by the Iraqi state, emphasising the Hittite Imperial origins by the Turkish state, and the application of Daco civilisation in Romania to claim the Transylvanian region are only a few examples of cultural wars indicating to the search for the glorious past of nations.

However, from here on it is useful to examine the arguments of another group of scholars in nationalism studies. Sometimes this group of scholars is referred to as modernists. This is because they interpret nationalism as a relatively modern phenomenon and generally associate its appearance with the French

Revolution and the 19th-century Romanticism era in Europe. Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012) and Benedict Anderson (1936-2015) are two outstanding names in this field of research. Hobsbawm (2005) analysed nations through the prism of *invented traditions,* whereas Anderson (2006) defined the nation as an *imagined political community*. The latter considered nations "*imagined,* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear them, yet in their minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 2006, p. 6). Anderson particularly underlined the contribution of *print-capitalism* in imagining the nation among many European citizens.

Hobsbawm (2005) wrote about three innovations which helped to create individual nations. The first of them was the establishment of secular primary education. According to him, education separated from the church actually weakened the power of the church in Europe and strengthened national consciousness. The second was the invention of public ceremonies. The royal jubilees, Bastille Day in France, May 1, Olympic Games, Thanksgiving in the USA, etc. are public ceremonies used for awakening national spirit. The third important innovation was the mass production of public monuments (public buildings, sculptures). According to Hobsbawm, not only these innovations, but also national sports essentially contributed to the creation and consolidation of nations. As a result, sports were new forms of national expressions, the popularity of Gaelic football in Ireland in contrast to English football and the cycling competition Tour de France are good examples of such expressions.

Although religion is often said to transcend ethnic boundaries, it is still possible to say that institutionalised religion has made a major contribution to the formation of national or ethnic identities. In order to create a national identity, some communities used the idea of divine choice (for example, "we are chosen children of God"). Liah Greenfeld's (2003) analysis on England provides a deeper understanding of the relationship between religion and nationality. Greenfeld argued that Protestantism was a midwife who helped the birth of Englishness. The English saw themselves as "God's firstborn" and the 16th

century John Aylmer, bishop of London, used to tell his congregation that God was an Englishman (not French, Italian or German) and they should thank God for that seven times a day. Queen Elizabeth I's long-established ruling of the British people, the sinking of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and the success of English scientists, all of these made even stronger the belief that the English were a sacred nation chosen by God (Greenfeld, 2003; Hastings, 1997).

As it is understood, national identity has a more effective and permanent effect than other collective cultural identities. It is possible to claim that nationalism will not disappear even if new alternative identity categories appear. While modernists and ethnicists emphasise that national identity is a collective identity, some researchers also mention about multiple national identities and the local social context as contributing to the development of the individual sense of national consciousness. Sometimes to understand national identity, it is necessary to go beyond nationalism theories, because national identities are produced not only at governmental, but also at the local level. This is useful because a particular society's daily thinking about their national identity is usually different from the national ideology that creates "pure" identities and national stereotypes (Adamson, Day, & Thompson, 1999).

The discussions about ethnicity and nation showed how intertwined and complex can be the matter of ethnic and national identities. Moreover, they complement each other. The diversity of literature proves that there are various means and ways of understanding and interpreting these concepts. The additional detailed review of main theoretical approaches in ethnicity and nationalism research alongside the theoretical stance of this work will be given in the following sections of this chapter. Now it is time to turn to the last but not least concept, '*diaspora'.* Although, the research question of the given work is developed mainly around the idea of ethnicity, diaspora is a quite important category too. This is because the given work particularly focuses on the ethnic identifications of Kazakhs living outside Kazakhstan. As it is known in academia and media since long it has become a "tradition" to refer to a dispersed group of people from one homeland as diaspora. Hence Kazakhs in Turkey were not an

exception. This in turn demonstrates how concepts of ethnicity and diaspora are closely related to each other. Therefore, the following section will discuss the term ‘diaspora’.

1.1.3. Diaspora

Internet search engines offer two basic meanings of the word ‘diaspora’: 1) a group of people who spread from one original country to other countries 2) the Jews living in different parts of the world outside Israel[3]. The original term comes from the Greek word meaning ‘a dispersion or scattering’. The word first used in English in the late 19th century to describe the scattering of the Jews after their captivity in Babylon in the 5th century BC. However, as we can see today the meaning of the term diaspora spread from a very specific to wider category which refer to the dispersion experience of not only Jews, but also other peoples. For example, the trans-Atlantic passage of Africans under the slave trade between 17th and 19th centuries created the African Diaspora. Thus, the term which once described Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion now has larger semantic domain including words such as immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile, overseas, and ethnic communities.

Towards the end of 20th century James Clifford (1997) argued that the localising strategies in social studies such as *bounded community, organic culture, region, centre* and *periphery* had become outdated. He underlined that localising strategies “may obscure as much as they reveal” (Clifford, 1997: 245). This is because the modern world has transformed from being rooted into more routed. Therefore, before attributing the concept of diaspora to a certain group one has to understand the complexity of the given issue. In his article Clifford (1997, p. 246) characterised diaspora communities in the following way:

- diasporas usually presuppose longer distances
- a separation from homeland which is more like exile: a taboo on return or its postponement to a remote future

[3] (www.dictionary.cambridge.org)

- diaspora can connect multiple communities of a dispersed population; this interconnection might take place by systematic border-crossings though not necessarily.

Here comes the complexity of using the paradigm of diaspora, because diasporic forms of longing, memory and identification are shared by many minority and migrant groups. According to Clifford dispersed peoples who once separated from their homeland by vast oceans and political borders, today owing to modern technologies increasingly are establishing border relations with their old country. Clifford saw that growing transnationalism will indicate to the incapability of diaspora concept to comprise transnational identity formations. The modern tendencies in everyday life of people are making more and more difficult application of exclusivist analytical paradigms in social studies.

To make his point clearer Clifford used an example from Roger Rouse's (1991) research on Mexican communities of Aguililla (Michoacan) and Redwood City (California). Rouse's research demonstrated that through constant circulation of people, money, goods and information the communities of these two cities in reality have become a single community and it would be wrong to interpret them separately from each other. In similar cases researcher cannot easily apply 'diaspora' as an analytical concept. Clifford states:

> Aguilillans moving between California and Michoacan are not in diaspora; there may be, however, diasporic dimensions to their practices and cultures of displacement, particularly for those who stay long periods, or permanently, in Redwood City (1997:246).

Although Clifford did not regard these Mexican communities as diaspora in full terms, he did not deny the idea of transnational paradigm characteristic to their social relationships came into being through migration. To make things easier Clifford suggested researchers avoiding the construction of the working definition of the term 'diaspora' by referring to the "ideal type", because according to him, even the "pure" forms of diaspora can be ambivalent. Furthermore, he underlined that at different times societies may emphasise diasporism in different degrees, depending on changing social attitudes like "obstacles, openings, antagonisms, and connections - in their host countries" (1997, p.249). In addition, Clifford encouraged researchers instead of stressing

real or imaginary homeland of diasporic communities in their work, to focus on decentered and lateral connections, because people's "shared, ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation or resistance may be as important as the projection of a specific origin" (1997, p. 250). Perhaps Clifford (1997) with his arguments laid foundation of current tendency in social studies of using 'diaspora' concept as a category of practice instead of bounded entity. In his article The 'Diaspora' Diaspora Brubaker (2005) also proposed to treat diaspora concept as an "idiom, stance and claim" (2005, p. 1) instead of bounded entity. Brubaker recommended to avoid thinking about diaspora in substantialist terms, instead it had to be interpreted as an idiom, a stance, and a claim.

He named three core elements that are accepted as constitutive of diaspora. They are *1) dispersion 2) homeland orientation 3) boundary-maintenance*. As Brubaker stated among these elements the boundary-maintenance stand out because on most accounts it is an essential criterion of diaspora. This category, in fact enables one to speak about diaspora as a distinctive community, "held together by a distinctive, active solidarity, as well as by relatively dense social relationships, that cut across state boundaries and link members of the diaspora in different states into a single 'transnational community'." (Brubaker, 2005, p. 6).

In summary, to get clearer and more precise picture of the community, 'diaspora' should be discussed as practices, idioms, claims, projects, stances etc. instead of something like as an entity, bounded group or ethnocultural fact. In this way researchers can examine to what extent and in what specific situations, contexts, those who claimed as members of putative diasporas passionately accept or only passively relate to the diasporic stance (Brubaker, 2005). Now, when all analytical categories have been clarified, it is time to move on the discussion of different approaches in ethnicity research and declare the theoretical stance of the given research. Therefore, the next section begins with the review of historical approach called 'primordialism'.

1.2. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ETHNICITY RESEARCH. PRIMORDIALISM

The main attribute of ethnicity research during the first half of twentieth century was a common belief in the stability of ethnic groups and their ascribed characteristics. Therefore, in those times, terms such as ethnicity, race and culture were used almost interchangeably (Gamsakhurdia, 2017). This approach views "ethnicity as irrational, deep-seated allegiances and attachments to kin, territory or religion. Ethnicity is seen as a primordial tie which connotes unity and solidarity above and beyond internal division" (Galkina, 2020:3). The primordialism is a term used to define the belief that nationality is inborn feature of human beings, such as speech, sight or smell (Özkırımlı, 2010). Nash (1989) claimed that primordial relations create the fundamentals of ethnic group: "primordial ties are … the social expression of the psychological basis of identity, selfhood, and of others who are like the self, and yet others who are different from the self" (Nash, 1989, p. 4). He also expressed that body (a biological component as blood, genes, bone), language, religion, shared history and origins are the building blocks of ethnicity.

Umut Özkırımlı (2010: 50) identified four approaches of primordialism: *the nationalist, sociobiological, culturalist* and *perennialist*. The common characteristics of all these approaches is their belief in antiquity and the naturalness of nations. Clifford Geertz, one of the well-known names in social anthropology, is also associated with primordialism. Özkırımlı (2010) evaluates Geertz's approach as culturalist one. Although Geertz talked about the congruities of blood, language, religion and particular social practices among the objects of primordial attachments, it does not mean that he was suggesting that these objects are themselves given or primordial, instead he underlined that aforementioned qualities are assumed to be given by individual members of culture (Özkırımlı, 2010).

Many researchers (Hobsbawm, 2005; Brubaker, 1996; Gellner, 1996; Özkırımlı, 2010) criticised the primordialist approach mainly because of the assumption that ethnic or national identity are given or facts of nature. Therefore, identities

are interpreted as fixed and static. The scholars criticising primordialism often cite Ernest Gellner's fundamental question "Do nations have navels?" inspired with the creation myth of mankind. Adam, the first man did not have a navel, because he was not born like other people, he was created by God. Similarly, nations are also might be born or created. Gellner (1996:367-8) gave Estonians as the best example of navel-free nationalism. In the nineteenth century they even did not have an ethnonym, but owing to modern processes they were able to establish vibrant culture and strong nation.

Özkırımlı (2010: 62) stated that although van den Berghe, the advocate of sociobilogical theory of ethnicity, accepted that ethnicity is both primordial and socially constructed, he was never be able to explain it properly how exogamy was possible if humans were biologically programmed to mate with relatives and what would happen to vertical ties of descent if and when ethnic boundaries changed. Another critic of primordialism, Paul Brass (1991) in his book *Ethnicity and Nationalism* analysed several so-called primordial attachments such as language, religions, kin relationships. He concluded that all these attachments are variable and subject to change, moreover the level of significance attributed to them are not homogenous. For example, members of different ethnic groups choose to change their language to provide better job and educational opportunities for their children. Thus, the logical continuation of this discussion would be a transition from criticism of primordialism to the thoughts about instrumentalism or constructivism vigorously advocated by the above-mentioned researchers as an alternative approach to ethnicity research, but before doing so it is useful to review the trends in recent studies associated with ethnicity.

1.2.1. A Review of Recent Trends in Ethnicity Studies

Brubaker (2009) did in-depth review of works written on ethnicity between the 1980s and 1990s. In doing so Brubaker tried to classify recent trends in ethnicity research as well as to establish the contours of a global and cross-disciplinary studies on ethnicity, race, and nationalism. According to Brubaker

(2009, 22) beginning with 1980s there were two basic trends in the studies of ethnicity, race, and nationalism. The first is the emergence of an integrated interdisciplinary field covering all different forms of the aforementioned concepts. The second is the development of analytical resources which does not treat nations, ethnic groups or races as substantial entities. As Brubaker argued the first trend reframed the study of ethnicity, race and nationalism in broader and more integrated terms.

> This has generated a new field of study that is *comparative*, *global*, *cross-disciplinary*, and *multi-paradigmatic*, and that construes ethnicity, race, and nationhood as a *single integrated family of forms* of cultural understanding, social organization, and political contestation (Brubaker, 2009, 22).

What one understands from this part of Brubaker's review is that such concepts as race, ethnicity and nation are not precise analytical concepts. A second recent trend according to Brubaker is a set of actions intended to go beyond *the substantialist* or *groupist* assumptions that continue to define the study of ethnic groups, nations and races until now. According to Brubaker (1998, 2004, 1994 cited in Brubaker, 2009) a 'groupism' is the tendency to deal with different categories of people as if they were internally homogenous and externally bounded groups. This means that ethnic groups and nations are interpreted as both basic constituents of social life and fundamental elements of social analysis. The first cluster in this trend focuses on dynamic and processual understandings.

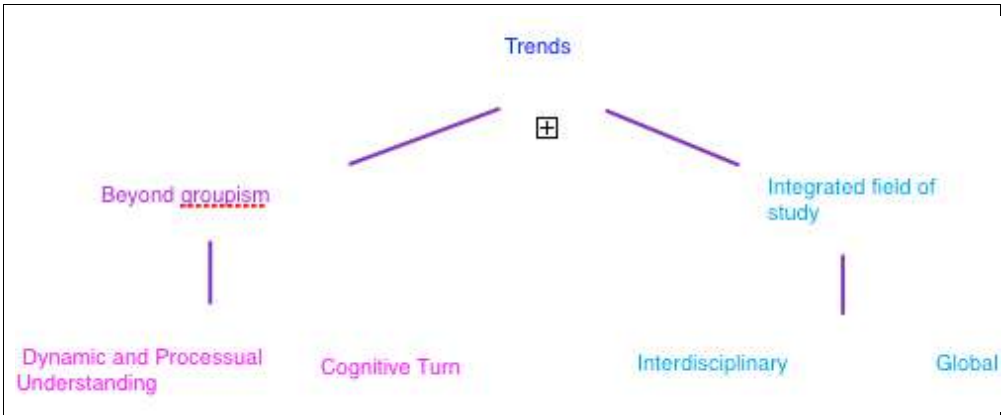


Fig. 2 Trends and Clusters in Ethnicity Research Classified by Brubaker (2009)

Fredrik Barth (1969) was the first among who looked at ethnic groups beyond the “groups”. Barth (1969) and his colleagues argued that ethnic groups are not fixed entity, that ethnic boundaries have flexible and implicit characteristics, so continuity and change in ethnic groups is interconnected. Barth stated that “…individuals and small groups, because of specific economic and political circumstances in their former position and among the assimilating group, may change their locality, their subsistence pattern, their political allegiance and form, or their household membership” (1969: 24). Similarly, to Barth, Brubaker (2004, 2006 cited in Brubaker, 2009, 30) underlined that not only the ethnicity works in and through bounded groups, but also “in and through various categories, schemas, common-sense knowledge, symbols, elite and vernacular discourse, institutional forms, organizational routines, public ceremonies, and private interactions” (2009, 30) in such way suggesting more encompassing view of relational and processual understanding of ethnicities. The second cluster in the trend *beyond groupism* mentioned by Brubaker was cognitive turn characteristic to many scholars’ work. This turn means that concepts like race, ethnicity or nation are not things in the world, but perspectives on the world. As Brubaker put it:

> These include ways of identifying oneself and others, construing situations, explaining behavior, imputing interests, framing complaints, telling stories, etc., in ethnic rather than other terms. They include systems of classification, categorization, and identification, formal and informal. And they include basic schemas and taken-for-granted background knowledge, embodied in persons and embedded in institutionalized routines and practices, through which people recognize and experience objects, places, persons, actions, or situations as ethnically marked or meaningful (2009, p.32).

Shortly, cognitive perspectives suggest looking at ethnicity or nationalism as the way or specific method of making sense of the world. In this context ethnicities are the ways of understanding and identifying oneself, identifying and classifying other people, that is constructing sameness and difference (Brubaker, 2009, 34). It is clear that for the last forty years the researchers

studying ethnicity have been more into the idea of implementing integrated cross-disciplinary, multi-paradigmatic, comparative, global studies that looked beyond groups in order to avoid falling intro the trap of substantialism or essentialism.

1.3. ACADEMIC CONSENSUS ON CONSTRUCTIVISM

Scholars (Brubaker, 2005, 2009; Slootman, 2018) pointed to the existing academic consensus on treating the concept of ethnicity as social construct. Thus, essentialist or objectivist historical assumptions, that treat people with the same ethnicity as homogenous and bound together because they share specific features (appearance, descent, language, culture etc.), have become outdated. That is why the studies of ethnicity today do and should focus on dynamic and processual understandings of ethnicity. Many researchers agree that the work of Barth was crucial in constructing 'constructivism' approach. The reason for this is that Barth was against the static objectivism, a prevailing approach in ethnicity studies of his time which focused more on the observable cultural patterns which were characteristic to ethnic groups such as language, dress, food etc. For example, "if Pathan women started wearing embroidered tunic-fronts used among the Baluch, this does not mean that it would transform her into Baluch woman" (1969, p. 132). Therefore, Barth encouraged other anthropologists to focus on the boundaries rather than the cultural content of ethnic identity. Against the old anthropologic conceptualisation of ethnicity Barth had three basic claims:

1. Ethnicity defined not with culture, but with social organisation.
2. Ethnic identifications are based on ascription and self identifications. They depend on situation and may change.
3. The origins of social organisation is not cultural content, but ethnic boundary which is a social boundary formed through interaction of certain groups with *others*.

He believed that the essence of ethnic boundaries came into being from interactions of community members within and outside the groups. In this

perspective, we-they distinctions drawn by actors themselves inform who can interact with whom and determine the types of social relationships they can be involved in. The fascinating side of Barth's idea is that ethnic boundaries could be maintained even in the absence of major cultural differences; on the contrary essential cultural heterogeneity may create ethnic commonality. Moreover, the boundaries persist despite the constant flow of people across ethnic. As Barth argued people move between their ethnic identities to be in the most advantageous position depending on different situations.

Other theoreticians also linked the group solidarity to rational and individual choices (Yalçıner, 2014). Thus, people depending on their personal interests can apply for different ethnic identities, if necessary can even change their choices. Ethnic identities become important when multiple communities have been interacting on the same lands throughout the history. As a result, ethnic identities maintain, modify and reflect bonds and networks existing between different groups. For example, in Kenya when *Kipsigis*, *Kikuyu*, and *Maasi* ethnic groups come together they put aside their kinship and ethnic identities and speak in Swahili language, thus putting forward their more inclusive national identity. In the same way while elites in Kenya use English or another international language, their workers in order to emphasise their ethnic differences and not to allow their bosses to understand them speak in local or *pidgin* language (Calhoun, 2007).

What is to be concluded from the points expressed by the authors above is that first and foremost ethnic groups are created on the basis of feelings of unity and shared consciousness, but questions how and why that unity is being formed, negotiated, preserved and recreated throughout the time continue to puzzle many researchers. Moreover, it has to be clear that there is no unique answer which suit to all ethnic groups. It is also a fact that nature of ethnic groups is dynamic: people and institutions change, characteristics of citizenship can take different forms, but the feeling of interconnectedness and the sense of belonging will continue as long as the group continues to exist.

1.3.1. More Works on Ethnicity as Social Construct

Today it is possible to see that many social scientists who focus on ethnicity tend to develop their studies on Barth inspired theory of constructivism, only slightly modifying and adapting it to their own research as well as combining with other concepts (Gamsakhurdia, 2017; Slootman, 2018). Thus, Barth's theory expanded from analysis of small-scale village societies to the analysis of large-scale urban migrant and/or minority societies existing in nation-states. In some cases, the scholars combined the given theory with other approaches such as *intersectionality* (Slootman, 2018; Adlparvar & Tadros, 2016) or Bourdieu's *habitus* principle (Wacquant, 2008). Intersectionality, the term coined by feminist scholar Kimberle Williams Crenshaw in 1989, represents an integrative framework which shifted the study of ethnic identity to the study of multiple identities and their interrelationship. The idea of intersectionality is based on the thinking that different dimensions of a person's identity do not work independently from each other, but influence and shape one another. For example, Slootman's (2018) focus on higher-educated members of the second generation of Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch individuals allowed her to explore the intersectionality of class (education) and ethnicity. While arguing her point she stated that:

> … how a female Muslim experiences her gender is not similar to the experiences of all women, and how she experiences being a Muslim is not similar to the experiences of all Muslims. Rather, her experiences as a woman are shaped by the fact that she is a Muslim, and her experiences as a Muslim are influenced by the fact that she is a woman (Slootman, 2018: 47).

Slootman claimed that intersectional thinking is highly effective approach that helps to avoid falling into the trap of groupist thinking. Another popular approach in analysing ethnicity seems to be Bourdieu's theory of practice. At the core of his theory is the concept of *habitus* that is "the individual dispositions through which people perceive, judge, and act in the world and which is formed through the conditions of one's life that shape possibilities and impossibilities. The conditions include such categories as profession, income, education level,

gender, ancestry, and religion, but also more subjective properties such as feelings of belonging" (Bourdieu, 1992: p. 225 cited in Slootman, 2018: 17). According to Slootman, in Bourideu's framework dispositions build the grounds for people's actions, or *practices*, which in turn constantly reproduce the societal structures. One has to bear in mind that the practices do not only regenerate social structures, but they can also change them. Although individuals can be predisposed by different social conditions, they still have possibility to challenge the structures, thus it means that members of society are not completely powerless who unconsciously follow the existing structures (Slootman, 2018).

It is possible to conclude that today there are more proponents of intersectionality theory which sees an individual adjusting himself to multiple layers of identity. The researchers emphasise that 'holding' various identities and even more belonging to numerous groups result in social identity complexities. Therefore, in such cases, individuals have to reconcile several social identities in their selves (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). Taking into account the complexity of such situations James E. Cameron (2004) offered a multidimensional model of social identity which was structured on how people invest in their connections with various groups. This meant that the sense of social belonging includes different levels of cognitive centrality, in-group affect and group ties. Vladimer Gamsakhurdia (2017) identified two mainstreams in modern ethnicity research, one is being oriented on the social aspect of ethnic identity ignoring the culture, whereas the other focused more on the role of culture and collective memory. In his terms ideal research would be the combination of personal, social and cultural aspects of ethnic identity. The following section is dedicated to another approach in researching ethnic and national identities which is widely argued by institutionalist theorists. This specific theory and its major concept will be applied in the analysis and discussion of research materials in the following chapters as supportive element to the constructivist stance of this work.

1.4. IDENTITY AS A 'SCRİPT'

It is generally believed that sharing an identity suggests some active engagement on individuals' part. People choose to identify with a particular identity or a group. Some of those people have more choice than others. This attitude addresses the importance of *structures*, the forces beyond people's control which shape their identities, and *agency*, the degree of control which individuals themselves can exert over who they are. The relations between structures and agency in identification processes have been research interest of many institutionalist theorists. That is why since the 1980s American sociologist John W. Meyer vigorously argued about the importance of institutional theory in researching identity. In the essence of Meyer's idea lies the concept of 'script' which means that many social actors while identifying themselves ethnically and nationally "perform" institutionalised model of behaviour i.e. *script*. Meyer et al. (1997) has written that "the contemporary nation-state derives from worldwide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes." (1997: p. 144-145).

These models and their aims are extremely rationalised, articulated, and often homogenous. Worldwide models define and justify agendas for local action, forming the systems and policies of nation-states and other national and local actors in almost all of the areas of rationalised social life such as politics, business, education, science, even the religion and family relations. Therefore, the institutionalisation of world models explains many enigmatic characteristics of modern national societies and their structural isomorphism regardless the differences in origins and traditions of countries.

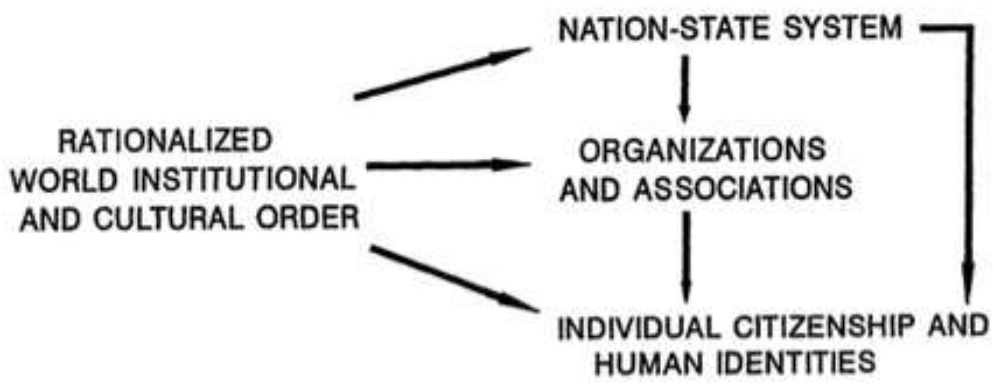


Fig. 3. The world as enactment of culture. Meyer et al. (1997, p. 150).

Meyer et al. (1997) claimed that although world models have begun to operate as shapers of states and societies long time age, it has become prolific especially after the second World War. Moreover, they argued that nation-state is culturally constructed and embedded. This argument brings them closer to the advocates of constructivist approach in ethnicity research. In Meyer's framework the culture involved in building of nation-state is greatly organised on a worldwide basis and not simply derived from local circumstance and history (p. 147). As a result, "nation-states are more or less exogenously constructed entities - the many individuals who engage in state formation and policy formulation are enactors of scripts rather more than they are self-directed actors" (1997: p. 150).

If in the past institutional theories presented society as made up of autonomous and purposive individual and organised actors, today Meyer and his proponents (Meyer et al., 1997; Meyer, 2010) argue that such *agentic actors* (groups who have higher degree of control of their identities) themselves are supported with the wider social conditions. In his article Meyer (2010) rated the new institutionalisms from more realist to more phenomenological models and argued that for the analysis of modern society phenomenological model especially relevant. According to him in phenomenological model *actor identities* are constructed in the wider and global cultural context. Moreover, in this model

actor agency, boundaries, and internal structures not only are legitimated by the wider institutional system, but also vary with its variations. The institutional environment in phenomenological model is rich, because it is made up of complex cultural meanings and organisational structures, thus it operates as a cultural or meaning system, which penetrate actors far beyond their boundaries, constructing agency, identity, and activity. Meyer concludes that in phenomenological models, actors are constructed entities, playing parts as in the theatre. If "…in realist models, the relation of actor and action is causal, with society and its structure as a product, in phenomenological models, the actor on the social stage is a *scripted identity* and enacts *scripted action*" (2010, p. 4).

For Meyer, "the institutional system - the organisations and cultural meanings that write and rewrite the script - becomes central, and the actors are seen as partly derivative on a very rich institutional environment. And in these models, questions about what forces create and modify the casual institutional scripts also become central" (2010, p. 4). Furthermore, successful institutionalisation of social patterns, involves the construction on the social stage of purposive, competent, and motivated actors who appear to choose the correct and required actions. Thus, modern society has a dramatic structure in which people on social stage perform roles of very real and properly motivated actors in a realist sense.

1.4.1. How to Apply 'Identity script' to the Case of Kazakhs in Turkey

The given research does not fully agree with all the ideas of Meyer and his colleagues. It also acknowledges the fact that Meyer used examples from the Western societies only. However, Meyer's concept 'identity-as-a-script' can still be useful in bringing together disconnected parts of this research. It derives from the fact that in the particular case of Kazakhs in Istanbul, pure constructivist approach would have certain limitations to assemble all the patterns of Kazakh identity preservation revealed from the data. For instance, one of the strong cultural elements inherent to the ethnic identity of Kazakhs in

Istanbul was their tribal identity. The latter was constantly emphasised in their everyday interactions with each other. This particular element supposedly has to belong to the primordial model because in this model kinship is regarded as the source of national and ethnic identity. This sort of exceptions indicated that applying only classical constructivism while analysing data would not be enough, thus to overcome this issue it was decided to incorporate analytical concept such as one proposed by Meyer and his colleagues.

The historical fact such as migration of Kazakhs to Turkey itself shows the applicability of Meyer's concept in the discussion of their ethnic identity. The reason for this is that the story of Kazakhs' initial settlement in Istanbul as refugees and their successful evolvement into adequate members of Turkish community do not essentially differ from the story of other migrant groups in the world. In the field I was told many times how Kazakh elders upon their arrival to Turkey had to work hard from dawn till dusk to stand on their own feet with only occasional breaks for *namaz*[4]. Similarly, while I was studying in London, a friend of mine giving me a lift had mentioned that the place where I stayed was the Polish neighbourhood. He also positively commented about the Poles being very hard-working and pious people. The similarities of Kazakh and Polish migrants' experience itself led me to think about the institutionalised behaviour of migrants which is acted out globally. In addition, there are many research papers describing the same kind of stories of migrants. These papers usually testify the success stories of hard-working Indian and Asian diaspora who started their lives from the scratch in the USA (Min, 2006).

However, this research is not going to argue that there is one global script of Kazakh ethnic identity which can be used to enact Kazakhness everywhere in the world in the same manner. Instead, it focuses on how Kazakhs in Istanbul maneuver between different identity scripts imposed by various 'script writers' at local and national levels. It is important to highlight that the cultural scripts are not static, they change and evolve in accordance with script writers' as well as actors' goals. The agency of individual Kazakh actors should not be

[4] The ritual prayers prescribed by Islam to be observed five times a day.

downplayed, because there is always room to interpret the main script as in the case of worldwide interpretations of Shakespearean plays. In the forthcoming chapters, I try to elaborate on the notion of Kazakh ethnic identity scripts and analyse specific examples when it is acted out. How did Kazakhs' self-identification forms change from their initial settlement in Turkey? What changes did collapse of the USSR bring to Kazakh identity scripts? How strong is the actorhood of Kazakhs in Turkish and Kazakhstani political and social environment today? Is writing Kazakh ethnic identity script always one-way process? are only a few questions which are going to be tackled through the institutional script approach in the following chapters.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the study of ethnicity began with primordialism which treated ethnic identity as inborn or given fact. However, the diversity of cases and ambiguity of the terms ethnicity and nationalism made many scholars question the suitability of this theory. They criticised it for its rigidness and bias, thus the theory of constructivism has been evolved. Among them Barth's research on maintaining ethnic boundaries was the fundamental one. The constructivist authors believe that nature of ethnic groups is dynamic. Regardless the consensus on the ethnicity as social construct Gamsakhurdia (2017) warns us not to underestimate the role of cultural content in creation and maintaining ethnic identity. Thus, while analysing and discussing ethnicity it is better to have theoretical framework with combined approach or at least to have supporting concepts. In this work the concept 'identity as script' from institutional theory, advocated by Meyer and his colleagues, is going to be applied. This work intends to demonstrate that Kazakhs in Turkey sometimes emphasise their ethnicity in accordance with the 'scripts' widely promoted by political discourse or individual 'script writers', who are usually well-respected members of community with higher social status. The concept of script is used in this work in order to learn how much agency, the degree of control individual members of

Kazakh community in Istanbul have over their ethnic identity. Much of the said here would not mean anything if there was not methodology which helped to collect necessary data for the analysis. Therefore, the work moves to Chapter 2 to discuss the research methodology.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the methodology of the research. This chapter focuses on the fieldwork conducted in Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul, where Kazakhs established their own neighbourhood alongside with other Central Asian ethnic groups. Participant observation in the two commemoration ceremonies in August, 2018 and June, 2019 respectively, alongside with Altay Village Brotherhood Festival in Niğde, in July 2019 allowed me to better contextualise identity issues of Kazakhs living in Turkey. This is because unlike in their everyday lives Kazakhs' ethnic identity was much more emphasised during collective celebrations. Through conducting fieldwork, it was possible to observe how Kazakhs formulate their identities and loyalties depending on various contexts.

2.1. FIELDWORK

The fieldwork was the major method in conducting this research. This method is important because it helps anthropologists to access locals' perspectives. Clifford in his article Travelling Cultures (1997) questioned the localised nature of field where community lives. This is because for old school of anthropologists doing fieldwork was all about dwelling in specific location. For them field had fixed borders and used to be a controlled space which made it similar to laboratory. However, Clifford criticised this approach and claimed that within globalised context the notion of field had also expanded its borders because cultures are not only dwelling, but also travelling. According to Clifford none of the terms existing in social sciences is able to give fully all meanings of cultural mobility as *travelling cultures.* For him culture is an ethnography of travelling relations, because meanings are created in contexts and flows between cultures. In his words, to research Haitians someone does not need to go to

Haiti anymore because today there is a need to think of at least two places (e.g. Brooklyn and Haiti) when thinking of identities similar to Haitian (Clifford, 1997). Since this work is meant to address the issues of Kazakh identity existing outside of Kazakhstan particularly in Istanbul, Turkey, Clifford himself could not find any better example than Kazakhs for illustrating his concept of *travelling cultures* and this is not only because ancestors of Kazakhs living in Turkey led nomadic life style before migrating here. Clifford stated that interpreting field as rooted and localised would be inaccurate taking into consideration the development of modern technology, easy travelling, expansion of borders, and increased number of migrants all over the world. Today people living even in the remote villages are exposed to constant flow of people. Although I agree with Clifford's conceptualisation on flexibility and expansion of field boundaries, I still found it useful to designate specific place to conduct a fieldwork. This place had to be a connecting point of Kazakhs in Turkey, where they not only live but also come together on temporarily basis and depart. This sort of place would make it easier to trace Kazakhs' connections to other places in Turkey. Therefore, the choice of field was informed by the history of Kazakh settlers in Turkey.

On the basis of the Turkish governmental decision from March 13, 1952 "1379 Kazakh refugees divided into 14 groups began their journey from Pakistan to Turkey between September and December, 1953. They travelled from Karachi to Basra by ship, there they changed to train to Nusaybin and from there train brought them to Istanbul" (Altay, 1981, 425). After their arrival to Istanbul Kazakhs were allocated in migrant houses in districts of Tuzla, Sirkeci and Zeytinburnu, where they attended different professional courses including carpentry, carpet weaving, dress making, and even literacy courses (Gayretullah, 2017). After spending from one to three years in refugee houses in Istanbul, Kazakhs were sent to different rural parts of Turkey. However, over the years many Kazakh families left the rural areas and came back to Istanbul. Many of them chose Zeytinburnu district as a place for their settlement. Therefore, the big number of Kazakhs living in Zeytinburnu today made it suitable fieldwork site for this research.

The fieldwork in Zeytinburnu took place between April 15-August 01, 2019. However, within this period I had to travel to other regions of Turkey as well to attend different events organised by Kazakhs. Two important events which took place outside of Istanbul were the regular Village Festival in Altay Köy in July 20-21, Ulukışla district, Niğde province and Commemoration Gathering for the memory of Şirzat Doğru in June 29, a man who established Alash *kymyz*[5] farm in Kemalpaşa, İzmir. Aside from that I had two other ten-day long field trips to Istanbul back in April, 2017 and in the end of July and beginning of August, 2018.

2.1.1. Zeytinburnu. Experiencing the Field

According to Evren (2006) Kazakhs living in Zeytinburnu constitute the biggest number of Kazakhs living in Turkey. Kazakhs began to settle in Zeytinburnu since the early 1960s. Some Kazakhs later chose to move to other parts of Istanbul such as Küçükçekmece (Svanberg, 1989, 94–97) and Bağcılar. But all these settlements, as Kusçu (2016) pointed out, have one thing in common. It is the fact that in order to preserve their unity and not to assimilate in the host society, Kazakh migrants preferred to settle in a segregated area. Thus, Kazakh neighbourhoods in Kazakkent/Güneşli, Küçükçekmece and Zeytinburnu are the result of a desire to live together as a community (Kusçu, 2016, 385).

In contrast to Bağcılar and Küçükçekmece districts, the district of Zeytinburnu however, functions like a powerful hub where hundreds of Kazakhs not only from Turkey but also from other countries meet on a daily basis for different purposes. There are three important associations functioning in Zeytinburnu: *Kazak Türkleri Vakfı* (Kazakh-Turks' Foundation), *Doğu Türkistan Göçmenler Derneği* (East Turkestan Immigrants' Association), and KATEAD-*Kazak Türkleri Eğitim ve Araştırma Derneği* (Kazakh-Turks Research and Education Association). Almost all Kazakh weddings take place in the building of Kazakh-

[5] Traditional Kazakh drink made of mare's milk

Turks' Foundation. There are also many leather workshops and grocery shops owned by Kazakh entrepreneurs. In addition, the district itself plays important role within migration context, because it consists of colourful ethnic structure. The researchers emphasise the past of Zeytinburnu as slum area (Göncüoğlu, 2013; Özbayoğlu, 2003). This is because till 1953 the west part of Zeytinburnu belonged to Bakırköy district and became an independent district only in 1957 due to the rapid growth of population after the massive immigration to the region. Thus, apart from Kazakhs, other immigrated ethnic groups with Turkic origins such as Tatar, Uyghur, Uzbek, Kyrgyz etc. also found home in Zeytinburnu. It must be underlined that today social media made incredibly easy to establish the contact with members of the community and follow their lives. Today even though I do not stay in the field any more, the social media gives me an impression as if I have never left the field. As a result, I am often aware of public and social events organised by Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu. It is possible to say that my virtual entry to the field happened long before of my actual entry.

In April, 2017 I messaged to person on Facebook whom I met in Amsterdam kurultay in 2015. To my great surprise this person moved back to Istanbul and agreed to help me. Two years after kurultay we met again in Istanbul. This time we were talking in Turkish and he was quite impressed with my fluency in Turkish. Moreover, I could feel how it became a lot easier to build a network after learning the language. The man took me to Kazakh Turks' Foundation, where I met more people. That day one of the families was having a funeral. It was the funeral of a man who lived and died in France, but since his family graveyard had been in Istanbul his remains were brought to be buried in Istanbul. It was a big gathering and I had chance to talk with many people. I exchanged the numbers with couple of them and sent some friendship requests on social media. After that day, the number of my Kazakh acquaintances rose progressively.

However, despite the rise in number of my acquaintances gaining their trust took time. Therefore, my immersing into fieldwork was similar to the initiation ceremony of a novice. My nationality, gender, age, ethnic and tribal

background, all played its parts in how Kazakhs positioned me in their community. Sometimes people would ask me *"Sen kimning kelinising?"* (Whose daughter-in-law, are you?) assuming me as someone's daughter-in-law from Kazakhstan. This was due to the current trend among Kazakh men who bring wives from Kazakhstan (I get acquainted with at least four of such brides). The researchers usually forget that they are often observed more than they think. I had been interrogated, observed and talked about until Kazakh community allowed me to cross that invisible boundary between me and them, and eventually got ready to share their life stories.

2.2. COLLECTING THE DATA

Learning locals' perspectives in the field presupposes collecting data. The process of recording and analysing the data used for the current study was not an easy task because my personality always had the potential to influence and, in some cases, shape the answers to the questions asked. This is the time when emic and etic perspectives of a researcher is blended and they do not really know which position would be effective in interacting with locals. Despite that I consider myself lucky, because I was able to collect large amount of data including field notes, photo and video materials, voice and video recordings of the interviews which constituted almost 20 GB digital data. To collect them I used following methods: *participant observation, fieldnotes,* and *semi-structured interviews.* Although these methods common to many anthropological studies, in this section I still decided to review them and demonstrate their applicability in this particular work.

As Joy Hendry (1999) underlined the anthropologist researching particular culture has "…to experience what it is like to be a member of that world, for otherwise one could not begin to understand how it looks and feels" (1999, p. 3). Thus, in the field I spent most of the time doing **participant observation**. I was observing the daily routines of the two Kazakh families with whom I stayed, regularly attending Kazakh death and wedding rituals. Once even I volunteered

to be a waitress in a local tea-house run by Kazakh entrepreneur where Kazakh men usually spend their evenings. The experience was quite enlightening. In extremely hot and humid summer nights I used to have regular walks along the crowded 58th boulevard in Zeytinburnu sometimes bumping into Kazakh professor who was walking for recreational purposes, whereas my aim was observing multicultural nature of Zeytinburnu as well as to chat with some of the elderly Kazakh ladies sitting on the benches along the boulevard. Most of these ladies were fleeing from the heat in their homes.

Another methodological instrument used in this work was taking **fieldnotes**. As it has been argued the detailed fieldnotes are helpful in producing quality ethnography (Emerson, M. Robert et al., 1995). Although new technologies help us to document events, there are certain qualities of those events which recordings can not communicate. This relates to the five senses (visual, audial, gustatory, olfactory and tactile) triggered during the events. In this respect, photos and videos are not helpful in establishing olfactory and gustatory characteristics of the events. Besides a researcher can not video record everything or remember. Cameras usually scare away members of society. Today looking at my field notes someone would face with very messy writing in three languages English, Kazakh and Turkish using two alphabets and most probably will not understand them. I was taking notes in English mainly, because I wanted to avoid extra work while writing my thesis i.e. translating them would be time-consuming and slow this process. Nevertheless, I would still use Kazakh or Turkish to keep some valuable quotations in the original language. The notes for this research contain key names and words, proverbs and jokes I heard from people, schemes, abbreviations etc. It is obvious that some of them were written in a rush. However, information withdrawn from them became a building block for this entire dissertation. I did not keep a separate **personal diary,** a technique originated in Victorian era (Hendry, 1999) because my field notes themselves had mixed character of personal diary and field log.

As Kottak (2015) rightly pointed out “…participating in local culture means that ethnographers constantly talk to people and ask questions” (p. 232). By this the

researcher partially meant **interviewing** method. Rather than using an open-ended interview which might bring a risk of developing interviews into broad discussions that are unrelated to the topics, in this research it was decided to apply the semi-structured interview technique, which included pre-prepared questions and sub-questions, but at the same time interviewees were provided with the opportunity to develop their stories as long as they did not deviate from the main themes of the interview. Since interviews were crucial in spotting ethnic identifications of Kazakhs, it is important to know in details how this instrument of research was used and navigated during the fieldwork.

2.2.1. Interviews and Interviewees

In the field, when I was approaching a person who was singing a Kazakh song or cooking Kazakh food to ask questions many of them used to redirect me to other people claiming that they were not good enough in what they were doing and ensuring me 'that ninety years old man living on the other side of the street or eighty years old woman living in the neighbouring building' knew much better than them. From this behaviour I learnt two things: first, the names of my potential interviewees and second, the importance of age hierarchy in Kazakh society. As for the latter, in Kazakh society it is considered that the older you get, the wiser and more knowledgable you become. The stories and narrations of elders were truly valuable for this study, especially in reconstructing their history of migration to Turkey and tracing their adaptation processes in Turkish society.

In terms of language of the interviews the community members themselves were to decide in which language for me to conduct them. Definitely, our primary communication language was Turkish, but elder people clearly expressed a willing to speak in Kazakh during the interviews, whereas young people preferred Turkish, simply because they did not know Kazakh language. To compensate their lack of knowledge in Kazakh, they would throw some Kazakh words in their speech and conjugate Kazakh verbs in accordance with

Turkish grammar, for example, *jainamaz* (a prayer rug) or *aytıyoruz* (we tell, instead of Turkish verb *söylüyoruz*). Besides, during the interviews I myself and the interviewees often experienced the phenomenon called **language interference***,* which in linguistics denotes the consequences of the influence of one language (i.e., the mother tongue) on another (the language studied). As scholars suggest interference can be both negative and positive (King, 2000). The bigger difference between the two languages the more negatively it might affect language-learning process whereas similarity between languages results in correct language production that is positive transfer. My quick grasp of Turkish definitely was positive transfer of knowledge that is based on the similarity of Turkish and Kazakh, however, that knowledge did not work out positively other way round, instead it had reversed effect. Whenever I was trying to speak in Kazakh in Istanbul, Turkish words in my head kept interfering with my mother tongue making me stumble and struggle to express my ideas accurately. This was especially noticeable during the interviews, some young Kazakhs from Zeytinburnu, who were educated in Kazakhstan, also admitted that after spending more time in Turkish-speaking environment, their Kazakh gets rusty. As a solution for this situation, I offered my interviewees not to hesitate in mixing languages, because I felt that making them stick to only one language would limit the number of things, they were probably willing to share with me. By mixing languages, I do not necessarily mean switching the codes, when a speaker alternates between two or more languages in the single conversation, instead I am referring to some sort of linguistic expression similar to Pidgin English practiced by many speakers in West Africa, only instead of English at stake we have Turkish. However, to analyse those interviews one has to be fluent in both Turkish and Kazakh.

The interviewees for this research were not randomly chosen people, but rather were a convenience sample that snowballed from local individuals well known to me. On the recommendation of such people, there was a higher willingness and trust to discuss identity-related issues openly. The interviews were structured around the questions of ethnic identifications. All conversations were face-to-face, aside from couple of phone interviews (with the respondents who

were staying in Kazakhstan at the moment of interview). Interviews usually took place in the interviewees' houses. This was because it was more convenient for them to have me come to their places rather than them going somewhere else to meet me, especially considering the heat in summer and the huge size of Istanbul districts. Additionally, Kazakhs live close to each other, for example only one family can occupy a whole block of apartments. Hence, I would just go straight from one door to another to do interviews. I tried to make the process of interviewing as much participatory as possible for the interviewee, thus allowing other family members or close neighbours to join and sometimes make comments during the interview. This was especially helpful when elderly people were struggling to recall some events or needed clarifications in questions, sometimes during interviews grandchildren would come and spring to the laps of their grandparents or curiously examine my camera tripod. For the sake of data evaluation all interviews were video or voice-recorded, apart from the cases when informants themselves refused to be recorded and preferred to stay confidential. The video/audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and was used for the analysis. The following section will discuss my position in the field in order to show how my own identity might have affected the process of research and its outcomes.

2.3. INSIDER OR OUTSIDER?

Researching own society can be both difficult and easy at the same time. Easiness comes from the fact that a researcher usually is aware of the language, culture, and way of life of their own community. This knowledge saves them from feeling awkward while doing fieldwork. However, difficulty also comes from the same fact, because the more researchers know about cultural content the more, they have chance to fall in the trap of bias. Their knowledge of culture blocks their vision and ability to analyse. The level of bias in my research has to be evaluated by the reader. I would like to point out in this study, although I am a Kazakh by birth, I was not a typical insider for Kazakhs in Turkey. First of all, I was born and brought up in Kazakhstan. In contrast to

them, my ancestors were not related to the places in Xinjiang, China. In addition, Turkish is not my mother tongue. Therefore, I can tell that in the field I was an insider as much as an outsider.

I could describe my communication with Kazakhs in Istanbul as passing through several doors in the building. Ethnicity was the first level where I was interrogated and welcomed to the society. As soon as people learnt that I was Kazakhstani student, they would express some sort of contentment that many Kazakh youth were pursuing higher education and career in foreign countries. They used to repeat the phrase "May *Kazakh balasy* (Kazakh child, youth) be safe, wherever they go!" After establishing my Kazakhness, people had to verify it, in other words to check its "authenticity". To do so people asked questions about my tribal identity. Tribal identity is crucial in ethnic identification of Kazakhs, one can be a real Kazakh only through belonging to kinship groups. Therefore, the role of Kazakh pedigree in ethnic identification processes will be discussed in the Chapter 8 extensively, but before that I would like to give here brief information on Kazakh kinship system.

The Kazakh kinship division dates back to the sixteenth century. Historically, Kazakh territories were divided into three big hordes (*zhuz):* The Great Horde (*Uly zhuz*), the Middle Horde (*Orta zhuz*), and the Small/Junior/Little[6] Horde (*Kishi zhuz*). Each of these Hordes was governed by a *Khan*. There were no linguistic and cultural differences between these hordes. The Kazakhs who migrated to Turkey belong to *Orta zhuz* (Middle zhuz). Orta zhuz itself consists of six clans: *Argyn, Kipshak, Kongyrat, Uaq, Nayman* and *Kerey.* Furthermore, each of these clans are composed of several lineages.

I was born in Central Kazakhstan and similar to Kazakhs from Istanbul I also belong to *Orta zhuz*, but unlike theirs my clan did not move too far from their initial habitats. As a result, I thought that coming from the same big tribal family would help me to build better relations with Kazakhs in Istanbul and evoke their

[6] Kazakh word 'kishi' was translated differently in various literature so I gave all three versions which I have come across so far.

sympathy towards me, however people's actions proved me wrong. The reason for this, their perception of kinship stayed on the level of individual clans within Orta zhuz. They did not move far beyond it and there was no necessity to use their umbrella Orta zhuz identity against the *Other,* simply because there were no other hordes such as *Ulu zhuz* or *Kishi zhuz*[7] whereas in Kazakhstan especially in big cities people tend to cluster together around their bigger tribal divisions neglecting their inner clans and lineages. So, this was the story of my passing through the imaginary doors of Kazakh society: ethnicity (Kazakh), tribal horde (Orta zhuz), and inner lineage (Argyn) in order to be trusted as a true member of Kazakh society.

Not only my ethnic and tribal identities were challenged in the field, but also my gender was also a subject for discussion. Some Kazakh women in Turkey expressed extreme hostility towards me. This was because they saw in me not a researcher but a young single woman. Although it was difficult to accept this fact, their cold behaviour had grounds. I was told many stories when a certain Kazakh man left to Kazakhstan for setting up business, and who eventually had long-term love affair with another woman over there. Consequently, because of those traumatic experiences in the eyes of Kazakh women in Turkey the women from Kazakhstan tend to have bad reputation. This social truth reflects that Kazakhstani women exemplify the looseness and immorality whereas the behaviour of Kazakh women in Turkey defined with chastity and virtue.

Therefore, the aforementioned attitude brought some hardships during the fieldwork. My solution of this problem was neutralising (muting) my gender as much as possible. For example, I was staying till late night with some of my male informants in tea-houses. At the beginning they were struggling to bring up certain topics for discussion considering it too inappropriate to be uttered in front of a woman, but with my encouragements they opened up slowly sometimes even throwing obscene jokes and sharing their youth adventures.

[7] There are few representatives of Kishi zhuz tribes in Istanbul, but their settlement to Turkey has different story. They came to Turkey in the mid 80s and at the beginning of 90s from Afghanistan together with Uzbek refugees escaping from the war fuelled by Soviet and American forces.

Certainly, ordinary Kazakh woman would rarely sit till late night in the tea-house with a group of elderly men and would prefer to leave the place before the embarrassing stories start to come up. I do not deny that I felt the same way, but my curiosity of a researcher was stronger than my prescribed code of gender behaviour infused into me since my childhood. I had an immunity of an anthropologist who was trying to get holistic image of society and to do so needed perspectives of both men and women on social matters, thus certain social rules had to be breached. Sometimes the gender division in Kazakh society could be explicitly seen through the spatial division between men and women. For instance, in the building of Kazakh Turks' Foundation in Zeytinburnu the first floor is used for female guests, whereas men occupy the second floor during celebrations and funerals. After the reflection on the use of methods, I can tell that through fieldwork my position as a researcher transformed into a reversed Other. What I mean by reversed Other is explained in the following concluding section for this chapter.

CONCLUSION

As I have already written in the introduction my first encounter with Kazakhs from Turkey happened long before my fieldwork in Zeytinburnu. After this meeting I could not help wondering about their journey from China to Turkey, their methods of sustaining Kazakh identity, and ways of life. I clearly exoticised them. This exoticisation was partially conditioned by Kazakhstani media and policy. Ever since I was growing up, I was told by Kazakhstani media and political discourse that there were Kazakhs somewhere in the world, who were more authentic and purer than us. Their "authentic" and "pure" nature made them suitable candidates for taking roles in nation-building processes in Kazakhstan. The elites considered that, since their worldview and language had not been contaminated with Soviet ideology, they would positively contribute to nation building and the revival of national culture in Kazakhstan. Due to this political discourse, Kazakhs in Turkey sparked my interest as a researcher. In the beginning, instead of thinking about them as the same as me, I looked at

them as the Other. However, during the fieldwork I realised that not them, but I was an actual Other. If in Kazakhstani context and from Kazakhstani perspectives, I designated Kazakhs in Turkey as the Other, in Turkish context and actual field location, I was the Other, moreover I was a *reversed Other* because positions between me and the Kazakh community going to be studied were swapped. During everyday conversations my Kazakhness, my tribal and gender identities were questioned. Therefore, every single step I took or word I spoke made me the Other, but not them. Being a reversed Other was not a negative experience though, instead it affected positively the progress of this research, because interrogations and doubts expressed by the community made me realise my own beliefs and assumptions about Kazakh ethnic identity. This realisation in turn helped me to structure and formulate the appropriate questions. This chapter described the researcher's journey of data collection, whereas the next chapters will be dedicated to the interpretations and analysis of the same collected data. The discussions in the following chapters should demonstrate how well the research questions of this work were addressed and in what ways theoretical approaches described in Chapter 1 were applied in explaining the issues of ethnic identity of Kazakhs living in Istanbul.

PART 1

MAINTAINING ETHNIC BOUNDARIES VIA MEMORIES

CHAPTER 3

SETTLEMENT OF EAST TURKESTANI EMIGRANTS IN TURKEY

Chapter 3 focuses on the history of Kazakh exodus from Xinjiang in the 30s and 40s of the 20th century. Learning about historical background of Kazakhs settlers in Turkey is essential in understanding their present ethnic identification processes, because the present of communities are usually connected to the past events. This means that it is really difficult to separate people's past from its present. The events such as wars, migrations, revolutions, religious or economic reforms constitute memorable events which are sustained in social memory and influence decision-making of individuals for the next few generations. This is also true for Kazakh community. This Chapter particularly explores the trauma and loss experienced by Kazakhs after their exodus from homeland, the Altay mountains. The discussions here will show how Kazakhs's trauma of exodus had been sustained in their collective memory and continues to be a driving force in shaping their ethnic identity and modern political views. The arguments are mainly evolved around the testimony of the first and 1.5 generation of Kazakhs from Istanbul.

3.1. ALTAY KAZAKHS: GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Central Asian peoples like the Kazakhs were subordinate people of neighbouring powerful empires for about 150 years. Their lands were added to the expanding territories of Russia and China through the numerous invasions in the nineteenth century. While Russian tsarist armies moved eastwards to annex the territories of Central Asian khanates, the Manchu rulers of China established control over the pastures of today's Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous

Region. China's military intervention resulted in the official incorporation of a region once known as Eastern Turkestan into the empire of Qing dynasty in 1884, thus for the first time in history the area became Chinese province (Benson & Svanberg, 1998, p. 3). In the twentieth century, the successor states of both empires continued to exercise control over Central Asia, "dividing people like Kazakhs with new international borders, separating not only clans but also individual families on either side of the Sino-Soviet frontier" (Benson & Svanberg, 1998, p. 3).



Fig. 4. Map of Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region (Justin Jacobs, 2010, p. 1293)

Previous to migration Kazakhs in East Turkestan led pastoral nomadic life. For several centuries, the abundance of pasturage and rainfall in these areas made it suitable for the Mongol and Kazakh nomads. The sedentary Uyghurs were excellent tradesmen and traditionally populated the oasis cities, which once were part of the Silk Roads, a trade line that connected China with the Middle East and Europe for almost two thousand years. The varied topography of Xinjiang and relatively sparse population allowed Kazakhs and Uyghurs to live side by side in peace and harmony (Rakhimzhanova, 2015).

East Turkestan was officially renamed into Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region in 1955 in recognition of its single most populous group, the Uyghurs. Kazakhs are the second in terms of population in the region, who began to move into East Turkestan in the eighteenth century, establishing themselves on grasslands in the northern and central mountain ranges in the region; One of them is the Tarbagatay Mountains stretching on the north and northwest of Xinjiang straddling the current border between Kazakhstan and China. The other is the Altai mountains located along the northeastern border between Xinjiang and Mongolia. While scholars suggest that Kazakhs settled in the Altay region in the 18th and 19th centuries only, local Kazakhs themselves "assert a much longer, at least millennium old, presence in Mongolia and Western China, reaching back to the times of Chingiz Khan" (Genina, 2015, p.27). In this way the secondary sources confirm the importance of Altay mountains as identity pillar for Mongolian and Chinese Kazakhs. In addition, after my fieldwork I learnt how much the Altay mountains are treasured by Kazakh community in Turkey too. Moreover, its name has become almost a synonym of the word 'homeland'. Therefore, sometimes Kazakhs in Turkey do call themselves as *Altay Kazaktary* (Altay Kazakhs). Hence it was not a mere chance that a small village in Niğde province in Turkey habited by Kazakhs is also called Altay village which in July, 2019 celebrated its 65th anniversary.

The affection towards Altay was especially strong among the first-generation Kazakh settlers in Turkey. When the Kazakhs first arrived to Turkey, they did not have the concept 'surname'. Most probably because of the oral tradition of reciting their genealogy they did not have an urge to have one. However, things changed when they settled in Turkey. In order to be registered as refugees, get social benefits and receive passports in Turkey Kazakh community suddenly had to have family name. This was the time like choosing the name for baby both exciting and responsible moment, but instead people had to choose their surnames. Some Kazakhs approached this task quite consciously. For instance, surnames such as Altay, Canaltay and Oraltay all refer to the Altay mountains. Hasan Oraltay (1930-2010), Kazakh public figure in Turkey, journalist, and political activist shared in his memoirs that he had decided to have surname Ör

Altay, *ör* means high in Kazakh, but the officer who registered him wrote it down as Or, so for the rest of his life he went by the surname Oraltay. On the other hand, there were also Kazakhs who did not really care much about their family names and decided to live with the surnames assigned by the officers in Turkey. 90-year old grandpa Tölegen Alanyalı living in Bağcılar/Istanbul is one of such examples. When we first met in his house, he asked me if I was surprised to see the nameplate "Tölegen Alanyalı" above the door to his apartment building and most obviously I was. Tölegen ata who was born in the Altays and who spent 10 years in Pakistan could not have had any connection to Alanya at least in his early ages. He said that since he did not speak Turkish when he first came to the country his surname was chosen by the officer who registered his documents. That is how today Tölegen ata, his children and grandchildren carry the surname Alanyalı. However, we should understand that here the problem is not about having or not having a surname, it is rather people's attempt to commemorate and recollect their homeland through making specific choices and decisions in their everyday life. The choice of surnames indicating to the homeland and naming a village in Turkey after the homeland demonstrate to the fact how Kazakhs try to sustain their past in many different ways. As a result, in this particular narrative the mountain Altay has become the central element in Kazakhs' social memory.

The important question here is "Why would Kazakhs leave the Altay mountains, the place so much loved and cherished, so far as to leave to Turkey, to the country located thousands kilometres away from their homeland?" According to the historian Abdulvahap Kara (2019) the initial cause of Kazakhs' migration from East Turkestan was Sun Yat-Sen's Chinese revolution in 1911, which ended the existence of four-century Manchu Empire and established the tight control over East Turkestan. In the past the Manchu dynasty intruded less into the life of people from this region, allowing them to have autonomous life, however after the revolution in 1911 the pressure and persecution from central government hugely increased over the Uyghurs and Kazakhs. The situation worsened during the rule of the Chinese governors Jin Shuren (1928-33) and Sheng Shicai (Kara, 2019). The governor Shicai, in the sources described as

one of the bloodiest rulers of Xinjiang. According to the rough estimations, during his ten-year rule in East Turkestan from 1934 to 1944 he imprisoned more than 120, 000 people with pretext “potential rebel” and killed around 80,000 to 100,000 people (Benson, 1990; Islambek, 2017, 28). One of the interviewees told that his grandfather was among those thousands of people who fell victim of this despotic regime.

> We had homeland, Altay; in 1934 different events took place there, our relatives were fallen victims of Chinese oppression, there was armed conflict, our leader Alip Tayci was beheaded, the place, where it had happened, now is known as *Alip shapkan* (Alip beheaded); we could not live there any longer, thus we moved to Manas, a place closer to Urumqi and lived there until the end of 1940s (male, 82).

The person, who was sharing his family history, during that time was only 5-6 years old boy. In this period, the taxes for indigenous people increased and their lands along with properties were confiscated. The Kazakhs were not allowed to study in their language. The severe punishments were applied even for the smallest crime committed by local people. As a result, shared Muslim faith and Turkic origins brought the Uyghurs and Kazakhs together in the rebellion against their brutal oppressors (Benson, 1990). According to Benson (1990) both the Uyghur and Kazakh groups not only actively opposed Chinese rule and organised well-planned rebellion in 1944, but they also propagated the ideas of Turki nationalism in Xinjiang which encouraged desire to have an independent Turkic Islamic state. Nevertheless, all these rebellions had only short-term success, it was not possible to continue fighting against Chinese governors’ forces which was much superior in number and weapons. In addition, the communist rule imposed over traditionally nomadic peoples like the Kazakhs in the second half of 1940s made them oppose to the radical changes in the governmental system.

Consequently, the oppressive regime exercised by Eastern Turkestan’s governors during the republican era, plus the establishment of Communist ideology in China made the Kazakhs both to rebel and emigrate to other countries in order to live freely (Kuşçu, 2016, 383). However, this escape of Kazakhs to foreign countries did not happen at once, instead it consisted of

several stages which took place both within and outside the borders of Xinjiang. The scholars (Kara, 2019; Kusçu, 2016) stated that there were two waves of Kazakhs' migration from East Turkestan to Turkey. The first wave of exodus occurred in the1930s and the second took place in the early 1950s. Both migratory movements with approximately ten-year intervals ended in Turkey from 1952 to 1954. The knowledge of the facts about Kazakhs' journey from Xinjiang to Turkey is crucial in evaluating its effect on the self-identification processes of Kazakhs currently living in Zeytinburnu. That is why in the following section I gave detailed description of two waves of exodus based on mainly secondary sources.

3.1.1. The First Wave of Kazakh Exodus

The first wave of Kazakh exodus from East Turkestan lasted more than seventeen years from 1935 to 1952. Professor Kara (2019) who gave full chronological order in accordance with geographical places, identified four stages in the first wave of migration. The first phase of this migration begins with the imprisonment of prominent community leaders in 1935. In August of the same year the Kazakhs from Qumul and Barköl areas held a secret meeting where Kazakh leaders such as Eliskhan Tayci, Zayip Tayci, Mazhen Shanya etc. decided to move their people to Gansu, to a safer territory ruled by Chinese Muslim General Ma Bufang. The main residents of Gansu region were Dungan people, Han Chinese who were Muslims. Regardless the armed conflict which happened between Kazakhs and soldiers of the Governor Sheng Shicai, the group of people led by Eliskhan Tayci managed to reach Gansu in the spring of 1936. After that, the Kazakhs from Altay region also decided to take up the same journey. Finally, all three groups of Kazakhs from Qumul, Barköl and Altay gathered in Gansu and there they were able to spend for about two years in peace (Gayretullah, 2017; Kara, 2019). Although local Dungans showed hospitality to Kazakhs, their commander general Ma Bufang could not protect Kazakhs against Sheng Shicai's army. Under the pressure of such

circumstances Kazakh leaders decided to migrate to India via Tibet, which can be interpreted as the second phase of their migration.



Fig. 5. The first wave of Kazakh migration

The journey to India was even worse than to Gansu, apart from clashes with Chinese and Tibetan soldiers on the way, people had to fight against harsh natural conditions. Many people died from cold and lack of oxygen in the high-altitude peaks of Tibet. In September, 1941 the Kazakh convoy reached India and was allocated to the refugee camps. The number of Kazakhs who reached India in 1941 was 3039 (Altay, 1981; Oraltay, 2005). However, in the camps due to anti-sanitary conditions and malnutrition added to tropical climate with which people were not familiar, thousands of Kazakhs lost their lives. Indian Muslims came to rescue while Kazakhs were suffering from epidemic diseases in the camps. After changing several locations in India, finally the majority of Kazakhs decided to settle in the city called Bhopal. When British India was split in 1947, the Kazakhs settled in Pakistan (Gayretullah, 2017; Kara, 2019).

3.1.2. The Second Wave of Kazakh Exodus

The second wave of Kazakhs' migration from Xinjiang is related to Ili rebellion or 'Three Districts Revolution', the Turkic peoples' revolt against Chinese government between 1944 and 1945, which backed up by the Soviet Army. It started on November 7, 1944 with attacks to the Chinese garrison stationed in Yining (Kulja), the principal city of the Ili valley, close to the Sino-Soviet border. Although Chinese troops outnumbered the Muslim rebels, they were able to gain control of the city and within few days forced the Chinese troops to move towards the outskirts of the town. Following this, on November 12, 1944, the East Turkestan Republic (ETR)[8] was established (Benson, 1990).

First and foremost, aim of this fighting was to eliminate all Han Chinese from the soil of Xinjiang. These revolts spread mainly in three northern regions of Xinjiang which are Ili, Tarbagatay and Altay. Altay rebellion was led by Kazakh warlord, Osman Batur who was executed by Chinese government in April, 1951 (Jacobs, 2010). British journalist Godfrey Lias, was one of the first individuals who wrote about the events of 1940s in Xinjiang and its leader Ospan Batyr. As the main source for his book *Kazak Exodus,* he used the stories retold by Kazakhs who settled in Salihli, Turkey. The warlord who organised the battle in Tarbagatay region was a Kazakh chieftan called Qalibek Hakim. Together with his companions he began organised revolts in June, 1945 along the river Kyzyl ozen (Oraltay, 2005). These military confrontations lasted around six months. In the literature revolts in Tarbagatay is referred as battles of Manas and Sauan. After freeing the city of Sauan[9] from Chinese military troops, Hakim became its governor. It is essential to underline here the fact that the second wave of Kazakh exodus from Xinjiang in 1949 was led by Qalibek Hakim (Gayretullah, 2017). The armed conflict which began as a rebellion in Manas-Sauan lasted until Kazakhs gave up their weapons to Indian government at the end of 1951 and received political refuge (Oraltay, 2005).

[8] Sharki Turkestan Cumhuriyeti
[9] Today in the maps the city's current name is indicated as either Tacheng or Qoqek.



Fig. 6. 'The second wave of Kazakhs' migration from Xinjiang

Although Ili rebellion was carried out with joint efforts of Russians, Uyghurs and Kazakhs, Benson (1990) argued that "Kazak troops were the backbone of the 1944 anti-Chinese forces" (1990: 31). National army of ETR continued to free Xinjiang from nationalist (Kuomintang) troops until the autumn of 1945 and came close to Urumqi, its capital city. However, in this stage the position of Soviet Army towards ETR changed. Although initially it provided military and political support for ETR rebels, later the Soviets persuaded the ETR government to sign peace agreement with Chinese authorities upon Chinese government's request. Thus, the sovereignty of East Turkestan Republic was restricted.

It is important to state that during this period the communist and nationalist political powers in Chinese central government were competing over ruling Xinjiang, each trying to pull Turkic nationalist leaders to their own sides. The communist Mao Tsedong proved himself stronger than his opponent, Chiang Kai Shek who later fled to Taiwan. One month and a half after the plane crash with ETR officials, Chinese communist army consolidated control over Xinjiang,

including the three districts involved in rebellion (Benson, 1990, 176). Since the leaders such as Qalibek Hakim and his companions did not want to submit to Mao Zedong's new regime instituted by the Communist Revolution in 1949 had no other choice than fleeing from the country (Gayretullah, 2017; Oraltay, 2005; Kara, 2019).

The second group of Kazakhs experienced the same hardships as the first group while crossing the borders. Apart from fighting with Chinese military troops chasing them, they had to go through the desert Taklamakan and Himalayan Mountains, where they fought hunger, cold and illnesses. In 1951, 174 Kazakhs from Manas-Sauan region in Xinjiang reached Ladakh, a town in the border with China and India, from where Indian officials took them by plane to Kashmir (Oraltay, 2005).[10] The Kazakh group leaders were Qalibek Hakim, Dalelkhan Zhanaltay, Huseyin Teyci, Sultan Sherif Teyci, and Uyghurs were under the leadership of Isa Yusuf Alptekin and Mehmet Emin Bugra. The second group of migrants stayed in Kashmir for two years and some even up to four years. After losing all their cattle on the way Kazakhs had to adapt to new way of life and to survive in a new environment, they began to learn trading. Kazakhs from the first wave living in Pakistan at that time got in touch with the people from the second wave and they mutually decided to emigrate to Turkey.

There was no accurate accounting of Kazakhs who migrated from Altay mountain slopes to outer world. The approximate estimation could vary from 18 to 50 thousand people and only 1,850 of them were able to reach Turkey. Kara (2019) argued that Turkey was not chosen as a random destination for

[10]The number of Kazakhs from the second wave of migration is usually given as 350. American anthropologist Milton Clark (1954:621) wrote that they were about 350 individuals. This number was continuously repeated in other sources (Altay, 1981: 377-378; Uehara,1992: 22). I decided to refer to the memoirs of Hasan Oraltay (2005,144) and Delilhan Canaltay (2017, 178) recently published. As I interpret this discrepancy in numbers came into being due to the fact not all the caravan of Kazakh migrants with cattle came to the border of Kashmir at the same time, for some it took more time than others. The first caravans who came to Kashmir belonged to movement leaders such as Alibek Hakim, Hamza Ukirday, Kaynash Gayretullah, Nurgocay Batur, Delilhan Canaltay, Nurmukhammed Molla, Turdy Kari and their number of people and cattle were registered by Indian border control and both Canaltay and Oraltay were using that list, whereas the second group led by Sultan Sherif Teyci, Huseyn Teyci, Ahmet Molla, Kasen Batur joined to the first group later and there was no written list or official documentation of their people and cattle, thus 350 might be approximation given by most of Kazakhs to researchers.

migration, instead Kazakh leaders acted strategically, because of their shared language, culture and religion they saw friendly environment to preserve their national identity. This narrative is constantly circulated among Kazakhs. Although it seems like after Kazakhs' settlement in Turkey their hardships were over and their adventure had relatively happy end, the exodus from homeland whichever one left deep scars in the personal and social memories of Kazakhs. The exodus as traumatic experience is so much imprinted in their memory, that until now it continues to shape and inform the decisions of many Kazakhs. This can be seen and experienced through the conversations not only with elder members of community, but also with younger generations who have never witnessed the exodus, but knowledgable enough about it because of the narratives circulated within the community. In order to strengthen the argument about the social memory of Kazakhs based on the loss and trauma, in the next section I am going to examine the concept of collective memory from theoretical perspectives and include more examples of the narratives that is related to the exodus of Kazakhs from Xinjiang.

3.2. COLLECTIVE MEMORY

The question of collective memory, its sustainment, and communication was addressed by different scholars. Among them Paul Connerton's (1990) book *How Societies Remember* is an influential one. Connerton mainly defined social memory as a dimension of political power. He believed that controlling memory is related to power, thus, the use of data-processing machines to organise collective memory and the storage of data are not a mere technical matter but it is a crucial political matter associated with legitimation, control, and ownership of information (Connerton, 1990,1). Furthermore, as Connerton argued that our present-day experience essentially depends on our knowledge of the past. Moreover, we can experience our present differently depending on the different pasts to which we are able to connect that present. Thus, it is really difficult to separate our past from our present. Present factors not only may distort or influence our recollections of the past, but past factors also may influence, or

distort our experience of the present (Connerton, 1990, p. 2). This means that in the process of interpretation, memories respond to new circumstances and influences, undergoing constant changes. In this regard, Byrne (2010, p.169) remarks: “Everywhere...cultures (societies) are inventive. Cultural identity is improvised partly by drawing on the past.” Hence cultural groups are free to create their own cultural representations of the past. Therefore, different generations evaluate and interpret their cultural legacy in different ways, and due to this fact variety of new meanings arise (Kahuno, 2017).

It has become clear that our past shapes the perception of ourselves that is our identities. In this regard, Elias-Varotsis (2006, 25) stated that cultural identity involves becoming, as well as being. Since cultural identity is a transformation process, it belongs to the future just as much as it belongs to the past. That is why the role of collective memory is important in maintaining group identity. The social groups decide what is important to remember and what should be forgotten. Thus, collective memory is characterised by the selection of certain events to remember. The remembered narratives are transferred from one generation to another. They can be in the form of oral histories, songs, rites and festivals.

After observing and analysing the interviews in this work it was concluded that ethnic identities of Kazakhs in Turkey become relevant during social interactions and negotiations. Some of those interactions are exercised and perpetuated mainly through the narratives originated from collective memory. While emphasising their shared loss and trauma experienced during their exodus from East Turkestan Kazakhs are reminded about their Kazakhness. Thus, the trauma of exodus i.e., losing loved ones on the way and leaving behind a homeland is a memory that Kazakhs collectively hold on to maintain and reproduce their ethnic identity. Therefore, throughout this work I will be arguing that collective memory constructed on the basis of trauma has been helping to regulate Kazakhs’ ethnic boundaries throughout their stay in Turkey, even though most of the Kazakh traditions and customs disappeared or stopped being practiced.

The fieldwork showed that Kazakhs in Turkey constantly spoke about the hardships of exodus from Xinjiang. There are a few old eye-witnesses of that historical migration who can give testimony of that event. They are very treasured by community members. Some of them were interviewed during the fieldwork. Kazakhs in Turkey remembered their migration from Xinjiang as a remarkable event. Thus, if there is an attempt to understand Kazakhs in Turkey, we should start with focusing on their trauma experienced during their exodus from East Turkestan. This is because the community chose it as an essential part of their collective memory. Besides, this memory of shared loss and trauma will always make Kazakhs of Istanbul and their future generations stand out from the rest of Kazakhs. It means that all Kazakhs may belong to the certain tribal divisions and kinship groups within three Hordes, all Kazakhs may be the descendants of the nomadic herders, thus "legal bearers" of nomadic heritage, but only Kazakhs living in Turkey were able to transform their loss and trauma of migration into ethnic identity marker. The next sub-section will discuss the examples of the narratives based on the exodus and explore how the social memory about common past shapes the present worldview of Kazakhs and their current ethnic identification processes.

3.2.1. Exodus from Xinjiang: Kazakh "Holocaust"

The children, who took part in the exodus, today have become 80-90 years old people and many of them live in Zeytinburnu. One of them is Gayni *apa*[11]. She was 5-6-year-old girl when her parents decided to leave Xinjiang in 1949. She recalls Kazakhs' arrival to Ladakh in the following way: "Indian city Ladakh, we reached it on foot, someone was carrying blankets, some were carrying food, some people did not have anything to carry at all, some people were carrying drinking water in wooden barrels; We came to Ladakh and weapons were handed over. From there we were transported to Kashmir. My 2-year-old

[11] Usually elderly ladies are called *apa*, it means elder sister or grandmother in Kazakh language.

brother died after arrival to Kashmir. You know, at that time we knew nothing about vaccination…". These were parts from her childhood memories of arrival to Kashmir.

I interviewed Gayni apa in her flat. Since it was July, it was extremely hot and humid in the flat. We were constantly opening and closing the balcony door in the living room. Regardless her old age Gayni apa appeared to be vigorous and energetic woman. I was not the first Kazakhstani student who came to interview her, she shared how she had gifted some of her family relics kept from the time of exodus to Kazakh national museum in Nur-Sultan. Interview was long, with occasional breaks for food and tea. The mother of Gayni apa was coming from rich family and her father was a mullah and excellent shooter. Her uncle was killed by Chinese soldiers, thus when her father was asked by the warlords to join escaping Kazakh tribes, he accepted their proposal. His shooting skills were essential in defending the caravan of Kazakh tribes during the clashes with Chinese military troops. Gayni apa described military clashes and the passages through the Taklamakan desert, lake Lop Nor, and the Himalayas. In the middle of her speech on the crossing the border of China, she recalled farewell scene: "We finally were able to cross the border, we were on a safe side. Suddenly all people stopped and began to descend from their horses. Our mothers and fathers wept. They were grieving and lamenting. *Kayran, Otanymyz-ay, kayran memleketimiz-ay kosh endi, kosh endi dep, perizay mekenim kaldiay dariga-ay. Soytip koshtastyk. Kazak soytip, perizay*[12] *mekenim kaldiay darigay, korem be eken dunya-ay dep jilap sondai-sondai kunderdi otkizdik.* (Alas, our homeland, alas our country, farewell, farewell, oh an angel, my homeland has been left, precious; We did say good bye in this way. Kazakhs said farewell, oh an angel, my homeland has been left, precious; Will I be able to see you again? Thus, those were the days which were spent with crying)". Gayni apa stood up, waived her hand in the farewell gesture and began to cry. Neither me were able to hold my tears imagining that scene.

[12] Possibly derived from Kazakh word *perizat*- fairy, beauty. I preferred to translate it as an angel.

The story of Gayni apa is part of her personal memory. However, regardless of her personal experience her life history can be interpreted in the context of collective memory. In collective memory the narrative of one life does not work alone, instead it functions as part of an interconnecting set of narratives and is derived from the story of a whole group (Connerton, 1990). There are other people living in Zeytinbrunu similar to Gayni apa who can testify the events of their exodus. Some of them even wrote autobiographies. Those who shared their stories valued the importance of passing the history of their exodus to next generations. Thus, to make sure that younger generations will not forget who they were and where they came from.

Reading chronicles about Kazakhs' migration and their hardships made me compare their tragedy to the Holocaust except it was committed against Kazakhs. I could draw parallels of two tragedies where one race claiming superiority above the other exposed the other to all the possible tortures, the biggest of which is the expulsion from homeland territory. To my biggest surprise British journalist Godfrey Lias (1956) also compared Kazakhs' expulsion to Jewish exodus. Being Jewish himself Lias deeply sympathised with Kazakhs. He described many historical events which took place in Altay mountains during the 1930s and 40s. While referring to those events he often was making parallels to Jewish mythology. For example, in the chapters about Ospan Batyr, Kazakh hero, who led the rebellion (Ili Rebellion or Three Districts Revolution) against the Chinese government in the 1940s, Lias (1956) describes the birth of the hero in the following way: "In 1899, Islam Bay and his wives, one of them being great with child, pitched their tents as usual in the Altai Mountains as Abraham did in the hills which afterwards became the hills of Judaea" (1956, p. 9).

The exodus from Xinjiang and trauma associated with it had immeasurable impact on Kazakhs' perception of own history and enhanced the sense of solidarity within the group. Whenever I talk to Kazakhs from Zeytinburnu it was easy to notice their emphasis of their challenging and thorny journey from Altay Mountains to Turkey. In fact, many of the people, with whom I talked, did not experience the hardships themselves, they were second, third, some of them

even were fourth generation Kazakhs in Istanbul. However, many of them were eager to tell the stories about Chinese communist military troops who were constantly attacking their caravans, crossing the Himalayas almost by foot, suffering from tropical diseases in India in refugee camps, loosing all their livestock and material values on the way etc. (Gayretullah, 2017; Lias, 1956; Oraltay, 1976; 2005). The profound advocate of social memory, Connerton (1990) underlined that our past does not only shape our present, but also our presence deeply affects, sometimes even distorts our perception of the past. Thus, this perception may affect how Kazakhs ethnically position themselves against different ethnic groups and states too.

3.2.2. How Does Past Influence Present of Kazakhs living in Turkey?

For some societies, beliefs about shared past do not really influence everyday life of people (Gamsakhurdia, 2017). But in the case of Kazakhs the loss and trauma of the past shape contemporary feelings and behaviour of Kazakhs if not daily but at least on regular basis. Partially, this is because some people who witnessed the migration are still alive, they talk about their experience to their children and other people. The researchers like me are told these stories, educated group of Kazakhs in Istanbul write and publish books on this topic and organise conferences. The narratives of the past among Kazakhs is very strong that it is impossible to imagine any of their collective ceremonies without hearing the prayers and gratitude to the people who perished on the way coming to Turkey. For instance, during the Kazakh funerals and Friday prayers they have Koran recitations at the end of which *imams* dedicate prayers to the people who perished in the long journey, and called them *shehits,* religious martyrs. Similarly, Kazakhs' past also affected the way they position themselves against Chinese government and people. An interviewee shared his personal story in the following way:

> Once I was contacted by Chinese Embassy and told that they had been ready to give financial support for eduction of ten students from Kazakh families living in Turkey. As soon as I received this information, I tried to convince my acquaintances to send their

> children to study in China. But people reacted to my message with anger, and some of them even insulted me for easily forgetting our past. Nevertheless, I ended up sending my own son and niece to study in Beijing. The son already graduated from the university and works in Istanbul, whereas the niece still has couple of years ahead to finish her studies (male, 59).

From this example, it is possible to conclude that majority of Kazakhs rejected scholarship offer of Chinese government due to their historical loss and trauma. The action of rejection highlighted the culturally preferred and demanded identity of Kazakhs. In this context Kazakhs identify themselves against Han Chinese. As a result, they define Han Chinese as non-Muslim[13], cruel, fascist, communist, whereas Kazakhs are peaceful Muslims and Turks. This is the case when many actors eagerly pursue "prescribed" Kazakh identity conditioned with shared loss and trauma of Kazakhs. However, as it is clearly seen this narrative did not restrain one Kazakh person to send his child and even more convincing his sister as well to send her daughter to study in Beijing. This in turn, reminds us the other side of the argument about actorhood that is the agency, the degree of control which individuals themselves can deploy over their identities. As Meyer argued the rights, responsibilities, and powers of the actors today enormously expanded. Furthermore, he claims that institutionalised view of the person changed, because the whole social world depends on the choices and actions of the individual. This was seen through the action of the man who sent his son and niece despite the social pressure. Barth's claims about the negotiation of ethnic identities are also applicable here, because the man in the story chose the advantageous position for himself, thus sacrificing his collective identity conditioned with collective memory over his personal goals.

There are different ways how the loss and trauma of exodus affect Kazakhs' present experience. The elder generations prefer to write biographies recollecting the hardships of migration, thus to prevent its erasure from future generation's memory. Oraltay (2005) in his autobiography titled *Elim-aylap Ötken Ömir* (The Life Passed by Mourning the Homeland) shared detailed personal recollections about how Kazakhs managed to overcome the human

[13] Even if there were some, they were corrupted (Interview).

and natural obstacles on their way to freedom. Without focusing much on political aspects of the exodus addressed in his book, to consolidate my argument about how the past shapes our present I decided to use some paragraphs from his book describing the disease called *high altitude sickness*[14]. People can get altitude sickness, which is also called as acute mountain sickness (AMS), when they travel to a high altitude too quickly. It can become a medical emergency if ignored. The person's breathing becomes difficult because they are not able to take in as much oxygen. In severe cases altitude sickness might affect the brain or lungs. The ***yss*** (ıs) (altitude sickness) is characteristic to the Himalayan mountains, especially during the winter months. When the caravan of people and cattle reached the place *Essekbatty*[15] began to be sick with yss. The people who got altitude sickness began to die. In Essekbatty there were around 70 people who suffered from this disease. A person sick with yss can not breath. Sometimes their skin would become very swollen and while touching it would leak watery discharge. Not only people, but also the cattle also suffered from this disease. The cattle that served as food and transport on our way began to perish, sheep, camels, horses…their death made many people to move on their foot. There was no cure for this disease. Some people believed that bear's gall or human's urine is helpful in treating this sickness (Oraltay, 2005, 121).

> In every family there was a person suffering from *yss*. …One day … I was awoken by the crying voice of my mother. My sister Nurkamal had passed away. This was my mother's third child who died. …The night before with the hope for her recovery I brought her my urine and was forcing her to drink it: "Drink! If you don't drink, you will die!" Even though I tried hard, she did not drink it. I still remember how my departed mother looked at me and cried: "You said she would die, now she is dead". My father was also very upset with Nurkamal's death, but he tried not to show it. He instructed us to carry her body on camel's back until we find a proper place to bury her. For four

[14] However, AMS was not an only disease which made Kazakhs loose their lives, many of them died from cholera in Indian camps since they could not adapt at once to tropical climate.

[15] Many geographical names used in Oraltay's book might not be accurate or at least might slightly differ from the original names in the world map, because the Kazakhs during the migration tended to create own names to different geographical areas and animals since they were not familiar with flora and fauna of Himalayan region, in this case place was named Essek (donkey) batty (drowned), because it was believed that in this place hundreds of Uyghur merchants' donkeys carrying goods from India to Xinjiang drowned.

> days my poor mother was leading a camel with her child's dead body (Oraltay, 2005, 124).

Apart from Nurkamal, Oraltay lost his two other sisters for this disease, Maryam, the youngest one being only eight years old. Oraltay's niece Meryem Hakim, who is now professor at Social Sciences University of Ankara, told me later that she and her two other cousins were named after her aunts who died tragically in the Himalayas. It was her grandfather and uncle's will to name the three girls born away from homeland after the family members who perished during migration. This sole act of naming new-born babies after the martyrs of migration indicates to the fact how Kazakhs' past shapes their present today. Thus, this act of naming children can be interpreted as an occasion to recollect the trauma and loss of the past.

However, I was able to see that the past trauma did not only define the way how some Kazakhs name their children or grandchildren, but also did influence their life-choices and professions even though sometimes it is enforced by elder generation regardless younger people's objections. For instance, a retired Kazakh *imam* said that he received religious education because his father planned it long time ago even before he was born. His father made a vow in the Himalayas, that if one day he would survive, he would make one of his sons *hafiz*[16] as a gratitude to Allah's kindness and mercy. The imam shared that although in the beginning studying and keeping up with tough discipline in *madrasa* were difficult for him, he is now happy for making his father's dream come true. There are various stories which demonstrate how Kazakhs in Turkey today live and express their loss and trauma in their relationships and ethnic identifications. Every personal story is unique, but what is common for all of them is that when they are combined, they weave the fabric of one collective memory which focuses on the shared loss and trauma of exodus.

[16] A Muslim who has memorised the Koran: a title of honour.

3.3. PRIVILEGED SETTLERS

When the second wave of the Kazakhs from Xinjiang came to Kashmir, the Kazakhs from the first wave of migration had already began the refugee application process to Turkey. In this way, Turkey constituted the last phase of the Kazakh migration. For the first time Kazakhs in Pakistan called for the Turkish Embassy in India in 1946, after the end of World War II. However, their request was rejected. After a few years, Kazakh elders decided to renew their appeal for emigration to Turkey and established Eastern Turkestan Qaziq[17] [sic] Refugees Association in Peshawar in 1949. The main goal of this association was to persuade Turkish government to accept Kazakhs as refugees in Turkey and to establish good relations with their embassy located in Karachi.

The association made the list of Kazakhs living in different cities of Pakistan and later submitted it to Turkish Ambassador alongside with their request to migrate to Turkey. This time with the assistance of Turkish ambassador Yahya Kemal Beyatlı and the decision of the former Turkish prime minister Adnan Menderes their request was approved, thus Turkish government officially recognised Kazakhs from Pakistan, India and Kashmir as refugees in Turkey on March 13, 1952 (Kara, 2019; Kusçu, 2016, 384). On March 30, 1952 Kazakh Refugees Association received the letter from Turkish Embassy declaring about this decision. Afterwards, Halifa Altay, the general secretary of the Association began to deal with the paperwork of Kazakh migrants. He sorted out their visa applications for Syria and Iran, vaccination documents, health certificates from Pakistani municipality, checkout from police registration in Pakistan etc. This migrant sending process lasted for four months. From 12.09.1953 to 26.12.1953 Altay, during his stay in Karachi helped with papers for 1379 people, as a result within four months 430 Kazakh families from Pakistan were sent to Turkey in echelon (Altay, 1981, 425-427).

[17] It was written Qaziq on purpose, not as Kazakh, Kazak or Qazaq. This was due to the wide-spread rumours among Kazakhs about hostility of Turkish people against Cossacks - semi-military Slavic-speaking community which is sometimes written as Kazak too. Thus, in order to avoid this confusion and raise their chances in getting asylum in Turkey, they had to follow someone's advice and change spelling of their ethnicity's name.

Kazakhs came to Turkey as *iskanlı göçmenler* (settled/privileged migrants) in accordance with the decree adopted by the Council of Ministers in Turkey for the settlement of the 1850 refugee Turks from Eastern Turkestan. The first law regulating immigration to Turkey was adopted on June 13, 1934 and this document (İskan Kanunu) established the legal basis for Kazakhs' migration, because in Article 3 of this law *iskanlı göçmenler* were defined as immigrants and refugees that could be accepted in Turkey as those of Turkish descent and who are tied to Turkish culture ("Türk soyundan ve Türk kültürüne bağlı kişiler") (Kusçu, 2016, 384). Although Kazakhs came here as Turks and received benefits on these terms, having Turkish passport and being Turk according to the law did not make them immediately Turks and sometimes the identity expressed by the minority migrant society did not match with the one imposed by host society. These issues will be explored in the following chapters in an extensive manner, here I would like to only give few more details related to the status of iskan göçmeni.

Region	Town	Number of families	Land
Kayseri	Develi	104	3328
Konya	Ismil	72	11664
Sakarya	Adapazari	2	-
Manisa	Salihli	160	-
Niğde	Ulukisla	226	16995

Tab. 1 Settlement Places of Kazakhs and Assigned Land Property (Gayretullah, 2017, p. 175)

The status of iskan göçmeni comes with numerous advantages. Not long after their arrival Kazakhs received Turkish citizenship. They had been provided food and board until they were given land, house and financial aid for setting up business. Moreover, they were exempted from taxes for five years. The young men were also exempted from military service until securing their family's financial income (Gayretullah, 2017; Kusçu, 2016, 384).

After their arrival to Istanbul Kazakhs were first allocated in migrant houses (*göçmen evleri*) in Tuzla, Sirkeci and Zeytinburnu by Turkish government, where they attended vocational training including carpet weaving, clothes making, carpentry and cabinet making including language courses for both children and adults (Gayretullah, 2017). The benefits offered by the status of iskan göçmeni had deep impact on Kazakhs society, moreover, other Central Asian refugees who settled in Turkey later even envied Kazakhs. For instance, in an Uzbek store in Niğde, the old man running the store said to me that Kazakhs were luckier in terms of their settlement in Turkey, because they came here as iskanli gocmenler, so they had governmental support at the beginning, whereas he and his family came to Turkey as individual migrants and it took them more efforts and time to get on their feet.

I would like to underline here is that receiving benefits from Turkish government in the 1950s made Kazakhs exercise reciprocity. The concept of reciprocity is often emphasised by sociologists while describing the transnational ties of migrant groups, gift giving and marriage traditions within tribal societies. The Kazakhs also wanted to express their gratitude to the host country in a certain way. As a result, since the time of their arrival they have been enacting reciprocity in various forms, for example, the first-generation Kazakhs demonstrated their gratitude through being a law-abiding citizen, they saw hard-work and piousness as key elements in thanking their host country. However, according to many Kazakhs the most effective way of thanking the host country was to support political visions of the government that allowed them to settle legally in Turkey. Therefore, the first-generation Kazakhs became active supporters of the Democrat Party founded by Adnan Menderes in 1945. In the following sub-section, I examine special attitude of Kazakhs towards the figure of Menderes and explain how historical decisions of elder generation Kazakhs still continue to influence the political choices of younger generation.

3.3.1. Why Do Kazakhs Love Adnan Menderes?

After military coup in Turkey on 27 May, 1960 Menderes, the prime-minister who accepted Kazakhs to Turkey, was imprisoned and executed by the junta on September 17, 1961 which made many Kazakhs mourn his loss. Even today the name of Adnan Menderes among Kazakhs is often recalled with much respect. Moreover, every year on March 13 they gather around his tomb to commemorate him and dedicate their prayers. According to some of the witnesses Menderes himself visited the Kazakhs in refugee houses in Istanbul, one of them even claimed that Menderes had gifted him a toy. For Kazakhs he was a saviour and continue to be so even today. That is why his execution left sad memories among the people. Gulzhamal, an elderly Kazakh lady, during the time of military coup was a newlywed bride. She recollected that on the day of Menderes's execution one of the Kazakh families was having a *shildehana* (celebration of a newborn baby). The people who came to celebrate the birth of a baby boy on September 17, 1961 did not know how to react to the news whether continue to rejoice with the family or lament for the loss of a public figure who had positive influence on Kazakh society. Some neighbours told the family off for having fun when Menderes was executed. Gulzhamal apa said that one of the Kazakh women in the crowd began to lament in the following way:

"Adnan Menderes edi-au ak mangday,

El-jurtyna jakkanday,

Mine zalymdar tusirdi-au … (birdeme…tries to recollect) *gyp kakpangay"*

These lines talk about how good Adnan Menderes was to his people and that he was trapped by his enemies. Although Gulzhamal apa shared her story in a fragmentary manner and obviously did not remember many events clearly, but it still shows the devoted attitude of Kazakhs towards the figure of Menderes. The history of Kazakhs' settlement in Turkey became quite relevant during the 2019 Istanbul mayoral elections. My fieldwork coincided with the dates of the campaign. As I realised most of the people whom I talked were pro-AKP

(currently ruling party in Turkey) candidate during these mayoral elections and it is possible to claim that their decisions were informed with the historical events retained in their social memory. Today, many of the Kazakhs regard AKP as an actual continuation of the Democrat Party, moderately right-wing political party founded by Menderes and his colleagues. It has been mentioned above that the Kazakhs while staying in Pakistan had applied for refugee status in Turkey two times. The first time when their request rejected, Turkey was governed by CHP and its leader İsmet İnönü. The Kazakh society was holding a grudge against CHP since that time and it is extraordinary to see today how this feeling of resentment was fostered by the elders since the 1950s and passed down through generations later to become powerful motivation in exercising votes during the mayoral and governmental elections in Turkey in the 21st century.

3.4. MODEL MINORITY SCENARIO: WHAT IS LIKE TO BE A GOOD TURK?

In research about Asian immigrant communities the most wide-spread and popular approach was *model minority* thesis. Historical events and such components as hard-work, the high proportion of higher education graduates, considerably low rate of crime, children's high performance at school created the stereotype of model minority and it still continues to affect identities and achievement of young Asian Americans. I also found the concept of model minority useful in conceptualising the information about earlier years of Kazakhs' settlement in Turkey. It is clear from the interviews that the first and 1.5 generation Kazakhs in Turkey can be best described as model minority, because the most of them were hard-working people. In other words, Kazakhs were trying their best to get on their feet. Gayni apa, whose name I have already mentioned above, shared that in the first years of their settlement in Turkey, they were doing seasonal works like picking grapes and fruit in Izmir. Later according to Gayni apa and many others Kazakhs became involved in leather industry. The most successful ones began to open small workshops and

later run factories sewing leather clothes that were sold not only in Turkey, but also overseas. Gayni apa recollects:

> Kazakhs did not show anyone they were in need or did not go to the streets for begging, that is why Kazakhs today are loved in Turkey. Kazakh did not steal, did not lie, they won their bread themselves, neither Turkey, nor us experienced harm from each other. Today migrants commit crime and murder, I don't know. Kazakhs did not have that, thanks to God (female, 82).

Thus, Gayni apa emphasised honesty and good behaviour of Kazakhs on the days of their arrival in Turkey. According to her and many others such behaviour of Kazakhs was conditioned by the elders' activity. In the early years of settlement, they were the ones who regulated the order in society. They were kind of consultants in Meyer's institutional framework of identity. *Community consultants* make "persons better actors, groups better organised actors, and nation-states more complete organised actors" (2010:7). Among the widespread consultants he named therapists, teachers, trainers, and lawyers. Since gerontocracy is a quality which characterises Kazakhs' society even today, it can be assumed that in the past the elders were similar to consultants and set rules of proper behaviour for Kazakhs. For example, in the past the elders regulated the marriage of young Kazakh women. Although today there are many cases of Kazakh women in Istanbul marrying to Turkish men, among the first and 1.5 generations there are no Kazakh women who were married outside of Kazakh community. In the 1950s-60s the elders considered that if Kazakh woman married to a man from different ethnic group, she would stop being Kazakh. Therefore, when Kazakhs came to Turkey, many Kazakh women regardless their young age had to marry elderly men, and sometimes to live in polygamy in Turkey. However, this rule was not applied to Kazakh men, from the time of leaving East Turkestan they always had freedom to marry foreign women. Already in Pakistan some of them were married to local women and had children.

Kuşçu (2016, 3) emphasised that there are active and passive members of diaspora communities. Active members usually shape the behaviour of passive members and contribute to the dominant identity formulations within community.

It could be assumed that since Kazakhs came to Turkey owing to the law that prioritises immigrant people of Turkish origins and affiliated with Turkish culture, part of their script at their earlier years of settlement was not only to be a model minority, but also to be good Turkish citizen or Turk. Therefore, community consultants or leading members of diaspora were trying to emphasise Kazakhs' Turkishness/Turkicness more than their Kazakhness in the early years. Kuşçu (2016, 387) named Halife Altay and Hasan Oraltay as active Kazakh diaspora members of first generation who shaped greatly ethnic formulations of Kazakhs in Turkey. For instance, Oraltay (1965) in his first book, *Hürriyet Uğrunda Doğu Türkistan Kazak Türkleri* (East Turkestani Kazakhs On the Way to the Freedom) wanted to introduce Kazakhs to the host society since many people in Turkey did not know much about Kazakhs or their culture. According to Kuşçu (2016, 387) Oraltay used the term "Kazakh Turks" in his book to emphasise that they were part of the greater Turkic family:

> This is natural, as Kazakhs in Turkey, like other migrant groups of Turkic origin, felt closer to Pan-Turkik circles in the host society during the Cold War. In his 1965 work, Oraltay wrote about Magzhan Zhumabayev, a famous Kazakh poet and one of the founders of the Alash Orda government. Oraltay emphasized Zhumabayev's Turkestan ideal and his service for the cause. He underlined how the poet was concerned about all Turks in his poems and not just ethnic Kazakhs (Oraltay 1965, 15) (Kuşçu, 2016, 387).

I want to point out another author from first generation Kazakhs who used the term 'Turks' to describe Kazakhs. He is Hızırbek Gayretullah, whose book *Altaylarda Kanlı Günler* was first published in 1977. This book did not describe Kazakhs as separate ethnic group instead it used the generic term 'Turk' and even the expression 'Kazak Turkleri' was rarely used. The author in his book described mainly the events which happened in Altay mountains between late 1930s and 1940s. Below is an excerpt from the first chapter of the book.

> Jasan Kızıl'da Türklerin başına gelen bu felaket, tek çıkar yolun silaha sarılmak, şiddete şiddet, kısasa kısasla mukabele edileceği gerçeğini bir kere daha ortaya koymuştu. Bundan dolayıdır ki, bütün Türk uruğları tek vücut, birlik ve beraberlik içinde Çin mezalimine karşı birleşmişlerdi. Artık isyan büyümüş, kan gövdeyi götürüyordu. Türkleri, korkutan şey, mühimmat ve silah sıkıntısı idi. Eğer Çinliler

> gibi, Türkler de eşit imkanlara, denk silah gücüyle çarpışmış olsalardı, belki de bugün Doğu Türkistan'da müstakil bir devleti olabilirdi. (Gayretullah, 2017, p. 28)

I would like to emphasise here the fact that Gayretullah under the term 'Turks' meant Kazakhs. In the last sentence of the citation, it is clear that author regrets about the loss of East Turkestan and not being able to establish united Turkic state. As a result, from the books of the first-generation Kazakh authors it is possible to see their tendency to claim their Turkicness or closeness to Turkish people instead of separate Kazakh ethnic identity. It seems like these authors' intention was to demonstrate closeness of Kazakhs to the idea Pan-Turkism or so-called Turkic nationalism long before their actual settlement in Turkey the 1950s.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Kazakhs' settlement in Turkey had long background history. Their exodus from Eastern Turkestan were conditioned by such big historical events as the fall of Manchu dynasty in China, Chinese revolution in 1911 led by Sun Yat-Sen, the appointment of the cruel governors in the region of Xinjiang, 'Three districts' revolution', and conflicts between nationalist and communist Chinese powers in the late 1940s. These events made thousands of Kazakhs flee their homeland. The escape was very traumatic, because thousands lost their lives due to illnesses, cold and hunger. This experience is deeply etched in Kazakhs' collective memory so that until now it continues to shape the worldview of younger generation who has never seen the migration themselves, but do "remember" it well because of the narratives passed down from the elders.

Not only the exodus from homeland left deep scars in the social memory of Kazakhs, but also radically transformed their lifestyle. Kazakhs from Xinjiang who were nomadic pastoralists until the 1950s became sedentary within few years, moreover they began trading and doing seasonal works. As a way of thanking Turkish government for its support Kazakhs played out model minority scenario that is being hard-working, law-abiding and pious citizen who will

contribute to the development of Turkish society only positively. This gained them the reputation of model minority. In the 1960s the community leaders, so-called consultants and active diaspora members emphasised the idea of Pan-Turkism among Kazakhs. The next chapter will further expand on the notion of collective memory and discuss other particular elements inherent to Kazakh social memory. The discussions should show how some historical events from the past continue to influence Kazakhs' current political positions and cultural identities. The forthcoming chapter once more reassures us about the profound effect of collective memory on people's ethnic identifications.

CHAPTER 4

KAZAKHS' QUEST FOR BELONGING

Chapter 4 begins with the discussion of the events from the period between the late 1960s and the end of 1970s in Turkey. It aims to show the effect of political instability on ethnic identification processes of Kazakh community in Istanbul, because the events from this period made many second-generation Kazakh community members question their ethnic and social identities. Further, the arguments in this chapter will be developed around the concept of physiognomy as an ethnic cue. This is because physical features of Kazakhs in Turkey constitute one of the strongest ethnic identity markers. That is how outsiders establish their Otherness. Another interesting issue that is going to be raised in this chapter is the relationship between Kazakhs and other Turkic migrants from Central Asia currently living in Zeytinburnu. Although because of physical similarities Kazakhs, Uyghurs or Uzbeks are confused with each other, this does not mean that these groups are not as homogenous as they are imagined.

4.1. HOW MAY PAST SHAPE PRESENT POLITICAL VIEWS OF KAZAKHS?

This work mainly evolves around the elements of social memory maintained by Kazakhs in Istanbul. In the previous chapter it was clear that the shared loss and trauma experienced during exodus from Xinjiang constituted not only essential part of Kazakhs' social memory, but also worked as driving force in creating and maintaining Kazakh ethnic boundaries. However, the exodus was not only event that was imprinted in the social memory of Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu. The happenings from the second half of the 1970s in Turkey also left some marks in the collective memory of Kazakhs. Moreover, these events have been continuously shaping the political stance of many Kazakhs in Turkey which was obvious during the campaign of Istanbul mayoral elections in 2019.

Sabri Sayari (2010) wrote that during the second half of the 1970s, Turkey had experienced one of the cruelest episodes of political violence in its modern

history. The waves of violence were originated from the campus radicalism of the late 1960s. In this period, similar to the American and European campuses, Turkish universities also witnessed a sharp rise in student political activism. Initially, young leftist activists, students protested the problems of the higher education system which later escalated into street demonstrations against the center-right Justice Party (JP) government, the Vietnam War, and Turkey's close military and political ties with the USA. Within a few months after the beginning of the strikes and sit-ins in 1968, the student protest movement grew into clashes and fights between two main groups: the leftist *devrimciler* (revolutionaries) and *ülkücüler* (far-right ultranationalists) (Sayari, 2010, p.199). The authorities and the media used the term ***anarşi*** to refer to this political violence that had been expanded from Istanbul and Ankara to the small provincial towns in Anatolia. According to Sayari nearly 5000 people died and thousands more were injured during this period. The failure of the Turkish government to stop the killing spree led to a military coup on September, 1980. However, the purpose of this chapter is not to address the questions about origins, development, and causes of political violence and terrorism in Turkey during the late 1970s and its consequences, instead in this part I will focus on the experience of Kazakhs and explore how the confrontations between different political groups affected their conceptualisation about personal, social and ethnic identities.

I first heard about the events of the 1970s while conducting my fieldwork. Beforehand I did not do any detailed research about modern Turkish history, because I could not foresee the fact that the events from this period might actually shape current political views of Kazakhs and their position within Turkish community. The events from the 1970s became relevant and were recalled during Istanbul Mayoral elections in 2019. In the elections Istanbulites were to choose between two candidates nominated by the ruling (AKP) and oppositional (CHP) parties. My fieldwork coincided with their political campaign. Esra, my host while talking about the approaching elections said that one of her acquaintances regardless being a heartily supporter of Nationalist Movement

Party (MHP) had an intention to vote for CHP candidate, Ekrem Imamoğlu, which made Esra angry[18]. "I said to her, *abla*, how would you dare vote for them, how would you forget that CHP was on the side of those who maltreated Kazakhs in the 1970s. By the way do you know what I am talking about? Wait, I will explain it to you." that is how in the late hours of the night Esra recollected the political violence of the 1970s and its reflection on Kazakh community. While describing those different political group confrontations she mainly relied on the stories heard from her parents and in-laws.

I would like to emphasise here the fact that Esra was born long after the political instability in Turkey, but interestingly the events from that time deeply affect her current political stance. Today she would rather be affiliated with AKP than CHP, because in her opinion during the time of political terror in Turkey, the Kazakhs were not well protected by CHP ruled government. This brings us again to the argument about social memory well expressed by Connerton (1990) who stated that people while experiencing the present moment are connected to the past events and objects despite the fact that those events and objects are no longer available for them. In addition, people can experience the present differently depending on the different pasts to which they connect that present. It means that it is really difficult to separate our past from our present. As a result, wars, migrations, revolutions, religious or economic reforms constitute memorable events which are sustained in social memory and influence decisions of individuals for the next few generations. The conversations with the Kazakhs showed me how in reality the memorable past events can influence the present life of communities. That is why I found it extremely important to include the narratives from Kazakhs' social memory into this dissertation, whether it is related to the trauma of exodus from Xinjiang or the political violence in Turkey.

[18] MHP did not nominate own mayoral candidate in 2019.

4.2. BEING THE OTHER OTHER

It seems that mainly the second generation of Kazakh settlers in Istanbul were involved in the right and left movements. It is understandable because the movement itself had been started by the youth and young years of the second-generation Kazakhs, who were born after the settlement of Kazakhs in Turkey, coincided with the events of the 1970s. A Kazakh woman, who was a college student at that period of time recalled how she would pray every time going to the classes, because at any point she could be a victim of the street attacks. The Kazakhs from this generation, whom I interviewed, recollected that initially they had struggled a lot about their identities. They stated that in school environment they were bullied quite often, because their Turkishness was questioned by their peers. This in turn made the Kazakhs themselves question their own identities. Beşir *ağabey*[19] shared that after regular group fights and beating-ups he would go straight to his parents to ask them who he was. The answer was always Turk. Similarly, Fatma abla told that once the leftist groups broke the windows of their house which made her furious: "I remember it as if it was yesterday. I went to my grandfather and asked him why he had brought us to this hell. My words struck him. He sat speechless for sometime. Then he said to me: "My child, I brought you here, because first we are Turks and second, we are Muslims."" Fatma abla told that later she did not question her grandfather. It is clear that in conflicts with their children Kazakh parents did not emphasise their children's Kazakhness, instead they convinced them that they were legitimate members of Turkish community no less than any other Turks. The stories of Beşir ağabey and Fatma abla are an example of the typical identity crisis experienced by the second generation. The political violence in Turkey at that time only reinforced this crisis and quest for their belonging.

Nagendra Bahadur Bhandari (2018, pp. 89-90) in his paper demonstrated well intergenerational negotiation of cultural identities from Jhumpa Lahiri's novel

[19] elder brother in Turkish

The Namesake based on the life of Indian immigrant family in the United States. He describes actions specific to the first- and second-generation members of the Ganguli family within the framework of acculturation and deculturation processes. Bhandari (2018) argues that the first generation immigrants view the foreign culture as a threat to their cultural identity. This makes them attempt reestablishing their native cultural identity. Living in one's own neighbourhood, celebrating native festivals or frequent visits to homeland indicate to the efforts of the first-generation immigrants to reinstate their native allegiances more strongly. That is why the first-generation Kazakhs in Turkey were keen on establishing various cultural associations and produce periodical publications. By doing it they wanted to promote and introduce Kazakh culture. The way how the first-generation Kazakhs were protective of the young girls upon their arrival to Turkey and not allowing them to marry outside their community also indicates to their attempt to maintain social cohesion that is to create a cohesive sense of what it is to be Kazakh.

In the second generation maintaining cultural identities develop in different manner and degrees comparing to the first-generation immigrants. This is because the former is brought up by diametrically different cultures. They do not experience distinct past and present like their parents. They have only one home that is the host country of their parents. However, what to do if that host country, the place you are born and grown up, discriminates you? As Bhandari (2018, p. 96) stated both the first and the second generation face discriminatory practices or rude remarks in their diasporic existence, but their reaction to this discrimination essentially differ from each other. "The first generation seems to be habituated and pretends not to notice. Even if they notice, their reaction is rather normal and less upsetting" (Bhandari, 2018, p.96), whereas the second generation might be outraged when they experience *othering*. As Bhandari argued such reaction is the result of their psychological sense of belonging, because unlike the first generations the second generations consider the host country as their homeland, thus when they experience discrimination, it really hurts them.

I believe that both Fatma abla and Beşir ağabey were hurt not so much physically as soulfully by the treatment of their peers during the left-right confrontations. Therefore, they were angry at their parents and questioning own identities. Many second-generation Kazakhs experienced the same thing and this feeling of pain led some of them to quest for belonging. For most of them *ülkü ocakları* was an answer to their quest. That is why many second-generation Kazakhs became *ülkücü.* I remember a man, who today supports MHP saying "I did not become MHP member, because I wanted it, I became because they were the ones who looked after us" (özellikle MHP'li olmak istediğimden değil, kimse sahip çıkmadığında onlar bize sahip çıktı).

Certainly, the identity crisis of the second-generation Kazakhs is not an only reason of them becoming ülkücü during political terrorism in Turkey, its pre-conditions were situated in the social memory of Kazakhs related to their exodus from Xinjiang. Since these people run away from Chinese communistic regime and their ideology, it becomes quite clear why in Turkey Kazakhs preferred to be and still are on the "far-right" side of the battle. Beşir ağabey recalling the events from his youth uttered following phrase "On one hand we were hated, on the other hand we were loved". This phrase in fact makes interesting the situation of Kazakhs in Turkey, because being loved and hated at the same time demonstrates a special form of Othering consisting of extreme hatred and admiration.

As scholars suggested Othering can result in different behaviours. For example, ignoring the specific group leads to their invisibility in society whereas hyper-visibility of certain groups will bring the higher level of difference between the self and the other. Hypervisible Othering results in essentialism where anyone who look or act similarly are assumed to have similar experiences. The case with Othering of Kazakhs can be conceptualised as an *outsider within* which is sometimes called as *the Other other*. These Others are partially accepted by the community. In this case for Other being accepted means to have an honorary position and they are usually grateful to be accepted by the Self (Min, 2014).

In spite of belonging to the Turkic culture and being Muslims, there are different factors that make Kazakhs the Other in Turkey. Especially, during the times of political violence in Turkey, not only Kazakhs' political view defined the nature of their Otherness, but also their physical features. More specifically, the Kazakhs were essentialised sometimes even stigmatised, due to their Mongoloid appearance. Consequently, their physical features became a visible symbol of their political affiliation i.e., ülkücü groups. As Beşir ağabey told me his face was disadvantage for him, even if he said that he was a communist, he would still be beaten up by the leftist groups, because his face would speak more than himself.

While applying the concept of Other to the Kazakhs in Istanbul, one can see that it has so many layers and it does not only involve the dichotomy of Turkish-Self and Kazakh-Other. The concept of the Other that is rooted in the physical appearance of Kazakhs is also expressed and exercised inside the Kazakh community itself. Since for Kazakh men it was allowed to marry outside of their community from the very beginning of exodus and after their settlement in Pakistan and Turkey, there were some mixed-race children who were born to Pakistani or Turkish mothers with Kazakh husbands whose physical features were distinct from other Kazakhs. Although, these people are accepted as Kazakhs on full terms, I noticed that other Kazakhs tend to give them certain kind of nicknames based on their similarities to other ethnic groups, for example, Kürt Ali or Arap Miraç.

Esra, a young lady, who actually opened up to me this whole theme of political terrorism in Turkey and whose name has been already mentioned in the previous section, was born to such kind of family. Her paternal grandmother was Pakistani woman; thus, her father was not a typical Kazakh i.e., a person with slanty eyes. During political turmoil in Turkey, in contrast to Beşir ağabey, the face of Esra's father was an advantage to him, moreover it was the advantage to the whole community. As Esra shared there were times when her father was given money by their relatives and neighbours to do their grocery shopping. The rest of the community was too scared to go outside, because any

time their physical appearance could provoke physical attacks. The next sub-section will reveal some difficult truths of being involved in the political crimes which sometimes is imposed by the external forces as a correct script of identity and does not necessarily indicate to somebody's personal choice.

4.2.1. Velican Oduncu: A Hero or A Criminal?

Haykırdım Yayıldı Sesim Zindana
Cana Cana Can VELİCAN'A
Nasıl Dayanırım Gardaş Acına
Şehid olmuş ülküdaşım Velican

The words above belong to the *türkü* (traditional song) dedicated to a Kazakh man named Velican Oduncu (1964-1988) by one of his ülküdaş (member of ülkücü group) friends. It is also a song of lament that is sang by Velican's comrades who mourn about his death. For the first time I have heard about Velican Oduncu in summer 2019 when I was attending his younger sister's funeral. The women there were talking about the life of a departed woman and one of them mentioned that she had an elder brother who died in prison because of his political views in the 1980s. After hearing their conversations, I could notice that the woman who mentioned it had certain kind of admiration towards the personality of that criminal brother. I forgot about this conversation, until the day when Altay ağa, my host in Salihli reminded me about it. Altay ağa is one of those many people who witnessed and experienced the right-left tensions during his youth. He told me about Velican, a Kazakh boy who was convicted for 39 years for murdering 7 people who were apparently communists. At that time Velican was only 14 years old and he was not executed because his age was under eighteen. The other witnesses, who recall the Velican's journey of becoming one of the sought-after criminals in Turkey, said that as a teenager once Velican came to visit his relatives in Salihli, there so-called communist boys attacked him and he was violently beaten up by them. According to Velican's younger brother Tahir Oduncu, who lives today in

Güneşli/Bağcılar, Istanbul this traumatic experience pushed his brother to establish tight relations with ülkücü group in Zeytinburnu. Altay ağa stated that the boy was simply used by the ultra-nationalist group, moreover Velican's anger and grudge against leftist groups because of his traumatic past experience was constantly provoked by them to make him commit more crime.

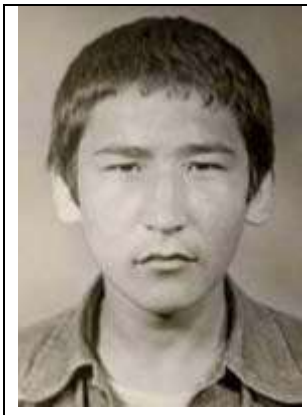
According to Tahir bey, Velican's brother not only the beating, but also the stories frequently told by their grandfather about Chinese communists and their persecution of Kazakhs provoked him to commit a crime. Those stories shaped young Velican's worldview and awoke his hatred against communistic ideas. Tahir bey further added: "…my brother spent 10 years in prison. He must have changed 6-7 prisons and finally, was killed in Gaziantep. We did not call him Velican, he had a pet name Tosun, because he used to be fat in his childhood. It was difficult times. Youngsters were beaten in Zeytinburnu. We were called fascist". However, what is fascinating about Velican Oduncu's story is that it has two sides and in one of them Velican is a hero and in the other one he is a brutal criminal.

To learn the story where he is depicted as a criminal it is enough to look through the newspapers of that period of time. One of the articles was titled "'Canım sıkıldıkça adam öldürüyordum" (Whenever I was bored, I would kill a man). Ülkücü Oduncu died many years ago and it is impossible to learn true facts neither about his crimes nor his victims. Thus, we may never know whether he was a ruthless killer as he was described in the media or he was just forced to take a blame on himself. Nevertheless, today Velican is commemorated and worshipped as the hero and martyr by some Kazakhs and ülkücü group members. As his brother says every year on July the 16th (the death day of Velican) *ülkücü camia* (ultranationalist congregation) visits his tomb and carries out Kuran-Hatim[20]. He also said that their family is often visited by MHP deputies.

Another point from this story which attracted my attention was the fact that the "heroism" of Velican is interpreted in close connection with the actions of Ospan

[20] Khatm al-Qurʾan is a recitation of the Holy Quran from the beginning to the end.

Batyr, a Kazakh freedom-fighter from Xinjiang. When I first talked to Tahir bey, he began his speech stating that they are from the lineage Molku of Kerey tribe, the same like Ospan Batyr. He emphasised that their family is the closest relative of Ospan Batyr among the Kazakhs living in Turkey. In fact, Ospan Batyr's name was already mentioned in Chapter 3, he was one of the initiators and leaders of "Three-Districts Revolution" in 1944 which led to the establishment of the last short-term independent East Turkestan State. Although ETR collapsed because of interventional powers and internal conflicts, Ospan batyr did not stop his partisan fighting against Chinese central government until the day he was captured and publicly executed in April 29, 1951. Godfrey Lias was one of the first western authors who underlined the distinctive place of Ospan Batyr in the social memory of Kazakhs from Turkey. He described the song about him heard from Kazakh bard named Karamullah from Develi, but Lias also warned his readers that "Kazak poetry is fulfilled with incomprehensible allusions to ancient history and legend which the rest of us could not understand" and moreover some of the "feats of arms and of courage which were ascribed to the Hero Ospan, in fact could be performed by other people" (Lias, 1956). Besides, according to Lias Kazakh refugees in Turkey did not even see how he was captured by the Chinese authorities. Nevertheless, one thing is clear here that Ospan Batyr has become a mythologised character in the collective memory of Kazakhs in Turkey. That is why some Kazakhs even call him as "Altay Kartalı" (Altay's eagle) and every year either on the day of his capture or execution Kazakhs in Istanbul have press-conference about him and deliver fiery speeches about his heroism. As Justin Jacobs (2010) stated "Kazak refugees in Turkey and Kazakstan crowned him a "martyr" before finally deciding that he was the aborted second coming of Genghis Khan. *Osman the myth is alive and well*" (p. 1291). However, similar to Velican's story Ospan Batyr's story also had the second side where he was nothing more than "bogeyman" and "bandit" for Chinese communists, whereas Chinese nationalists called him "incorrigible" and "unpredictable" hesitating to be allies with him (Jacobs, 2010, p. 1307).

	
Fig. 7 Velican Oduncu	**Ospan Batyr**

From the words of Tahir bey, I understood that his brother Velican is seen as the legitimate heir of the war initiated by Ospan Batyr. None could be more suitable to the task of fighting the communists and infidels than Velican considering the fact of him sharing the same blood with already mythologised character from Kazakh social memory. This is actually an exemplar case when the past is used by society to interpret its present. In this particular story the history of Kazakhs' exodus from Xinjiang with its main heroes was used to legitimise and condone the crimes of the second-generation refugee Kazakhs in Turkey.

To sum up, what I understood from the narratives shared by the interviewees the political terrorism in Turkey created a lot of trauma and brought damage to the life of whole population of the country. Especially, were deeply affected the young Turkish citizens. The conflicts between *ülkücü* and *devrimci* groups made many Kazakhs question their existence and legitimacy of their stay in Turkey. In the period between the end of 1970s and the beginning of 1980s there were considerable shifts not only in the political views, but also other aspects of life among the Kazakhs. If the first-generation Kazakhs were applying the model minority script for their social behaviour which means hard-working, no stealing or committing any other crime and presenting their culture only from positive side, active involvement of some of the second-generation Kazakhs in the political terrorism in Turkey indicated to the fact that model minority scenario

used by Kazakh settlers at their arrival was gradually loosening. The political struggle made the second-generation Kazakhs quest for belonging and have conflicts with their families. The most important finding from this chapter is how people's past significantly shapes their understanding and interpreting the present. In the case of Velican Oduncu, the image of Ospan Batyr was used to condone his actions. Velican's choice of the side in the battle between far-lefts and far-rights was significantly informed by his family's and community's past. As we could see the collective memory of Kazakhs and its elements today can inform decisions of younger people in variety of matters such as selecting the candidate to vote for, taking sides in the political confrontations, or even naming their children. Moreover, the conflicts during political instability in Turkey demonstrated the incidents of Othering exercised against Kazakh youth. Even though Othering happened because of Kazakhs' political position, Kazakhs were essentialised because of their physical appearance and all of them were considered as fascists. Since this chapter opened up the theme of Othering Kazakhs on the basis of their appearance and described how it was contextualised during the events of the 1970s, the next part is going to be a logical continuation of the same discussion, but only with much broader perspectives and examples.

4.3. THE VISIBLE INVISIBILITY OF KAZAKHS

This part addresses the issues related to the physiognomy of Kazakhs, because the appearance of Kazakhs makes them stand out from other people in Turkey. Therefore, this part aims at analysing situations where Kazakhs' face becomes essential in their ethnic identifications. The discussions include several examples which enable us to see how sometimes physical features become an impetus in negotiating ethnic identities. However, Kazakhs' physical presence does not always guarantee them ethnic presence, because their similarity with other Central Asian and East Asian communities usually causes confusions, generalisations, prejudice and bias about Kazakh identities.

4.3.1. Physical Features as Symbol of Ethnic Identity

When I had an interview with Sıddıkhan Uluçay, 85 years old man, the founding member of Kazakh-Turks foundation in Zeytinburnu, he had quite impressive library for a person who had worked for his whole life in the banking field. I used to imagine that only university professors own a lot of books. Almost all the sources were related to Kazakh culture. Among his collection there were twenty-volume Kazakh Soviet Encyclopaedia and the hardcopy of National Geographic magazine from 1954 with American anthropologist, Milton Clark's article about Kazakhs in Kashmir. Uluçay explained his reason for having such rich material in the following way:

> There is a question. Who are you? (Sen ozin kimsin?) Kazakhs here encounter with other nations, people. In Kazakhstan there is no such question, they live in their homeland, they know who they are, but in a foreign country people always pose this question. They have been to Korean war. They knew only Koreans. They knew nothing about us. Thus, while answering their question a Kazakh has to know something, that is why I put so much effort, collected these books, that is the only thing I could do.

Uluçay's life is an example of individual attempt to answer the question "Who are you?" posed by his surrounding. He approached this task seriously. He spent his whole life collecting and reading materials about Kazakh culture to be able to give full and satisfactory answer to anyone who was interested in his ethnic identity. However, what made others ask him question about his identity? What did trigger his surrounding to pose him question "Who are you?" Was it Uluçay's unusual behaviour? Was it his clothes which attracted attention of others? Or was it altogether? In one thing I can be sure of is that people largely were curious about Uluçay's identity because of his unusual physical appearance, particularly almond-shaped eyes. I remember myself in Ankara getting stared a lot both by men and women whenever I went out, sometimes children would point fingers to me or ask their parents questions about me. This shows that Kazakh community makes a big presence with their physiognomy.

While writing about the concepts of ethnic symbols and stereotypes Anya-Peterson Royce (1982) stated that interactions between different ethnic groups

are based on mutually recognisable symbols. According to her, the symbols are especially relevant when people try to communicate message about something invisible. Although, ethnic identity is invisible, it could be successfully expressed through culturally significant objects, sound and act including traditional clothes, food or dances. Similarly, here the physiognomy of Kazakhs should also be interpreted as *ethnic cues* which are the powerful symbols of ethnic identity. Stanford Lymann and William Douglas (1973) defined ethnic cues as "… aspects of appearance and behaviour that have ethnic significance but that are beyond the control of the actor" (cited in Royce, 19, p. 148). Similarly, Harold Isaacs (1975) spoke of the body as a badge of identity that immediately establishes who are the 'we' and who are the 'they'. Therefore, physical features are important in establishing ethnic identity borders because they are there and immediately visible and available to be used as symbols. They also appear as markers of ethnic identity because they are difficult to change.

In addition, Royce (1982) claimed that physical features usually are culturally loaded, because humans love to value certain combinations of height, body shape, movement and ignore others. Therefore, some physical traits could be considered more noble than others. For example, in some cultural systems delicacy of facial features and bone structure indicate aristocratic blood. So, people with such traits are guaranteed power and respect in their own societies. However, in the situations of conflict, such values may cause tragic incidents. The genocidal war in Burundi between the Tutsi and the Hutu can illustrate well this fact. Tutsi people being Nilotes were tall, slender and fine-boned, while the Hutu, Bantu people were short and heavy with broad noses. During colonial era the Tutsi were romanticised by both the locals and the Western observers. In the war erupted in 1972 the reporters saw piles of Tutsi hands and feet, because in their anger the Hutu destroyed "the most visible, most-hated symbol of their subordination - the superior height of the Tutsi - literally cut them down to size" (Royce, 1982, p. 155).

So, what kind of cultural loads does Kazakhs' appearance carry? What do Kazakhs value in terms of body image? How is Kazakhs' physiognomy evaluated by themselves and others? There is no fixed answer for these

questions. The meanings ascribed to the almond-shaped eyes of Kazakhs by the outsiders can vary significantly depending on the context. However, analysing examples I identified three perspectives how outsiders see Kazakhs and value their physical attributes. Firstly, the common feeling experienced by people while seeing Kazakh person would be recognising the strangeness of this person. The realisation of strangeness often comes with confusion, because most people do not immediately differentiate Kazakhs from other ethnic groups such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean or other Turkic groups such as Uyghurs, Uzbeks and Turkmens. For instance, *"Biz mına Türkiyada jürgende Kıtay dep ayttı, Kore dep ayttı, Japon dep ayttı… bilmegen uakıtta. Kazakpız dep ayttık. Kazak degen narse Türkiye'de kigen kiyim bul."* (When we were in Turkey, we were called Chinese, Korean, Japanese…when they did not know. We said we are Kazaks. But Kazak in Turkish means clothe to wear) (66, male, Interview, 2018). In these occasions, the face can not be an only ethnic cue, thus in order to recognise a specific person as a Kazakh, observing side should additionally rely on such ethnic cues as speech or clothes. To be even more sure about the Kazakhness of a person one has to have a dialogue with him or her.

Secondly, the appearance of Kazakhs may invoke certain kind of admiration towards their identity. I was told by activist woman from MHP[21] (National Movement Party) that she had always been greatly respected by the party members because of her face. Her Kazakh face made her more authentic Turk. The admiration towards Mongoloid looks in Turkey indicates to the fact of existing exoticisation of Kazakh culture. Regarding Kazakhs as real Turks is about nostalgia and wish to relive the past that is contained in the nomadism, myth of Ergenekon, tents and horses. Another relatively modern reason for exoticisation of Mongoloid features in Turkey is preconditioned with the spread of South Korean popular culture, especially K-POP and dorama. The Turkish youth, mainly girls are mesmerised with the artists and seeing in us the same physical attributes often express special affection. For example, during preparations for the Altay Village Festival in Niğde my host family drove to local

[21] In Turkish Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi

bazaar. As soon as we got out of the car, a young girl who was taking selfies in front of a wall with big graffiti, asked me to take her picture. Handing me over her phone, she was speechless for a second looking at three of us and then asked where we from. She also added that she adores *çekik gözlü* people and wanted to have eyes like theirs. I am quite certain that Kazakhstani students living in the dormitories in Turkey at least once were approached by Turkish girls wondering whether they were from South Korea or not.

Thirdly, the attitude towards physical appearance of Kazakhs is not always positive. This was especially salient during the events of the 1970s. During that time on the basis of their face all Kazakhs were essentialised as fascists. Even today many Kazakh society members in Zeytinburnu experience the occasional essentialism towards themselves. For example, Fatma abla (born and raised in Turkey, second generation Kazakh woman) while waiting for train in metro was asked by a strange man to leave the country. Most definitely she was assumed as a newly arrived migrant woman who was "stealing" locals' jobs. This confrontation would not have happened perhaps if she had not had distinctive looks from the majority of people. Following examples show some sort of bullying and hostility on the grounds of people's physiognomy and body, but not necessarily discriminating Kazakh ethnicity.

> At school you know we used to have regular check-ups for lice, you know that they used to start the checking with us. We were strangers, we were physically different, that is why in my childhood I remember myself looking at the mirror and wishing miracle to happen and change the shape of my eyes (30, male, interview 2019).

The similar story was told by a young girl. "We used to live in Küçükcekmece, and I went to primary school there, comparing to Zeytinburnu there were less Kazakh people and, in my class, I was the only Kazakh. In my childhood I was bullied a lot. Since I was fat and my eyes were small children used to call me *yaban domuzu*". The story of the young Kazakh male and the girl could be about hostility based on the beliefs about aesthetic body image, rather than body as an ethnic cue. Despite that it makes clear that Kazakhs' physiognomy stands out in Turkish society. To complete this section, I refer back to Royce's comments, where she argued that our physical features are culturally loaded,

because humans love to appreciate certain body shape, skin tone and height. As we could see from the given examples, it is clear that Kazakhs' face can be culturally loaded in various ways including exoticisation and essentialism. Here I described three basic stances of the outsiders towards Kazakhs' appearance. Now it is time to explore what Kazakhs themselves do value in their physical appearance and how they relate their faces to the question of ethnicity.

4.4.2. Insiders' Perspectives on Physical Features

In the field I was often asked am I a pure Kazakh, were both my parents Kazakh, am I Uyghur or Uzbek, because for those people I did not look like regular Kazakh. The people who asked me these questions could not even explain what made them think so. Here is the story of Yunus (28) who was born and raised in Istanbul and a father of two children. His wife is from Kazakhstan. The couple splits their life between Turkey and Kazakhstan. Yunus shared his experience how others challenge and question his ethnic identity in everyday life largely because of his appearance and the appearance of his kids:

> Do you really want to know the truth about us? You should look beyond the surface. Kazakh Turk Foundation, weddings or celebrations all are great, but being Kazakh in Turkey is not about that. Do you think we do like Turks? We don't really like them. All these years we were told we are not enough, second-class people. Are you Tatar? Are you this? Are you that? constantly asking questions. I remember myself looking at the mirror and wishing to have different eyes. Yeah (Vallahi, swear to God). …Then in Kazakhstan also the same, are you Kazakh? If so, why do you have fair skin and hair? Why is your name different? Why do your children's name sound differently? I feel like I do not belong to anywhere.

So, this example shows that physical features of Kazakhs spark the curiosity of not only outsiders but also the people within their own community. Especially Kazakh communities coming from different countries such as Turkey and Kazakhstan express special interest in each others' appearances. This leads to the considerations about specific image that each Kazakh community has in

terms of differentiating genuine Kazakh from fake one. The following story clarifies this statement.

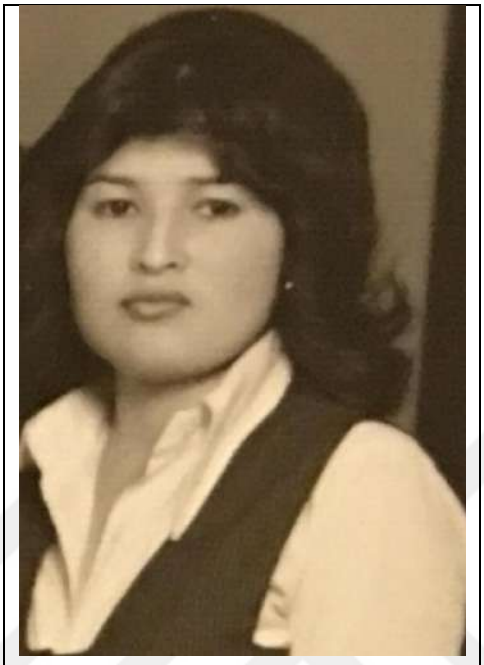


Fig. 8 Bağila Apa, Photo courtesy by Abdulhalim Karakol.

Beşir ağabey, whose name I mentioned in the section 4.2 shared to me how he married to Bağila apa. She used to live in Konya with her family. When her family moved to Istanbul Beşir ağabey fell in love with her and they began dating. He found an old photo of Bağila apa in his phone and showed it to me. A young woman with black wavy hair and rosebud lips was looking at me. Bağila apa was born to Kazakh father and Pakistani mother. She came from a crowded family, because her father had two wives. Beşir ağabey told that when they were still dating one day Bağila apa sent him a message telling that another suitor came to their house and asked for her hand. Beşir ağabey was shocked with these news and immediately went to talk to his mother explaining that if they did not do anything, Bağila would be forced to marry to another guy. Beşir ağabey: “I was furious, my mom on the contrary was so calm, she even said *tise tiye bersin, özi Kazakka da uksaymaydi* (let her marry, she doesn’t even look like a Kazakh)”. The statement of this mother demonstrates that

within Kazakh community there is a certain concept how real Kazakhs should look like. Anyway, with the help of Beşir ağabey's maternal grandfather the young couple were able to convince the father of Bağila apa to give them his blessing. There are some other people similar to Bağila apa having unusual face for a Kazakh person and who come from mixed families. Sometimes they are nicknamed as "Kürt" or "Arap". This shows that the physical appearance of Kazakhs becomes very relevant in verifying someone's Kazakhness and establishing its authenticity. This sub-section revealed that physiognomy is an important element in establishing someone's "fake" or "real" ethnic identities. The next section should explore people's actual reaction towards questioning and doubts about their ethnic identities on the basis of their appearance.

4.5. HOW DO KAZAKHS REACT ON COMMENTS ABOUT THEIR FACES?

The stories of confusion with other ethnicities give many Kazakhs the impetus for negotiating their identities in relation to Turkish citizens. The more they are confused with other nationalities the more they might claim themselves as being Turks or Kazakh Turks. Certainly, these claims partially were inspired and promoted by Turkish ultranationalist ideology supporters in Turkey. For some it is the feature which makes them real Turks. For others their physical feature is an indivisible part of their Kazakhness, which can not be easily erased.

One of the issues which still bother Kazakhs in Turkey is the unfamiliarity of other people about them. This unawareness of people in fact was the powerful driving force in negotiating their ethnicity. This is because while answering the question "Who are you?" Kazakhs would perform quest for their identity, for instance select the cultural material that would represent them best to others. Although Kazakhs' citizenship and status may make other people assume them being Turkish people, in reality the situation is different. Despite Kazakhs are treated well by Turkish government and received immediate financial support as well as their Turkish citizenship upon their arrival, because of their physical appearance people surrounding them easily confuse them with other nations

such as Koreans, Chinese or Japanese. Moreover, even if Turkish citizens see Kazakhs as Turks there are still confusions which stem from their physical and cultural similarity to plenty of other Turkic ethnic groups, because these groups are considered to be homogenous.

I consider that everyday struggle in self-identification of Kazakhs in Turkey, it is their visible invisibility. In public transport, in streets and shopping malls Kazakhs are physically visible due to their appearance, but ironically this high visible profile and physical presence of Kazakhs makes them ethnically invisible in Turkey. This means that general public in Turkey in reality does not know much about Kazakhs. This exact attitude from general public has become driving force for Kazakhs in negotiating their ethnic identity. I also argue that the desire to make themselves visible to public in Turkey has become even stronger after Kazakhstan's independence.

While conversing to Kazakhs about their ethnic identity, I identified that their biggest concern is to make known themselves for people in Turkey. For example, one of the men shared his frustration that there is no Kazakh *milletvekil* (member of parliament) in Turkey whereas there are representatives of Cherkes or Bosnian ethnic groups. Batı Hakim, the assistant manager of Kazak-Turks Foundation in Zeytinburnu, during interview vigorously told me about the singer-rapper Eypio[22] who was Turkmen grown up in Zeytinburnu. Eypio's song made him well-known among the young audience in Turkey. Thus, he became the pride of Turkmen population in Istanbul. Today, his initial song which made him famous hit more than 265 million views on YouTube. Hakim told that Kazakh youth should learn from people like Eypio and contribute to the visibility of Kazakhs not only in Turkey but also in the world. Further he began to convince me also to start vlogging and uploading videos on YouTube, because as an educated young woman I have better chances to make Kazakhs well-known to the world. Here is the part of his enthusiastic speech about Kazakhs' invisibility:

[22]Eypio & Burak King - #Günah Benim (Official Video) https://www.youtube.com/watch?

> The whole world knows Chinese or Koreans. Why? Because they have actors. Bruce Lee, Jet Li, Jackie Chan. Kazakhs do not have popular actor. There is only Asylkhan[23], but Asylkhan is only known in Kazakhstan. His film *Myng Bala* was not well promoted overseas. Did not have good advertising… You know the only problem of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, Kazakhs in Turkey, Kazakhs of the world is that there is they don't have a popular person. The phenomenon type person. They are popular only in their own regions. China's Kazakhs in China, Turkey's Kazakhs in Turkey, Kazakhstani Kazakhs in Kazakhstan. But we need to go abroad, become popular. Why don't we have our Micheal Jackson, why don't we have our Bruce Lee or Jet Li? (Interview, 2018).

Hakim believed that the remedy for Kazakh "ethnicity crisis" is to have super-popular person to represent the whole nation who eventually make Kazakhs recognisable in the world by its own name not confusing with others. The visibility of Kazakhs in Turkey was also questioned when Turkish actor, Haluk Bilginer won Emmy Award for his performance in the TV series "Şahsiyet" (Persona) in November, 2019. In the media Bilginer was portrayed as the first ever Turkish man who received International Emmy Award. However, in social media Kazakhs began to voice their discontent, because according to them the first Turkish man who was awarded with Emmy was Hasan Şerefli, who come from the family of Kazakh settlers in Istanbul.

Hasan Şerefli received Emmy Award 16 years before Haluk Bilginer in 2003 in the nomination "Documentary Film and Research" for his film "Parmaklıklar Arkasındaki Çocuklar" (The Children Behind Bars). In this documentary together with other eight researchers, Şerefli addressed the problem of children who were put into correctional facilities at their young age. During that time Şerefli was master student in the USA. Today Şerefli lives in the USA with his family and works in the field of international trade. In his interview to the newspaper Şerefli linked the unpopularity of his Emmy comparing to the current one to the dominance and prevalence of popular culture in Turkey. According to him, in Turkey people are not open to novelties yet (www.memurlar.net).

[23] Assylkhan Tolepov, a rising movie star in Kazakhstan, who became popular through his work in the film called "Zhauzhurek Myn bala", where he played the role of the 18th century Kazakh hero Sartay.

Although, the unpopularity of Hasan Şerefli's Emmy Award was related to the dominance of popular culture, rather than Kazakhs' ethnic invisibility, for some Kazakhs in Turkey the debate about "Who was the first Emmy winner in Turkey?" was opportunity to claim their identity. On one hand they felt proud for being Kazakh and underlined the director's contribution from their community to Turkish culture and film industry. On the other hand, claiming Hasan Şerefli as the first Turkish man awarded with Emmy, they did not use the term Kazakh-Turk thus avoiding hyphenated identity assigned to them. It means that sometimes they are also eager to be just as much Turk as others in the country or emphasise at least that they are not less Turks than other members of community.



Fig. 9 Turkish Emmy Award Winners (www.memurlar.net)

Barth (1969, 24) stated that "…individuals and small groups, because of specific economic and political circumstances in their former position and among the assimilating group, may change their locality, their subsistence pattern, their political allegiance and form, or their household membership". The interviews for this research also showed that there were special occasions, similarly to winning Emmy award, when the Kazakhs preferred to emphasise their *Turkishness* i.e., when they ethnically identify themselves as Turk. In what

situations do people emphasise their Turkishness and Kazakhness? In what circumstances do they manipulate with their ethnic identities?

The Kazakhs from Turkey who work abroad, more specifically in European countries love to emphasise their Turkishess. For instance, Gokhan (40, male) who spent six years working in the Netherlands said that in there while being asked about his ethnicity he used to say “I am Turkish/Turk”, however, anyone hardly ever believed him, because of his face, his Turkishness and its authenticity was doubted and questioned. This again shows the argument of Royce who claimed that physical features are ethnic markers that are hardly erased. The following part looks at the relationship between Kazakhs and other Turkic migrant groups from Central Asia currently residing in Zeytinburnu. This is especially important considering the fact these groups share similar physical features and quite ofthen confused with each other. However, the following discussions should reveal that regardless their physical similarities Turkic groups from Central Asia are not as homogenous as some people might consider.

4.6. THE SENSE OF SOLIDARITY AMONG TURKIC GROUPS

4.6.1. Zeytinburnu as Cultural Mosaic

It has been well established that this research was carried out in Zeytinburnu district of Istanbul. The uniqueness of this district is included in the fact that it is a cultural mosaic where many migrant Turkic ethnicities, mainly from Central Asia currently co-exist. If Kazakhs and Uyghurs began to settle in the district since the 1950s, Uzbek war refugees from Afghanistan found new home in Turkey between the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s (Uehara, 1992; Saka, 2006). The multicultural nature of Zeytinburnu can be easily seen through the people’s clothes in the street and the number of ethnic grocery stores and restaurants. In this context how do Kazakhs identify themselves against other

Turkic ethnicities living in Zeytinburnu? How do they characterise each other? When do their individual ethnic identities become relevant? These questions should be addressed throughout this chapter.

Chapter 3 revealed to us that the main historical difference between Turkic groups in East Turkestan was their lifestyle. Thus, historically Kazakhs were nomads, whereas Uyghur people were farmers and traders. Today certainly, their lifestyle changed enormously and moreover they do not even live in their ancestral homeland which is Xinjiang. Despite the fact that today they both lead almost the same lifestyles and have become urban dwellers; they still continue to see each other as ethnically distinct communities on the basis of their history. The reason for this is their long-held social memory, the concept extensively explored in the previous chapters. One of the informants of this research said a proverb in Kazakh *"Sart katty ma, tas katty ma?"* (Which is harder rock or Sart?) implying the stinginess and affection towards material values of Uyghur people. He was calling them Sart, because Imperial Russian travellers called the Uyghurs and Uzbeks with general name Sart which denoted both Turkic and Persian-speaking sedentary people and traders in Xinjiang (Benson, 1990). This proverb is certainly a form of negative ethnic stereotypification and most probably originated from the Uyghurs' traditional occupation form which is trading. As a response to this Kazakh proverb Uyghurs may call Kazakhs as lousy shepherds who had no culture or civilisation (Oraltay, 2005).

However, what surprised me here is that how some elements retained in the social memory of people can be recollected and applied to define current relationships of modern communities. In this particular case, the historical occupation of Uyghur people is interpreted as their ethnic trait and Kazakhs recollected it to emphasise the ethnic difference between themselves and Uyghur community. That is why on one hand while admitting that they are related ethnic groups Kazakhs and Uyghurs still consider themselves as separate ethnicities. This is clear from their everyday dialogues and stereotypes about each other which is narrated within both communities. On the other hand, although they consider themselves as separate ethnic groups, they still see

each other as an ally and closer person than any other Turkish citizen. Even the geographical proximity in their settlement in Istanbul that is living in the same neighbourhood indicates to this fact.

4.6.2. What Is in a Name: Türk or Türki?

In Turkish context due to mainly similar physical features Turkic ethnic groups from Central Asia are considered to be the homogenous group. Moreover, they are looked as part of bigger and powerful Turkish nation not as a separate ethnicity or nation. In fact, the law that helped Kazakhs to settle in Turkey recognised and verified them as people of Turkish origins and closely affiliated and tied to Turkish culture. That is why for Kazakhs in Turkey it is quite challenging to claim themselves as Kazakhs, instead they prefer to call themselves Turk or Kazakh-Turk. However, the use of hyphenated terms such as *Kazak Türkü* (Kazakh-Turk) or *Uyghur Türkü* like Asian American or African American creates a framework with a (real) Turk versus a type/version of Turk. I believe that although a person owns a hyphenated ethnic identity label, it rarely expresses the person's equal belonging to both identities. For example, in some occasions their Kazakhness may be emphasised more, while in other times their Turkicness/Turkishness. This thought was originated from Barth's conceptualisation of ethnicity and its manipulation in order to achieve advantageous position.

There is also a distinction between the use of term "Turk" in Turkish and Kazakh. Turkish uses the term *Türk (e.g. Kazak Türkü*) to denote themselves together with many other historical Turkic ethnic groups living in the world, whereas in Kazakhstan Turkish person from Turkey is called *Türik* (*Түрік;* in Russian *Турок*), while referring to the historical Turks the word *Türki* (*Түркі;* in Russian *Тюрк*) is being used. In Kazakh by simply changing the order of a letter "i" we could distinguish between current Turkish citizens and the rest of Turkic groups who have become separate nations in Central Asia due to various political developments. However, in Turkish context there is no such clear-cut

distinction. Once I went to the supermarket together with my South Korean friend, since my friend had been doing her grocery shopping in this supermarket for a long time, the cashier recognised her. After greeting her the cashier turned to me and said “Are you also a Korean?” me “No, I am from Kazakhstan”. “Oh, then you are Turk.” “No, I am Kazakh”. The cashier seemed confused by my answer.

This shows that when Turk sees a Kazakh, he/she is considered as Turk (but only after establishing her/his Kazakhness through asking questions, because physically we could be anyone from Japanese to Uyghur like in my own example), to be more specifically he/she is considered as Kazakh-Turk. However, when Kazakhs interact with Uzbek or Uyghur person, they are only Kazakhs there is no need to use hyphenated identity terms such as Kazakh-Turk, Uzbek-Turk or Uyghur-Turk. Moreover, these groups show affection towards each other. The warm and favouring relations against each other is especially visible when Turkic communities such as Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs and Uzbeks practice social solidarity among each other. The following section will describe and explain why do Turkic ethnicities from Central Asia practice social solidarity.

4.6.3. The Sense of Solidarity Among Turkic Ethnic Groups

It is assumed that the sense of solidarity mainly comes into forward when a group member gets in trouble. Solidarity can be exercised in any group category. People express sense of solidarity within the same religious, gender, professional, regional, linguistic etc. groups. In my interpretation act of solidarity itself is an act of ethnic identification that is by helping to someone in distress from their ethnic or ethnically related group a person makes a claim or statement that they belong to the same group. There were plenty of examples of such attitude during my fieldwork. To illustrate this, Muslims usually fast in month of Ramadan. In this month the Kazakh-Turks’ Foundation distribute food packages to poor Uyghur and Kazakh families and organise *iftars* (sunset meal

for fasters). From Islamic perspectives doing good deeds in the month of Ramadan is especially rewarding because they are multiplied. That is why Muslims try to compete in doing good deeds. What we see here that the officially organised help of Kazakhs was distributed on the basis people's ethnicity.

Here is a recent story of a young Uyghur man, who while escaping from Chinese re-education camp, illegally crossed Turkey's border. Consequently, this man was put into jail in Turkey. One of the Kazakh men using his connections helped him to get out of the jail. There are many Syrian and Afghani refugees who often cross Turkey's border illegally. But instead of helping one of them Kazakh man steps into helping this Uyghur man. He felt closer to this man, because according to his words his parents also once came from East Turkestan that is why he partially feels himself as East Turkestani. Although East Turkestan after the dissolution of Soviet Union and Kazakhstani independence began to be associated largely with Uyghurs, Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu still call themselves sometimes as Eastern Turkestani. This story shows that in the most occasions the social memory of Kazakhs function as an impetus in enacting social solidarity against other Turkic ethnic groups.

As I have seen from my fieldwork the sense of solidarity exercised by Kazakhs against their Turkic brothers or vice versa is not restricted only to Zeytinburnu district. For instance, Mustafa ağabey and his wife in town of Niğde once drove me to the Uzbek store. As soon as we entered the place the old man began to speak in Uzbek assuming we were Uzbeks. None of us have been to this place before. However, in there I could feel that we were extremely warm-welcomed not because we were their customers, but we were Kazakh customers. Even though, we said that we were not Kazakhs the old man continued to speak in Uzbek. Every time when Mustafa ağabey's wife spoke to me and used the words common in Uzbek and Kazakh languages, the grandson of the store owner would get excited.

Why were these examples presented here in the first place? This was done in order to demonstrate once more that the Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu construct their relationships with other Turkic ethnicities on the basis of their collective

memory. Even though they see many other Turkic groups emigrated from Central Asia as a separate nation and ethnicity they are inclined to practice social solidarity among themselves and support each other in difficult situations. For this exact reason, I was warmly welcomed in Uzbek grocery store and that is why the Kazakh man helped the Uyghur boy to get out from jail in Turkey. The Figure 9 is a visual representation of Kazakhs' relations with other Turkic ethnic groups in Turkey. The word Uzbek here is a variable, instead of this ethnonym there could be terms such as Kyrgyz or Uyghur too. The diagram illustrates that all these three groups have something in common. However, for my argument I draw a bigger share of common things between Kazakh and Uzbek (in green) on purpose. The closeness of Kazakhs to other Turkic groups from Central Asia originates from their shared history and geography. In addition, all these groups in Zeytinburnu share the destiny of a migrant and refugee in Turkey. There are also many similarities in languages too in contrast to formal Turkish language based on Istanbul dialect. The Venn diagram was chosen to illustrate this fact in a more metaphorical way.

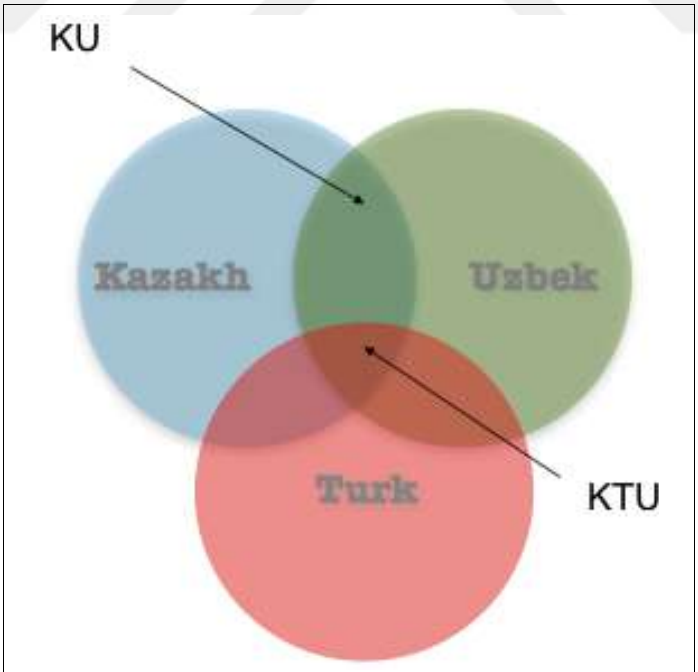


Fig. 10 Venn diagram representing relationship between different Turkic ethnic groups within Turkish context

As a result, the relationship between Kazakhs and other Turkic groups in Zeytinburnu is based on mutual social solidarity and inspired with their viable social memory. Despite that as some first and 1.5 generation Kazakhs claim currently these groups are less united and integrated. They believe that in the 1960s they were more bonded. This was because in the past they had regular collective performances representing traditional music, dances and clothes of Turkic peoples from Xinjiang. Thus, the review of the cultural activities of East Turkestani settlers in Istanbul from the 1960s in the next section should show us how the level of ethnic identities' emphasis can be subject to changes throughout the time and geography. Certainly, major changes in people's ethnic identity perceptions happen because of macro-processes, but individual agency of people in this matter also should not be ignored.

4.6.4. Cultural Activities of East Turkestani People

The first-generation Kazakhs in Istanbul did not strongly emphasise their individual ethnic identity upon their arrivel. For them the end of 1950s and 1960s was an era of claiming East Turkestani identity. This identity was demonstrated on stage through collective performances of Turkic peoples from Central Asia. Such performances were initiated and sponsored by the organisation called *Doğu Türkistan Göçmenler Derneği* (East Turkestan Association of Immigrants) established in 1960. It was the joint association of both Kazakhs and Uyghurs which intended to introduce the culture of East Turkestanis to local Turks and help them to be able to apprehend who these people were. This association was established by Uyghur ultra-nationalist leader such as Isa Yusuf Alptekin (1901-1995). Being a strong figure both at international level Alptekin succeeded in attracting attention of state authorities of different countries and international organisations on the issues of Eastern Turkestan. He partially helped Kazakhs to gain refugee status in Turkey, because in Turkey he was officially recognised warrantor of people from East Turkestan. That is why Turkish government sought his advice and approval for issuing refugee status and visa to Kazakhs.

I tried to find the former members of folklore group related to the East Turkestan Association of Immigrants. All those performers today became old and some of them emigrated from Turkey to Europe, whereas quite few died. I talked to three Kazakh women who actively performed during their youth. While sharing their experience they became more live and active. Two of them even agreed to perform to the camera. They said: “during those days we did not separate each other. For outsiders we were all Doğu Turkestanis. We had a lot of fun performing. We used to have Uzbek dance teacher. We sang songs in Uyghur.” They were regularly performing in *Tekirdag Kiraz* (Cherry) Festival and at home they were still keeping black and white photos as memo those days.



Fig. 11. At the back from left to right: Rahime Çakmak, Gülten Alptekin (the daughter of Isa Yusuf Alptekin), Saadet Taştan (now lives in Munich), Ayşe Gökay. **In the front:** Zübeyde Çakmak. **Photo by courtesy of Ayşe Gökay.**

The interviewee-women also shared information about the nature of their dance performances. As they claimed in the 1960s, they used to dance on stage not Kazakh, but choreographed Uyghur dances. They warmly commented on their dance master and choreographer who was the Uzbek man called Hekimcan Kaynar. In the sources Kaynar is shown as an influential person who promoted the culture of Turkic peoples during the 1960s in Zeytinburnu (Türk, 2009). He was a dentist, but at the same time he managed to choreograph several dances

for folk group including dances as *Can Ükecan Türkistan*, *Güllale* and *Pamuk toplama dansi*. One of the dances which two women performed for me in their living-room called *Can Ükecan Türkistan*[24]*.* They were dancing and singing at the same time.

At the beginning of the dance, they had their thumbs up as if trying to emphasise how powerful and first-rate nation was Turkestan. Their song represented a kind of national anthem for East Turkestani people. Looking at the first lines of its lyrics: *Ah yurung ortak oynaylik* - Let us go and play (dance) together **-** *can ükecan Türkistan* - dear brother Turkestan; calling all Turkic groups of East Turkestan to unite, then in the last line of the second verse: *Ah oynay desem koymaydi, can ükecan Türkistan* - How I do want to dance, but they do not allow me; *Aramızda düşman bar yar hürriyet* - since the enemy is between us; Thus from the lyrics only it is possible to understand how Turkic peoples were deeply affected by Chinese colonisation and their response to this was to unite as children of one family. The song was so relevant considering the fact that the memories of Ili Rebellion or Three District Revolution of 1940s was still fresh in the 1960s.

During this period many Kazakh leaders promoted the idea of Turkicness and the loyalty to the East Turkestan. For example, an association called *Türkistanlılar Kültür ve Yardımlasmţa Derneği (*Turkestanis Culture and Cooperation Organization) were made up of only ethnic Kazakhs in 1963 in Salihli. Although this association was established by a group of ethnic Kazakhs only still the name of the association did not bear the term 'Kazakh'. The leaders of Kazakh community preferred the name *Türkistanlılar* (Turkestani People). Even this choice of the name indicates to Kazakh leaders' effort in promoting the idea of Turkicness.

If in the 1960s it was still possible to talk about generic Turkic nation or East Turkestani identity, today Kazakhs in Turkey, though their ancestors came from Xinjiang, are developing strong relations with Kazakhstan. Similar thing can be said about Uzbeks, Turkmens and Kyrgyz whereas East Turkestan became a domain of Uyghurs and their unfulfilled dream of independent state. The main

[24] For full song see Appendix 6

argument of this work is that ethnic identity is cultural practice rather than a fixed entity. That is why ethnic identities can be very flexible, apt to changes and can be differently interpreted. The major changes in our ethnic identifications occur because of macro-processes. For instance, the people of Central Asia were imposed various identity scripts throughout their historical development. Even the ethnonyms such as Kazakh, Uyghur or Uzbek were largely constructed and handed down to the communities to enact ethnic identity scripts suitable for Russian and Chinese Imperialists, Nationalists and Communists. For example, the term “Uyghur” was revived in the 19th century by European and Russian scholars (Beller-Hann, 2007; Brophy, 2006) and according to Linda Benson, the Soviets and despotic governor of Xinjiang, Sheng Shicai fostered the use of this term with an intention to divide the Muslim population of Xinjiang, whereas the various Turkic Muslim peoples living there preferred to identify themselves as “Turki”, “East Turkestani” or “Muslim”. Thus, when both Kazakhs and Uyghurs settled in Zeytinburnu in the 1950s they were cherishing the idea of East Turkestan as a homeland and considered themselves as one nation. However, situation changed when Kazakhstan became independent. The modern identity script of Kazakhs imposed by Kazakhstani state was to embrace Kazakhstan as new homeland and contribute its nation-building processes. Although Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu from time to time take part in parades condemning Chinese government for discriminating policies against Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, the community does not express strong urge to move to East Turkestan, live there, study, invest and setting up business there. Instead, all these actions are turned towards new glorious Kazakhstani state. As Benson and Svanberg (1998) put it “…the Republic of Kazakhstan, which, for the first time in 300 years, offers Kazaks dispersed throughout the world an independent, Kazak-administered homeland” (1998: 197). Thus, the dispersed Kazakhs in the world did not only have an opportunity to embrace their newly-created homeland, in the form of nation-state, but also, they were subjected to changes in their social structure. Kazakhs in Turkey were no longer East Turkestani settler, Kazakh refugee or Kazakh minority in Istanbul, instead they were redefined as Kazakh diaspora,

thus the birth of Kazakhstan on the map meant the birth of Kazakh diaspora too. The logical continuation of the story about Kazakhs' relationships with other Turkic ethnicities should be the detailed revelation of the ways how the independence shaped identity perceptions of Kazakhs inTurkey.

CONCLUSION

The narratives shared by the interviewees indicated that political instability in Turkey during the 1970s created a lot of trauma. The conflicts between ülkücü and devrimci groups made many Kazakhs question their existence and legitimacy of their stay in Turkey. If the first-generation Kazakhs were applying the model minority script for their social behaviour, active involvement of some of the second-generation Kazakhs in the political conflicts in Turkey demonstrated how model minority scenario used by Kazakh settlers at their arrival was gradually loosening. As we could see the collective memory of Kazakhs and its elements today can inform decisions of younger people in variety of matters such as selecting the candidate to vote for, taking sides in the political confrontations, or even naming their children. Moreover, the conflicts during political instability in Turkey demonstrated the incidents of Othering exercised against Kazakh youth. Even though Othering happened because of Kazakhs' political position, Kazakhs were essentialised because of their physical appearance and all of them were considered as fascists. Even today the Kazakhs due to their shape of eyes stand out within Turkish community, but this does not make them visible or recognisable as an ethnic group or a nation. Here they are often labeled as Kazakhs as Kazakh-Turk i.e., as a certain type of Turk. They may be confused for Chinese or Koreans. However, more often, they get confused a lot with other Turkic ethnicities from Central Asia. The point here was to show that while outsiders see all of these people as homogenous group, they themselves see each other as a separate ethnic group and a nation. Historically they would differentiate themselves mainly depending on their cultures such as sedentary or nomadic. But after the Soviet Union's project of

“carving nation-states” each of the Turkic groups began to see each other as a separate nation no matter how similar their language, religion and culture were. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 the nation-states created in the early 1920s in Central Asia did not simply disappear, each of these states embarked on a new journey of promoting nationalism and creating national identities. This tendency also had an effect on Zeytinburnu people most of whom were Turkic emigrants from Central Asia. Therefore, the next chapter is going to deal with the macro-processes and discuss its deep impacts on the ethnic identifications of Kazakhs in Turkey.

PART 2

NEGOTIATING THE SCRIPTS OF KAZAKH IDENTITY

CHAPTER 5

KAZAKHSTAN AS A NEW HOMELAND

Chapter 5 will look at the macro-processes leading to the transformation of homeland understanding among Kazakhs in Istanbul. It demonstrates how after the collapse of USSR Kazakhs living in Turkey shifted their focus from their actual homeland which was East Turkestan towards newly-established country called the Republic of Kazakhstan in 1991. After the independence N.N. Nazarbayev, the first Kazakhstani President, decided to actively involve Kazakh diaspora members into Kazakhstani nation-building process. He initiated Kurultays, the regular meetings of diaspora members in Kazakhstan in order to boost economic and cultural relations between Kazakhstan and other countries. He also started the governmental repatriation project. In the nation-building process Kazakhs from Turkey acted mainly as foreign investors and revivalists of Islam.

5.1. MACRO-PROCESSES LEADING TO HOMELAND TRANSFORMATION

In 1991, the Central Eurasian regions of once powerful USSR became independent. For the first time in the twentieth century, Muslim peoples like Kazakhs, Uzbeks and Kyrgyz received a chance to rule their own states. This change brought into focus the history and present fate of the ethnic minority groups of both old Russian and Chinese empires, whose past and culture have remained relatively unknown in the West for many years (Benson & Svanberg, 1998). Due to the disintegration of the Soviet Union Kazakhstan emerged as an independent state and ownership of the new state belonged to its titular nation, Kazakhs. Similar developments occurred in other former Soviet countries, but Kazakhstani case was unique, because Kazakhs as an ethnic group did not

make up the majority of the population in the country during the first years of independence. They were less in the number than the non-titular portion of the population (Kuscu, 2007).

Kazakhstan declared itself as an independent state on December 16, 1991. Turkey was the first country in the world to recognise its independence which facilitated both countries' future economic and cultural relations. This in turn had another impact on the lives of Kazakhs in Turkey enhancing their mobility between two countries. There were inevitable changes in the self-perception of Kazakh people from all over the world due to the collapse of USSR. These changes were inspired by the central government of Kazakhstan which began to engineer Kazakh national identity soon after gaining independence.

Martha-Brill Olcott stated the independence to Kazakhstan was unexpectedly handed over after the collapse of USSR. Some scholars may interpret this statement as if Kazakhs never fought for their independence or even were reluctant to be an independent state. However, I suggest interpreting Olcott's statement in different perspective which indicates to the fact that as a country Kazakhstan was not fully prepared for its independence. Constructing and promoting Kazakhstani national identity was not an easy task, considering that Kazakhstan was the most fragile state among the former Soviet countries due to its geographic location. It has almost 7.000 km of common border with Russia, and the large number of ethnic Russian population who continues to be present in the country. According to the official statistics, when Kazakhstan received independence only 40% of the population constituted Kazakhs and the rest 60% were of other ethnicities (Özgül, 2006; Kesici, 2011; Ametbek, 2015).

In constructing national identity, the first president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev instead of relying on the Kazakh population inside the country made a decision to turn towards the Kazakhs living in other countries. Therefore, in the early years of independence Kazakhstani elite developed active homeland rhetoric, inviting the members of the diaspora to return to their historical homeland and propagated their ideas through public speeches and in the Kazakh-language media (Kuscu Bonnenfant, 2012, 31). This was done

because of three main reasons. Firstly, executing repatriation policy of Kazakh diaspora meant the regulation of the demographic proportion of Kazakh people in the republic who were less in number.

Secondly, introducing Kazakhstan to Kazakh diaspora abroad was a way to attract potential investors to the country, because the collapse of USSR also had led to the economic collapse in Central Asia which resulted in deep economic crisis in the region. Therefore, "both the transition from strict and centralist socialist economy to free market economy and the difficulty of standing on its own legs as a free country for the first time were quite a challenging issue" (Yılmaz, 2014: 30) for Kazakhstan. As Benson and Svanberg (1998) pointed in the mid-1990s the members of Kazakh diaspora who enjoyed prosperity in their adoptive countries begun to invest in Kazakhstan's troubled economy. Therefore, as a remedy for its national economic breakdown the government decided to attract more foreign investments. Here, the contribution of Turkish investors into Kazakhstani economy should not be overlooked. Since Turkey was the first country which recognised Kazakhstani independence, Turkish companies were also pioneers among the foreign investors in Kazakhstan. As Serdar Yılmaz (2014) underlined where Turkish state's efforts were insufficient in enhancing relations with Kazakhstan, the Turkish businessmen stepped in and their initiatives shaped the relations between Turkey and Kazakhstan.

The third reason in incorporating Kazakhs diaspora into nation-building process of Kazakhstan was their "authentic" and "pure" nature. It was believed that since their worldview and language had not been contaminated with Soviet ideology, their contribution in nation building would be truly positive. Particularly, Kazakh diaspora from Turkey played essential role in reviving Islam in Kazakhstan. For instance, the president personally invited Halifa Altay, Kazakh Islamic scholar from Turkey to Kazakhstan and urged him to collaborate with the local imams and educate people about Islam.

Unraveling the nation-building process of Kazakhstan is not as easy as it might seem. The reason for this is Kazakhstan's complex historical and geographical

context, including its multi-ethnic population. Throughout its existence as a sovereign state from the 1990s Kazakhstan wove its path between civic and ethnic nationalism. As a result, Turkey's Kazakhs, who are the main focus of this research, as diaspora community played its own part within the framework of ethnic nationalism. In the following section I will reveal and explain the effect of these macro-processes, especially the impact of Kazakhstani early nation-building initiatives on Kazakhs in Turkey at individual level.

5.2. KAZAKHSTAN IS NEW ANCESTRAL HOMELAND

I saw Hüseyn for the first time in Kazakh wedding in 2018, there he performed Kazakh custom *betashar,* which is translated as "opening the face of bride". He skilfully played dombyra and sang the song of betashar. The meaning of this song can be interpreted as a marriage guidance sang to brides where the singer recites such important advice as "to build a trusting relationship with parents-in-law, be polite with relatives, venerate the household, not to dishonour them all, be far-sighted, to shape a solid and hospitable family, to protect, the ancestral hearth and provide the continuity of the clan" (Kartaeva & Kulnyaz, 2017, p.203). Betashar is one of the very few Kazakh traditions that is being practiced by Kazakhs in Turkey. Another important part of this tradition is that the singer includes in his song names of male in-laws of the bride so she bows to greet them, whereas male relatives whose name mentioned in the song give money to the performer.

As I heard Hüseyn's singing I suspected that he was one of Kazakhstani students in Turkey who was doing betashar professionally, because his Kazakh was quite good for someone from his generation and in addition to that in Zeytinburnu there were only two elderly professional Kazakh betashar singers and both of them I knew in person. However, to my surprise I learnt that Hüseyn was born and grown up in Istanbul. Among his five siblings he is the only one who can play dombyra and speak Kazakh. This is because 25-year old Hüseyn studied university in Kazakhstan with the education quota given by the

Kazakhstani Ministry of Education to Kazakhs living abroad. This project started in 1994 and initially there were only 40 Kazakh students, whereas in the following year the number of expat Kazakhs who came to study in their ancestral homeland increased almost for four times. Young Kazakhs from China, Mongolia, Iran, Turkey, and Russia began their studies in Almaty, Zhambyl, Turkestan and Taldykorgan cities (Mendikulova, 2014).

Similar to Mendikulova many Kazakhstani migration and diaspora researchers in their papers label Kazakhstan as an ancestral homeland of all Kazakhs in the world with so much certainty, that some of them even fail to recognise that Kazakhstan is not an actual, but rather a constructed homeland. Hüseyn's grandparents were from Xinjiang, during their migration from China there was not even an independent state called Kazakhstan. However, regardless that today we can see the tendency well-argued by Kusçu (2016). She stated that if the first generation of Kazakhs in Turkey were still holding on the idea of Doğu Turkestan as their homeland and emphasising this idea through various cultural activities, after independence Kazakhs in Turkey began to focus more on Kazakhstan as their homeland leaving Eastern Turkestan for the domain of Uyghur ethnicity. This shift in focus did not happen by itself, but instead it was carefully planned by Kazakhstani government which right after the declaration of independence began to initiate such projects as distribution of student quotas and repatriation of Kazakhs living abroad.

My initial aim in interviewing Hüseyn was only to find out about his experience of learning dombyra, however, our conversation made me realise even deeper aspects of the impact that Kazakhstani independence had on the life of Kazakhs in Turkey. When I called to arrange an interview with Hüseyn in summer 2019, he said that he would not be back home until evening, but for me it was ok to go there, because his wife would be home. His wife Aynagül picked me up from the bus stop. I learnt that she was from Kazakhstan and moreover that we were both from the same region Karaganda. It has not been a year yet since they married. Aynagül graduated from Medical School in Kazakhstan and

was preparing for her TUS (Tıpta Uzmanlık Sınavı) exam. It seemed that she was homesick and thus was glad to talk to me.

Hüseyn was interested in Kazakh music since his teenage years. He shared that he was exposed to Kazakh music through his father. When he was a child, his father used to listen to many *küys* (instrumental music piece mostly played with dombyra) on CD-player. Both father and son were quite impressed with those pieces which later made Hüseyn learn playing dombyra. He bought his first dombyra from his friend at the age of 15 and began watching YouTube dombyra tutorials. He claimed that he learnt his first *küy* within two days. He also mentioned that some of the videos were in Russian, although he did not understand the words, he was able to catch up the lesson looking at the frets and fingers of the players. At that time, he certainly did not know that his future wife regardless being Kazakh would also prefer to speak in Russian. In Kazakhstan not only did he learn Kazakh, but also improved his dombyra playing and learnt many Kazakh folk songs. As a result, now sometimes he performs betashar during the Kazakh weddings in Istanbul. Hüseyn and Aynagül were not chosen by mere chance to be main heroes of this section. Their background and story are exemplar case which is helpful in unravelling the mysteries of the ethnic identification processes of Kazakhs in Turkey since the days of Kazakhstani independence.

5.2.1. Different Identity Scenarios and Hybrid Identities

From the story of Hüseyn I could see how different identity scripts imposed by nation-states are played out by individual actors. On one hand, according to Kazakhstani national identity script Kazakh diaspora in the world is seen as members of Kazakhstani society, thus is expected to be committed to Kazakhstan. That is why Kazakhstani government was willing to invite the Kazakh youth to study in Kazakhstan and persuade many others to come to Kazakhstan for permanent settlement, especially Kazakh intellectuals and businessmen. However, the choice of enacting Kazakhstani nation-building

script was and still is the matter of individual choice which indicates to the agency of Kazakh diaspora members over their identities. For instance, not all Kazakh youth in Istanbul like Hüseyn went to study in Kazakhstan. Instead, it was his personal interest in Kazakhstan and Kazakh culture which made him seize the opportunity offered by Kazakhstani Ministry of Education.

On the other hand, at the university, where he received his bachelor degree in the field of IT, Hüseyn was exposed to another identity script that is based on Turkic identity. As I learnt Hüseyn was one of the many alumni of Khoja Akhmet Yassawi International Kazakh-Turkish University in Turkestan. Both the location and the name of given university carry symbolic meanings in the Turkic world. Akhmet Yassawi was a Turkic poet and founder of the first Turkic Sufi order. One of his important contributions to the Turkic culture was using the vernacular while teaching about Islam. The establishment of the university named after Yassawi was initiated by Turkish state. Thus, we can see that Turkey was not only interested in strengthening economic relations with Kazakhstan via investing money into local projects, but also was keen on to reinforce the shared Turkic identity. For that purpose, Turkestan was the most suitable place. The founder and chairman of the university's board of trustees, Namık Kemal Zeybek declared its mission in the following way: "Orta Asya'da Türki Cumhuriyetlerle Türkiye Türkleri'nin kültürel anlamda birbirleriyle kaynaşması!" (…to mix (merging) both Turkic Republics and Turks from Turkey in a cultural terms) (cited in Akay 2006, p. 22). Zeybek distinguished people of Turkic Republics in Central Asia and Turks from Turkey only in geographical sense, for him all these peoples are one nation.

How did Hüseyn manage to navigate himself among these imposed identities? Did he have to choose specific side and be loyal only to one identity either Kazakh or Turkish? How did he express shifts in his ethnic identifications? Hüseyn considered himself as a living embodiment of his alma mater's mission. In his words: "*…aslında üniversite tam bana hitap ediyor, ben de üniversiteye hitap ediyorum. Çünkü Türk-Kazak üniversitesi. Türkiye'den geldim, hem Kazağım, ikisi bir arada*". So Hüseyn was not a regular Turkish student who

came to mix with students from Central Asian Turkic world, he was a Kazakh person grown up in Turkish environment who came to Kazakhstan searching for his roots and embracing his Kazakh identity. He said that he had difficulty identifying himself ethnically only as Kazakh or Turk. He could feel close to either side and felt more like a bridge between these two nations.

Another important memory from the university years of Hüseyn which indicated to his complex identity was Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to their university not too long after his election as a president of Turkey in 2014. During this visit Hüseyn had chance to perform in front of the two presidents: Nazarbayev and Erdoğan. He chose symbolic piece to perform. It was Erdoğan's campaign song. The melody of this song was borrowed from the song *Dombyra* composed by Nogay singer Arslanbek Sultanbekov. After Erdoğan's campaign the original song became an anthem of the whole Turkic world which is sang in many events which promote the brotherhood of Turkic ethnic groups. Hüseyn sang first two verses in Kazakh and the rest in Turkish, while singing in Kazakh he wanted to emphasise his Kazakhness, whereas singing an ode to Erdoğan he was underlining that Kazakhs in Turkey backed Erdoğan up during his elections.

As I have written in Chapter 3 many old and young Kazakhs are pro-AKP including Hüseyn. They believe that AKP represents the continuation of the Demokrat Parti, the party that accepted Kazakhs to Turkey as refugees. As a result, many Kazakhs support AKP, not because of pursuing individual political benefits, but because they are expected to do so. This is how they pay back and thank Turkish government for their input in saving Kazakhs in the 1950s. Backing up Erdoğan in his initiatives Kazakhs enact the accepted political script imposed to them by their community. The support of AKP is expressed in many different ways. For instance, from the family photoalbums I saw many people's photos taken with Erdoğan before his presidency upon his visit to provincial places such as Salihli and Niğde with considerable number of Kazakh populations. The news of Kazakhs gifting him and a former prime-minister Ahmet Davutoğlu traditional Kazakh coat, *shapan* were even portrayed in the

local newspapers. These actions demonstrated that there is a specific prescribed political identity that Kazakhs in Turkey had to follow rooted in their collective memory. However, as Meyer and his colleagues argued we can not ignore the agency of individual actors in enacting prescribed identity scripts, thus there are also members of Kazakh community who prefer to support other political parties in Turkey. The latter while expressing their political views prefer to have informed decisions rather than blindly following the expectations of their community. Certainly, by doing so they receive a lot of judging and criticism. This discourse about Turkish policy was especially relevant and widely discussed during my fieldwork because of approaching Istanbul mayoral elections.

Hüseyn's words about his experience in Kazakhstan reminded me the concept of hybrid identity advocated by Stuart Hall (1992). Hall underlined how some minor dependent ethnic cultures transit to bigger and dominant cultures and called the phenomenon as hybridity. In his terms, the concept of hybridity should not be interpreted as weakness, it is rather an advantage that helps people to easily adapt to a new environment, continuously changing realities and contexts. Moreover, it also indicates to the fact that ethnic identities are not a completed reality, thus they are always under construction and matter of personal choice. This is evident from Hüseyn's words. He said to me that if he goes to Kazakhstan, he says that he is Kazakh, whereas in Turkey he states that he is Turkish or Kazakh-Turk. In fact, both Hüseyn and his wife Aynagül represent vivid example of hybrid identities. Hüseyn was born and raised in Turkey, whereas Aynagül was brought up in Russian-speaking environment. They both were exposed to dominant cultures since their childhood. Their cultural habits such as tastes in food, clothing, religious practice, language and even political views heavily affected by the dominant culture, but it did not completely erase their Kazakh identity, rather it was muted and rarely expressed. Nevertheless, for Hüseyn and Aynagül in order to awaken and strengthen their Kazakh identity it was both equally important to make personal choices and follow the political scripts imposed by the institutions such as states or universities. They both stated that in future they plan to speak to their

children in Kazakh and make it a rule within their family. This shows that ethnic identifications are cultural practices rather than fixed entities which can be extremely salient or weakened based on both external forces and individual choices. However, one thing here is clear that the union of two Kazakhs such as Hüseyn and Aynagül, would not be possible or at least would be very difficult if not the macro-processes such as the collapse of USSR and nation-building initiatives of Kazakhstani state. Thus, in the following section I would like to explain the nature and origins of nation-building strategies practiced by Kazakhstani government, because I believe it is important to understand their actual impact on the life of Kazakhs in Turkey.

5.3. THE EMERGENCE OF KAZAKH NATIONALISM: ETHNIC OR CIVIC?

Aitymbetov et al. (2015) underlined that from the very first day of independence national identity in Kazakhstan was created in contentious interaction of two identities – Kazakh and Kazakhstani. These two types of identities are defined by the experts as ethnic and civic nationalisms respectively. If ethnic nationalism defines the nation in terms of ethnicity, civic nationalism bases on the political legitimacy and the active participation of state's citizenry. Similar to Aitymbetov et al., Nadamova (2019) wrote that dual nationalism in Kazakhstan was present from early period. For instance, the Constitutional Law (1995) against discrimination of minority groups and The Doctrine of National Unity in 2004 abolished the concept of Kazakh nation together with the status of titular nation and native people of Kazakh land. On the other hand, as Svanberg (1994) highlighted how Nazarbayev's regime heavily relied on Kazakh ethnicity in nation-building. One of such actions was involving Kazakh diaspora members into nation-building projects. In the 1990s in mass media diaspora members were called *qandastar* (brothers; people related by blood), whereas the state programme supporting Kazakhs abroad from 21 November 2005, No 1673 used the term *otandastar* (compatriots) to describe them. Although most of the Kazakh diaspora are citizens of other countries, Nazarbayev saw all of them as

nationals of Kazakhstan. He even proclaimed that “Kazakhs, who live all over the world, have only one homeland – it is Kazakhstan!” (Post, 2014, p. 60). The use of terms such as qandastar or otandastar clearly demonstrates the principles of Kazakhstani nationalism emphasise ethnicity. In order to fully understand the nature of ethnic nationalism in Kazakhstan it is crucial to look at the term *kazakhization*.

5.3.1. Kazakhization Process

The term *kazakhization* denotes the processes of nation-formation engineered by Kazakhstani government with a strong accent on Kazakh culture and ethnicity. The term is widely used in journalism, especially in the relation between Kazakh and Russian languages. Apart from that, kazakhization policy included measures such as increasing the number of ethnic Kazakh population which had constituted only 40% of the whole population before the independence, rewriting the Kazakh history and renaming streets and cities after the names of Kazakh historical figures (Kesici, 2011). Kazakhization to some extent is interpreted as a reaction to the processes that took place in the national sphere of Kazakhstan during the Soviet period, characterised by *russification*. The kazakhization was introduced as a countermeasure for the russification. This process wanted to eliminate or substantially reduce the application of Russian language in different fields. Thus, the development of Kazakh culture and replacement of Russian and Soviet symbols with Kazakh were crucial (O Beachain & Kevlihan, 2011).

From my point of view, kazakhization process crossed over Kazakhstani borders and expanded to other countries where Kazakhs live. This process deeply affected Kazakhs in Turkey too. Kazakhization itself does represent the identity script - institutionalised, engineered and actively encouraged by Kazakhstani government. Kazakhstani government largely contributed in reminding to Kazakhs in Turkey that they were Kazakhs. Thus, they are regularly exposed to the celebrations organised by Kazakhstani Embassy such as Nauryz or Independence Day where Kazakhstani musicians perform in nomadic style colourful costumes. These events as if transcending the message

“this is your original culture and you must be proud of it”. Although Kazakhs in Istanbul do not celebrate Nauryz unlike people in Kazakhstan, they are still involved in the process of celebration as spectators. Moreover, the successful implementation of kazakhization process among Turkey’s Kazakhs soon after independence is demonstrated through the activities of Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu who attend Kazakh language or music classes exclusively taught by teachers from Kazakhstan. It is because of kazakhization Kazakh men here bring wives from Kazakhstan and Kazakh women here decorate homes with carpets and tablecloths with traditional Kazakh embroidery imported from Kazakhstan. Kazakhization has become important nation building policy in Kazakhstan expanded to overseas. As I argue the policy does not only help to nationalise Kazakhstan, but also contributes to the formation of national-consciousness of Kazakhs living in other countries. This, in turn, created prerequisites for reconsideration of Kazakhs’ self-identification within Turkish community.

One of the important initiatives in kazakhisation process was the organisation of repatriation policy of Kazakhs living outside Kazakhstan. The initial step in this policy was inviting wealthy, reputable and educated members of Kazakh diaspora to the Wolrd Kazakh Kurultay, regular assemblies of World Kazakhs in Kazakhstan first organised in 1992. The participants of the first Kurultay were meant to be messengers to their community who would persuade others to respond to the call of their new homeland. As Anna Genina (2015) described in her research Kazakh diaspora’s arrival to their new homeland in the beginning of the 1990s was recalled as a time of excitement, euphoria, and high hopes. In the next section the activities of World Kazakh Kurultay will be described as an essential part of nation-building process both in Kazakhstan and overseas.

5.3.2. World Kazakhs Kurultays as Part of Kazakhization Policy

Until now Kazakhstan hosted five World Kazakhs Kurultays with the last one being held on 23 June 2017 in Nur-Sultan. The main idea behind hosting ‘*Kurultay’ (*congregation) is to unite Kazakhs from all over the world, promote Kazakh culture and traditions as they can be subject to assimilation and let

Kazakhs know that they are welcome in their historical homeland (Satybaldina, 2017). Kurultays are one of the successful Kazakhstani nation-building projects. Although kurultays' aims mainly focus on promoting joint economic and cultural activities among Kazakhs living both inside and outside Kazakhstan, it is clear that these projects were engineered as part of kazakhisation process. The first Kurultay of the World Kazakhs, held on 29 September 1992 in Almaty was a historical occasion which marked the beginning of a new period for Kazakhstan and the Kazakh diaspora. The First World Kurultay of Kazakhs hosted delegations from Turkey, Mongolia, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan Germany, France, Sweden and Norway. Solely from Turkey 104 participants attended this event (Kara, 2011; Mendikulova, 2014). In the first kurultay Nazarbayev stressed that all diaspora members "have one thing in common, it is longing for their homeland (*atameken)* (fatherland)*"* (*Duniyezhuzi Kazaktarynyng Kauymdastygy: 15 zhyl*", Almaty, 2007, pp. 53-59, 66).

With his speech Nazarbayev wanted to show to those people that Kazakhstan is their long-awaited homeland. One of the kurultay participants from Turkey said to me that Kazakhs living in Turkey experienced two big joys in their lives, first when they first arrived to Turkey from Pakistan and felt the support of kindred people. The second time was when Kazakhstan became independent. He shared that the first kurultay experience was overwhelming to him, he even saw many people crying. Kuscu-Bonnenfant (2012) concluded that the first kurultay had festival spirit and in the Kazakh-language newspapers it was portrayed as a celebration of the new homeland.

In the first kurultay, *Duniezhuzi Qazaqtarynyn Kauymdastygy* (the World Association of Kazakhs) (WAK)[25], an organisation coordinating activities of all Kazakh communities worldwide, was established. The WAK is a main institution that deals with the development of relations with the Kazakh diaspora and assist them in preserving their language, culture and traditions in the host states. The organisation provides them with Kazakh-language teaching

[25] Differently from Mendikulova, Kuscu-Bonnenfant (2012) in her article gave English name of the organisation as the World Kazakhs Association (WKA). The official website of organisation for further info http://qazaq-alemi.kz

materials and promotes access to Kazakh media. The cultural centres of Kazakh diasporas in different countries collaborate with the WAK to maintain bilateral connections and spread their message. Throughout the years with its cultural activities the WAK proved itself as the successful organisation in officially promoting the idea of Kazakhstan as nation-state of all the Kazakhs in the world.



Fig. 12. The First World Kazakh Kurultay. Abdulhalim Karakol (on the left) visiting Khoja Akhmet Yassawi mausoleum. Photo by courtesy of Abdulhalim Karakol.

All kurultays gave a big hope for Kazakhs abroad. They saw Kazakhstan as glorious country for which they were craving for so long. They looked at it and saw the potential to realise their dreams in terms of education and business. Although there were different laws and decrees which protected and guaranteed the support for Kazakhs from abroad willing to return to their new homeland, the reality for those who had returned to Kazakhstan upon the first call was different. The kurultays' aftermath indicated great expectations and lost hopes of some representatives of Kazakh diaspora which I am going to tackle in the following paragraph.

5.4. REPATRIATION POLICY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Initially Kazakhstani government northern regions as special settlement area for Kazakh repatriates. In this way the government tried to reduce the number of Russian population and weaken Russian dominance in Kazakhstani areas which border with Russian Federation. The Kazakhs who returned to Kazakhstan were given the status of *oralman* (repatriate; returnee). According to the *Law on Peoples*' *Migration* (1997, December 13), Article 1, *oralmans* are ethnic Kazakhs who permanently lived outside of the Republic of Kazakhstan before its sovereignty, and who came to Kazakhstan with the aim to live there permanently. Their status enabled them to receive financial support, medical services, social assistance, housing, and land from the government (Rakhimzhanova, 2015; Mendikulova, 2019). The adaptation centres were established to assist oralmans with documentation procedures and teaching them Kazakh and Russian languages as well as providing vocational trainings (Bonnenfant, 2012).

In Appendix 3 I presented the table with the results of National census from 2009 carried out in the Republic of Kazakhstan. It demonstrates the number of Kazakhs from other countries who came to Kazakhstan for permanent residence between 1999 and 2009. The number of Kazakh migrants from Turkey is in the third place among other repatriates constituting 1128 persons within ten-year period. Nearly one third of Kazakh migrants from Turkey settled in Almaty region, with 178 person living in Almaty city itself. Two other regions which hosted big number of Kazakhs from Turkey are Mangystau and Southern Kazakhstan regions. The frequent choice of these three regions for settlement have different reasons.

Foremost one is that Almaty, the former capital of Kazakhstan is a convenient zone for business and trading. Its geographical location allows it to be a business hub not only in Kazakhstan, but also in whole Central Asia. In addition to it, Almaty region borders with Xinjiang, this makes easy to keep in touch with Kazakhs from China as well, where distant relatives of Turkey's Kazakhs still

live. Southern Kazakhstan, which has a smaller number of Russian people provides good Kazakh-speaking environment which makes it easy for diaspora members to adapt in their new homes. While Mangystau region, located on the shore of Caspian Sea, is known for its petroleum industry which also makes it convenient environment for business too, since the area has rich clientele for entrepreneurs. For example, one of the interviewees for this research had run furniture business in Aktau, the capital city of Mangystau region for twelve years. From the choice of the region for settlement it is clear how much agency individual members of Kazakh diaspora have against the state-engineered programmes of nation-building. Although the state appointed seven regions in the north as special settlement area for returnees, it is seen from the statistical data above how few Kazakhs from Turkey followed this regulation.

An elderly Kazakh entrepreneur from Turkey went to Kazakhstan to do business in the 1990s. He submitted a request to the government to give hime land in Almaty region. However, his request was rejected, instead he was offered a place in the north. This is the story of his meeting with Altynshash Zhaganova, a former head of Agency for Migration and Demography in Kazakhstan:

> She said to me there are five regions in the northern Kazakhstan, go and see there, then come to see me again in Astana. So, we went to Petropavl, saw the village, we were shown barns for animals, there were more Russians than Kazakhs. If we went there as oralmans government would help us, the municipality would help us, we travelled from a village to another village. The houses of Germans who left were really good. There were many arable lands, they said if you came, we would give ten sheep, cows, hens and geese. In 4 or 5 years you will become rich, the only problem the winter is really harsh. I wish we moved there. We even had a plan to name the village as Turk-Kazak village, but in Istanbul children, married daughters convinced their parents not to move to Kazakhstan, scared them with cold winters of Kazakhstan.

From this story it is clear how Kazakhstani government tried to use oralmans as part of its nation-building plan and how plans of the individuals did not match with the governmental policy. For instance, Kazakh businessmen from Turkey pursued personal goals and financial benefits while choosing destinations such as Almaty or Mangystau for their settlement rather than national policy of

Kazakhstan. Even their intention to name their village to-be as Turk-Kazakh village means that Kazakhs from Turkey would not easily leave behind their cultural baggage acquired during their stay in Istanbul. Apart from that I also have to underline here that many Kazakhs from Turkey are less interested in permanent settling in Kazakhstan. For most of them Kazakhstan is the land of opportunity more than a homeland where they can work and educate freely their children. I met families who came back to Turkey after having spent seven, twelve and fifteen years in Kazakhstan. Thus, the next paragraph will explore what oralmans experienced in their new homeland.

5.4.1. Encounters of Kazakhs from Different Worlds

Aynagül and Hüseyn, whom I mentioned in **the section 5.2**, both shared their story of dating in Kazakhstan. Aynagül: “We met online. He was a complete stranger to me. Even his name Hüseyn sounded too strange and unusual”. Hüseyn: “At first when we were talking on phone, she used to say couple of things in Kazakh and the rest in Russian so fast that I used to give my phone to my friend so he could translate her speech to me. Later I learnt that she could actually speak Kazakh, just did not practice for quite a long time.” On the contrary Aynagül was saying: “You say (looking at me) you are researching Kazakh culture and traditions and staff like that. What do you think about them? Me personally, do not think Kazakhs here kept traditions, they do not have *tusaukeser*[26] or *syrga salu*[27]*;* I like their weddings it is humble; they use plastic dishes which is rather convenient, but you can not do it in Kazakhstan”. From these conversations we understand that encounters of Kazakhs from Turkey and Kazakhstan make each of the community doubt about purity of each other’s ethnic identity. Their dialogues result in questioning, sometimes even competing about who is more genuine Kazakh.

[26] *Cutting the ropes* is a festivity organised to celebrate baby’s first steps.

[27] *Giving ear-rings is* an engagement ceremony and official request of bride’s hand.

The difficulties with translation and Russian language dominance in Kazakhstan sometimes hinder the communication between Kazakhs of Turkey and Kazakhstan. In the field I used to hear a lot people criticising the way how Kazakhs used Russian. One lady said that they did not watch Kazakhstani TV, because everything was in Russian and they could not understand it. However, Aynagül and Hüseyn with their actions were able to show that the language barrier or any other misunderstandings can be overcome with some efforts. Moreover, there are dozens of other married Kazakh couples like them coming from Turkey and Kazakhstan.

The peculiar encounter of Kazakhs from Turkey and Kazakhstan can also be demonstrated through the story of the Kazakh singer Saadet Türkoz, who currently lives in Switzerland. Türkoz was born in Salihli, grown up in Istanbul and left to Switzerland in the 1980s. However, from time to time she comes to visit her relatives in Istanbul, to perform and give voice workshops. She was collaborating with Turkish artist and sang in the opening of her exhibition in Zulfu Livaneli Kultur Merkezi, Ankara few years ago. I met her during that live performance and get acquainted with her. Later during the interview for this research, she told me that in 1999 she gave her concert in Kazakhstan and had some collaborative projects with Kazakh musicians from Almaty. While recalling her concert in Almaty she said: “Well, people came to watch my concert, but you know there was a …, how could I describe it…the impressions of the audience was like “she is us, but at the same time not really us””.

From the examples above we can see that how independence of Kazakhstan allowed Kazakhs from different countries with own baggage of hybrid identities meet each other. Those encounters included various notions such as judgments, surprise, negotiation, and questioning of each others’ authenticity in terms of Kazakhness. Most certainly Kazakhstan’s sovereignty transformed self-identifications of many Kazakhs abroad. In this perspective, the discovery of Kazakhstan as a new homeland had both positive and negative effects on the familial relationships of Kazakhs in Turkey. On one hand, Kazakhs had opportunity to find their relatives, renew and strengthen their kinship ties across

the borders, also raising the chance of younger generation to find partner from the same ethnicity. On the other hand, some Kazakh men who went to Kazakhstan ended up having extramarital affairs. There are frequent stories of the men leaving to Kazakhstan to establish business but eventually ending up having affairs with other women. While some of these affairs led to family break ups in Turkey and wedlock children in Kazakhstan, some of Kazakh women in Turkey accepted their husbands' infidelities and continue to live with that burden today.

In addition to the familial issues, the hostility expressed by Kazakhstani Kazakhs towards their newly arrived compatriots complicated their adaptation process in Kazakhstan. This is because Kazakhstani Kazakhs see Kazakhs living in China, Mongolia or Turkey as the descendants of wealthy people who once fled own country from Communist oppression. Therefore, they are regarded as traitors and envied by the locals for being provided special privileges by the state (Genina, 2015, 14). For example, the following story demonstrates how deeply this division of "traitor" Kazakh and "genuine" Kazakh deeply set in mind of many Kazakhstani citizens. A young man who attended Kazakh language course in Zeytinburnu told me that in one of the classes their teacher, a lady from Kazakhstan said to students that they were runaway Kazakhs. The man could not help sharing his frustration about this story, because he does not consider himself or his ancestors as traitors, for him they just did not have other choice than leaving their homeland.

Although government encouraged diaspora members to return to Kazakhstan, the opinion of locals and returnees towards each other continued to carry ambiguous character. The locals consider the returnees as traitor or run-away Kazakhs, whereas the returnees claimed that they were authentic Kazakhs whose language and religion stayed intact and never hided their frustration about russified Kazakh people. This clash of two views expressed clearly in the following story of a woman.

> When I went to bazaar in Almaty, I saw a begging Kazakh woman and gave her money, sister beside told me that I would rather not to give

> money to such beggars. Anyway, she was going to spend that money for alcohol. Her words were like a slap to my face. Here (in Turkey) we are the purest Kazakhs. We were not contaminated with neither Chinese nor Russian ideologies (female, 50).

This woman was unhappy about the changes in Kazakh society. The same woman commented on documentary about Kazakh adoptees in the USA.[28] She criticised the child adoption programme of Kazakhstani government which had allowed the US citizens to adopt Kazakh children. She considered this programme cruel because the adoptees will no longer be Kazakhs, they will be taken away from their roots. Moreover, she emphasised "We, as Kazakhs coming from East Turkestan to the west, we are grateful to our ancestors. They did not allow any single Kazakh child to scatter, cared about them without leaving them in orphanages. Thus, be aware that the Kazakh nature/quality in us…is much stronger than in other Kazakhs".

While some of the business projects initiated by WAK members were successful as it has been stated in Kazakhstani media, there had been cases when Kazakh businessmen from Turkey fell victims of fraudsters and went bankrupt at the beginning of 1990s and they had to come back to Turkey. Due to the existing bureaucracy in Kazakhstan and their lack of expertise in local judicial norms, many of them did not file the cases to the court. For example, Omar ata (85) lost around thirty thousand US dollars while trying to set up his business in Kazakhstan. His goods brought from Turkey disappeared, and he still does not know where it had gone. Considering the fact of several death cases of Kazakh businessmen from Turkey in Almaty, Omar ata's story is still positive one.

Many Kazakh returnees experienced one thing in common. It was realisation that Kazakhstan was far from ideal homeland. Thus, the repatriation of Kazakhs from abroad to Kazakhstan had some difficulties and disappointments. Regardless all the frustrations and negative experiences of returnee Kazakhs upon their arrival to homeland, their enormous impact in Kazakhstan's nation-

[28] The film BALA (The Child) directed by Kanat Beysekeev. In 2011, due to the issues related to accessibility of Kazakhstani adoptees by Kazakhstani council and diplomatic officials, the adoptions by the US citizens were suspended.

building process has to be acknowledged. In the following section of this chapter, I will give more space to the discussion of spiritual and religious impact of Turkey's Kazakhs on people in Kazakhstan.

5.5. THE REVITALISATION OF ISLAM IN KAZAKHSTAN

5.5.1. Halifa Altay's Contribution in Spiritual Awakening of Kazakh People

Kazakh diaspora from Turkey largely contributed to the revitalisation of Islam in Kazakhstan after the collapse of Soviet Union. The bright example of this is the activities of Halifa Altay, a Kazakh scholar who after spending thirty-nine years in Turkey came back to Kazakhstan on mission of revitalisation of Islam. Halifa Altay was not only Kazakh theologian, but also writer, poet and ethnographer. Altay together with his friend and companion Delilhan Canaltay for the first time in 1988 in Turkey translated Koran into Kazakh language. It was historical moment for Kazakhs. According to the witnesses when Kazakhstan announced its independence on the radio, Altay hearing the news prostrated in the middle of the street to thank Allah. He also sent congratulation letter to the first president of Kazakhstan. Soon after that he together with twenty other volunteer Islamic teachers from Turkey on 23 February, 1992 flew to Kazakhstan (Islambek, 2017). Altay's translation of Koran became spiritual wealth of Kazakhs living not only in Kazakhstan, but also in other countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Mongolia and Russia (Arykkara, 2016). In the first World Kazakh Kurultay Nazarbayev gave Altay Kazakhstani citizenship and on December 17, 1993, the Independence Day celebration, the president personally handed him his Kazakhstani passport (Baltabayeva et al., 2017). After Kurultay he and his wife settled in Kazakhstan permanently, because they were gifted a flat in Samal district, in Almaty. Both he and his wife were allotted a monthly pension to live on in Kazakhstan.

The use of Halifa Altay's figure and supporting his actions was part of governmental nation-building project. The idea behind this project was to be

Muslim equalled to be Kazakh. Using Meyer's terms, Kazakh ethnic script included in itself the image of pious Muslim i.e., the notion of being Kazakh was the same as being Muslim. As a political instrument, Islam was used to approve the existence and uniqueness of Kazakh culture. In order to understand the state's eagerness in reviving Islam in Kazakhstan I have to underline again about the complex nature of nationalism and self-identification processes in Kazakhstan.



Fig. 13 Halifa Altay (in the left) together with N.A. Nazarbayev, the first president of RK (Photo from www.nblib.library.kz)

As Aitymbetov et al. (2015) argued in the beginning of independence days Kazakhstan had to find its path between the conflicting world view of the two major ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan – Muslim Kazakh and Orthodox Christian Russian. Another challenge of this controversy lied in the fact that most of Kazakhs were russified during Soviet time and many of them could not speak a word of Kazakh. While tackling the problem Nazarbayev was wise enough not to lead a policy against Russians which would create serious ethnic conflicts in the country, instead he directed all his efforts to strengthen Kazakh ethnicity, thus the revival of Islam was part of that policy. If language revival involved serious governmental actions, such as producing laws and decrees, which would completely transform media, education system and workflow at national level, the revival of religion could easily unite both Kazakh and Russian-speaking Kazakhs at individual level. It is because the language revival was realised through top-down policy, whereas the revitalisation of religion was

organised as bottom-up work with the help of individual people such as Halifa Altay. For example, Altay in 1993 travelled to seventeen regions out of nineteen in Kazakhstan to preach and all his travel expenses were covered by the government (Islambek, 2017). Between 1993 and 1996 he led the programme called “Imandylyk alippesi” (Alif-baa of Iman) in Kazakh Radio and managed the Religion Centre “Inabat” established under the WAK. None of these projects would be possible without substantial governmental support.

As Meyer (2010) argued the role of ‘consultants’ can not be overlooked who help others to become “better actors, groups better organised actors, and nation-states more complete organised actors” (Meyer, 2010:7). Among the widespread consultants he named therapists, teachers, trainers, and lawyers. I argue that people like Halifa Altay were successful consultants and negotiators. They took responsibilities of consultants upon themselves voluntarily, certainly not without incentives from the government which was eager to strengthen the image and identity of titular nation. Furthermore, as Meyer argued successful institutionalisation of social patterns, involves the construction on the social stage of purposive, competent, and motivated actors who appear to choose the correct and required actions. The correct and required actions might differ depending on the model or the script of nation-building project taking place in the country.

5.5.2. Why Did Turkey’s Kazakhs Act as Religious Missionaries?

Apart from the figure of Halifa Altay it is possible to say that regular individuals also largely contributed to the revival of Islam in Kazakhstan. Many secondary sources and the interviews held during the research indicated to this fact. For example, a woman who stayed in Kazakhstan for nine months to look after her grandchild shared her experience of teaching namaz to the neighbour women. The company “Ak yol” built a mosque in the city Oskemen, opened Koran courses and began educating children. Similarly, a person called Arslan Tosun

built mosque with his own efforts in the village Raiymbek in Almaty region (Canaltay, 2019, 231).

There is also Kazakh association in Turkey called *Hoca Ahmed Yesevi Ilim ve Irfan Vakfi* which focus on religious education of youth from Kazakhstan and other countries. It was founded in Istanbul in 1991. In the interview the head of the Foundation told me that while bringing children from former Soviet countries for Koran courses they privilege the children from low-income families and provinces. After the course, all these students are expected to go back to their countries and serve their homeland. In this way the foundation wants to fill the gap in Islamic knowledge existed in the former Communist states. Looking at the examples of individuals and organisations it becomes clear the serious input of Kazakhs from Turkey in the spiritual awakening of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan. Many of them continue to carry out religious activities in their relatively new homeland. However, Islam was revived not to improve religiosity of citizens, but to rediscover and strengthen Kazakh identity.

The revival of Islam was essential for nation-building processes in Kazakhstan. In order to accomplish this task Kazakhs from Turkey were chosen as the most adequate diaspora. Why specifically Kazakh diaspora in Turkey played leading role in revitalisation of Islam in Kazakhstan and not Kazakhs from other countries, for example, Uzbekistan, China, Iran or Mongolia? First of all, although the number of Kazakhs living in neighbouring countries such as China, Mongolia and Uzbekistan is bigger, people from two of the latter countries were deeply affected by Communist regime which forbade the practice of any kind of religion, while in China the policy of religious oppression is still relevant and active. Thus, people's knowledge and competency in Islamic principles from these regions are often questioned. A small number of Kazakhs repatriated from Islamic states such Iran and Afghanistan were also not trusted much by Kazakhstani authorities, because of the fear of fundamentalist and radical Islamist movements which threaten the country's secular model. Thus, after independence Kazakhstan decided to continue its pre-Soviet doctrine of moderate Sunni Hanafi school, that has been promoted in Kazakhstani territory

since the 18th century due to the initiatives of Russian Empire, who hoped to use *imams* to control better the colonised people. Similarly, the majority of population in Turkey identify themselves as Hanafi Sunnis, thus Kazakhs from Turkey were the most suitable religious missionaries for Islamic rebirth in Kazakhstan and subsequently rebirth of Kazakh nation. Secondly, Muslim friendly environment (for example, multitude of mosques or state funded religious schools and institutions) existing in Turkey helped refugee Kazakhs not only to continue practicing their religion, but also to improve their practice and bring it to higher level. Last but not least reason of Kazakhs from Turkey being so influential in reviving religion in Kazakhstan is related to their historical background.

Although many scholars underlined that religion had little importance for nomadic Kazakhs and was practiced only to certain extent in combination with old pagan traditions (Olcott, 1987; Svanberg, 1989; Ametbek, 2015), that was not true for the most of Kazakh migrants who came to Turkey, because many of them were wealthy and some of them even had formal religious education. In the 1950s among Kazakh settlers there were already numerous mullahs and imams (Oraltay, 2005; Altay, 1983; Gaytertullah, 2017). Few of them had an opportunity to do pilgrimage to Mecca long before their migration to Turkey (Canaltay, 2019, 5-30). Additionally, some Kazakhs widened their theological knowledge while staying in Pakistan, where they had attended madrasas (Islambek, 2017).

One of the interviewees told a story which can be linked to this situation. Once two Kazakhs, just graduated from religious school in Turkey went to Urumqi, Xinjiang in the beginning of 1990s and decided to pray in local mosque. When they get acquainted with the imam in the mosque, they expressed their wish to call for prayer. After hearing their will, imam and members of congregation who were by ethnicity Uyghur began to mock them, saying that Kazakhs had never been knowledgeable and skilled enough in the matters of Islam. However, Kazakhs insisted and performed the call to prayer, which made Uyghurs quite surprised and after learning that they were Kazakhs from Turkey said “Oh no

wonder why, your call to prayer was so good, this is because all religious and pious Kazakhs left to Turkey whereas non-religious ones stayed in China."

I think that this anecdote demonstrates the current importance of Islam for Kazakhs in Turkey, rather than the historical one. It can be interpreted as the person who was telling the story foremost wanted to emphasise the fact that historically nomadic Kazakhs were as much religious as other Turkic groups (Uyghurs, Uzbeks or Tatars who led sedentary lifestyle) and Turkish government only provided favourable condition for boosting their religiosity and piousness, thus 'a religious Kazakh' was not a newly invented phenomenon. Thus, these were the historical and political reasons why Kazakhs from Turkey were particularly suitable candidates for spreading Islamic knowledge in Kazakhstan.

CONCLUSION

Due to the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 Kazakhstan emerged as an independent state. Similar developments occurred in other former Soviet countries, but Kazakhstani case was unique, because at that time the number of Kazakhs, a titular nation of the country was only around 40 %. In addition, the long common border with Russia and high number of Russian people in Kazakhstan created certain difficulties in nation-building process. Governmental resolution to this problem was calling for Kazakhs living in other countries and using them to strengthen Kazakh identity. Therefore, as early as 1991, Kazakhstan planned to construct a homeland image by emphasising the ethnic, historical and cultural ties with Kazakhs living outside the country. The glorious image of the new homeland was reinforced by Kazakh-language media where members of Kazakh diaspora had been defined as long-lost blood brothers who finally were able to return to home. That is why Kazakhs living in Turkey had to embrace their new ancestral homeland though their real homeland was East Turkestan.

After the initiatives of the President Nazarbayev Kazakhstan's political and cultural elite claimed that all Kazakhs in the world have only one homeland which is independent Kazakhstan. Involving Kazakh diaspora into nation-building project was beneficial in three ways. Firstly, it helped to restore ethnic balance in the demographic picture of Kazakhstan. Owing to the repatriated people the number of Kazakhs in Kazakhstan increased within the last twenty years. Secondly, many Kazakh diaspora members acted as investors. In this field Turkey's Kazakhs share was larger than Kazakhs from other countries. Thirdly, in ethno-cultural terms Kazakh diaspora was seen as authentic Kazakhs. Authenticity included the continuous practice of Islam, in this respect Kazakhs from Turkey were among the ones who essentially contributed to the revival of Islam in Kazakhstan. Nazarbayev especially supported the missionary projects of Halifa Altay, because the revival of religion would create pious Kazakhs, who pray and go to mosques, but more importantly who would identify themselves as real Kazakhs.

Repatriation of Kazakh diaspora was useful strategy in strengthening Kazakh ethnic identity, but this policy had its shortcomings and did not prevent some members of diaspora from having negative experiences in Kazakhstan. This happened because Kazakhstan was too idealised and romanticised as homeland, the reality was different. Apart from socio-economic difficulties, Kazakhs who decided to return to Kazakhstan experienced cultural shock. Regardless all the negative experiences and problems of Kazakh returnees it is clear how they positively contributed to the nation-building policy in Kazakhstan. Comparing to other countries the number of returnees from Turkey was relatively small and most of them wanted to improve their financial situation, rather than seeking permanent residence or citizenship. Despite all the economic goals of Kazakhs in Turkey and their reluctance to give up their Turkish citizenship, in their eyes Kazakhstan succeeded in creating itself as a new homeland. Therefore, today instead of East Turkestan many Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu call Kazakhstan as their homeland.

PART 3

COMMUNICATING ETHNICITY THROUGH COLLECTIVE RITES

CHAPTER 6

MAINTAINING GROUP UNITY VIA COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONIES

Chapter 6 is about two commemoration ceremonies. The commemoration event in July, 2018 was dedicated to one of the leaders of the first wave of Kazakh exodus whose name is Eliskhan Alipuly, whereas the second ceremony was in June, 2019 and was organised to commemorate Şirzat Doğru, a person who established 'Alaş' kymyz farm in Kemalpaşa/İzmir. The father of Eliskhan Alipuly was beheaded by Chinese soldiers which made Eliskhan lead his people out of their homeland. Eliskhan's wisdom, knowledge of languages, diplomatic and military skills was underlined by many Kazakhs who witnessed the great exodus. Şirzat Doğru belonged to the first generation Kazakh migrants and as the person who had successful career in NATO and later established own business, he gained much respect from other Kazakhs in Turkey. During commemoration ceremonies Kazakhs recall their history, connect with their past and remind younger generation about their roots. Therefore, it is argued here that commemoration of the dead helps to reweave social fabric and establish ethnic boundaries.

6.1. COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONIES

Many researchers pointed out the importance of collective rites in creating collective memory which is in turn an essential factor in the maintenance of ethnic identity. Kahuno (2017:32) underlined the importance of ritual practices and festivals in the narration of the past in the following manner:

> …feelings and sentiments in respect of the history of an ethnic group are stimulated by collective rites which remind participants in a formal

> and an informal way of who they are and from whence they come. Such rites of 'belonging to' reconfirm the origin of the group and dramatize its struggles, as well as its victories. Ritual practices are characterised by dramatic symbolic representations of the past, and are loaded with concrete forms of abstract meaning. Similarly, festivals appear to be one of the most effective ways to narrate and improvise such cultural representations of the past (Kahuno, 2017: 32).

While Kahuno emphasised the importance of cultural rites and festivals in creating memories, Connerton singled out two distinct areas of social activity where social recollection actually takes place. They are *commemorative ceremonies* and *bodily practices.* He argued that if there is such a thing as collective memory, it is found in commemorative ceremonies, because according to him they represent the most effective ways of narrating and improvising the cultural representations of the past. "…but commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are performative; performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be thought without a notion of bodily automatisms." (Connerton, 1990, 5). Thus, Connerton believed that there is an inertia in social structures. According to him social memory is mainly exercised or becomes tangible through our bodily practices. For example, the style of clothes characteristic to different historical periods usually celebrates the end of certain political regime and reflects new orders in society. French revolution established not only new political regime, but also affected the fashion "…clothes became uniforms. The culotte of simple cut and the absence of adornments were emblematic of the desire to eliminate social barriers in the striving for equality" (Connerton, 1990, 10). However, this chapter is not so much about bodily practices as commemorative ceremonies. In this chapter I will try to disclose the meanings of two commemorative ceremonies which had been observed during the fieldwork. This is because both ceremonies perpetuated the theme of loss and trauma experienced during Kazakh exodus from East Turkestan.

Connerton (1990, 39) strongly argued that to study the social formation of memory we need to focus on the acts of transfer that make remembering in common possible. And to do so he advised to isolate and consider in more

detail certain acts of transfer that are common in many different societies. That is why he singled out commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices as essential acts of transfer. The reader should understand; however, these practices are not the only constituents of communal memory, there are many other narratives that characterise and produce social memory. But what Connerton made clear that commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices are the most suitable phenomena which enable us “to see that images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained by (more or less ritual) performances” (Connerton, 1990, 40).

While researching on Georgian case Gamsakhurdia (2017) wrote that “ethnic identity will remain even if the belief in common past disappears” (2017: 10), whereas among Kazakhs in Istanbul the shared history of migration has become an essential instrument for sustaining Kazakhness. As long as the narratives of the exodus trauma and loss stop to have meaning for people, their ethnic affiliation will be weakened, because in the oral narratives of Kazakhs the main reason behind the exodus was to save their ethnic and religious identity. They were afraid that Chinese government would deprive them from their religious and ethnic identities which is very common for totalitarian regimes. The only solution for continuous practicing of Kazakhness was to leave their homeland, but this came with many sacrifices. These sacrifices in the form of the deaths of beloved ones increased the sense of solidarity among group members. Therefore, the leaders of exodus and Ili rebellion of 1944 and 1945 in East Turkestan are regularly commemorated in Turkey. These ceremonies are platforms where Kazakhs come together and reminded about their unique history of migration.

6.1.1. Commemoration of Eliskhan Alipuly

I left Esra’s flat at 7.30 am on July 29, 2018. I had a bus to catch before 8.00 am Zeytinburnu. But it was not a regular bus, it was a service bus taking Kazakhs from Zeytinburnu to commemoration ceremony of Kazakh public figure

named Eliskhan Alipuly. It was his 110th anniversary. Kazakh-Turks Foundation organised transportation of people from Zeytinburnu to the ceremony place. When I arrived to the stop the buses were almost full. I found a free seat at the back of a small bus and set out for a journey to Belgrad forest together with others. I was quite nervous, because this was the first big collective event of Kazakhs in Turkey which I was going to attend. When the bus arrived to the forest there were a lot of people. I managed to find an acquaintance who saved a place at the table for me. Since I was planning to record the ceremony, I set up my camera first. First, the guests were served breakfast. The forest had calming and soothing environment. The children were playing under the big shadows of the trees. I could see how some old and young people wearing traditional Kazakh clothes. This was the ceremonial space. Who was Eliskhan Alipuly? Why did people come together to celebrate his anniversary in Belgrade forest?

6.1.1.1. Who Was Eliskhan Alipuly?

The complexities and stages of Kazakhs' exodus from Xinjiang have been already written in Chapter 3. According to the historical resources there were two exoduses. The first exodus took place in the 1930s. Eliskhan Alipuly was the initiator and the leader of this exodus. He was born in 1908 in the town of Barköl in East Turkestan (Xinjiang) (Şakenulı, 2018, 103). His father Alip Camysbayuly was a chieftain of Tasbike tribe. 1931 in Qumul (one of the regions in Xinjiang) there was Muslim uprising against Chinese government. The uprising spread in a very short period of time to the neighbouring districts and reached the Kazakhs in Barköl too. Eliskhan's father Alip also took part in this uprising. Jin Shu Ren, the governor of Xinjiang, who received military help from Soviet Union, was able to suppress the uprisings. Eliskhan's father Alip's village was hiding in the valley close to Urumqi (the capital of Xinjiang). His village was unexpectedly attacked by the government troops in the end of October, 1932 and Alip was killed together with other 117 people. Eliskhan was away when his father's village was attacked. After this tragedy 24-year old Eliskhan decided to move his people out of Barköl. He was intelligent and

educated person. He studied at Kazakh-Mongolian school in Urumqi and there he also learnt Chinese (Şakenulı, 2018, 105-107).

Eliskhan first led Kazakhs to Gansu region, the territory of Muslim Han Chinese. But years later the place was not safe for Kazakhs thus it was decided to cross the border and escape to the south. In August, 1941 Eliskhan and the tribes following him reached Indian borders. After handing over their weapons to Indian border control they were accepted as refugees and stayed in the refugee camps. According to Jadi Şakenulı at least 6000 Kazakhs died during the migration led by Eliskhan (2018, 116). Eliskhan got sick in 1943 because of the epidemic disease in the refugee camp. When he died he was only 35 years old. He was buried in the yard of Baruyn Mosque in Candauil village, Dir region of Pakistan (Şakenulı, 2018, 117). Eliskhan married three times, but all his wives and children died too. Thus, none from his household was able to make it to Turkey and none of his offsprings survived to continue his lineage. Despite that there are Kazakh families in Turkey who consider themselves as his descendants. Among them the children of his nieces and nephews who affiliate themselves with Eliskhan's lineage.

6.1.1.2. The Politicisation of the Commemoration

In Kazakh the commemorative ceremony is called *ʌss beru* which is literally translated as giving food, although, feeding public is part of commemoration, food provision is not an only aim of this ceremony. ʌss was usually given to commemorate people who had high status (khans and sultans) in society, who were wealthy and powerful, and who contributed to society with good deeds, for instance, *batyrs* (heroes). Moreover, in nomadic culture commemoration was not necessarily coming together to grieve about the departed person. This kind of large-scale ceremonies were usually organised to celebrate the end of grief and bring back joy to the public and family who was grieving for some time. Thus, until now ʌss hosting side in Kazakhstan, apart from performing collective prayers for the soul of departed, also organises horse races, traditional sports competitions, and music performances. Eliskhan Alipuly's personality carried all

the necessary characteristics to be commemorated collectively in ʌss. The Kazakhs in Turkey proclaimed him *batyr* (hero/warrior). Although his commemorative ceremony did lack the celebratory aspect of usual and historical Kazakh ʌss ceremonies, this ceremony had other aspects to be analysed. One of such aspects is the politicisation. That is why here I emphasise that commemorative ceremony of Eliskhan Alipuly was a suitable platform for negotiating tribal, ethnic and inter-ethnic powers.

One of the valuable arguments expressed by Connerton (1990, 51) about commemorative ceremonies was positioning of the ceremony in its own historical context. So, if we are planning to analyse a specific rite its meaning should be related to the circumstances in which it is performed. The commemoration and veneration of a hero ancestor by his lineage groups is a common thing in Kazakhstan, moreover it has become widespread and fashionable trend in the recent years. However, Eliskhan Alipuly's commemorative ceremony is unique in terms of its context, because here we see the commemoration of a Kazakh person in Turkish environment. Thus, ceremony has to be tackled from the local perspectives.

In general, commemorative ceremonies may consist of various practices. The parades (e.g. in National Socialist Festival practiced in the time of Hitler in Germany marchers commemorated the Putsch, the 'blood baptism' of 1923), re-enactment, when event from the past is repeated, re-presented, and is given ceremonially embodied form (e.g. *tatbir*, the bloodletting ritual practice exercised by some Shia Muslims on 10 Muharram of the Islamic calendar, known as 'the Day of Ashura' to commemorate the death of Husayn ibn Ali, the younger grandson of the prophet Muhammad, who was killed along with his children, companions and near relatives at the Battle of Karbala), theatrical performances, dance and music shows are only few to mention. However, Eliskhan's commemorative ceremony did not really involve bodily practices or any other physical activities of its participants and organisers. Instead of physical re-enactment of loss and trauma experienced during exodus, the ceremony participants expressed their commemoration orally. I underline here that people's narratives were not a mere re-telling of the past, instead it was a

re-enactment of commemoration. Thus, in order to argue my point about the politicisation of the event, I focused on public speeches delivered by different officials during the ceremony.

Three main concepts perpetuated throughout those speeches were ‘Allah’, ‘Turk’, and ‘Kazakh’. İbrahim Mutlu, the head of *Eliskhan Batyr Commemoration Committee* opened the ceremony in the name of Allah and welcomed all the guests. He continued to describe the current situation in China which persecute Turki Muslims in Xinjiang and put them into brain-washing prisons which are commonly known as re-education camps. Therefore, the image of Eliskhan is especially relevant and valuable today. I presented excerpt from his eulogy to to Eliskhan batyr:

> …Bütün bu olaylar bizlerin güzel Türkiye'mize göç etmemize özgürce hürriyet içinde yaşamamıza vesile olan Eliskhan batur'u her bir ferdimizin her zaman minnetle ve rahmetle anmamız gerektiğini göstermektedir. …Bütün bu sebeplerle bizi hürriyete kavuşturan mensup olduğumuz büyük Türk milleti ile beraber hür şekilde ve müslüman olarak yaşamamızı Allah'ın izni ve yardımı ile vesile olan Eliskhan batur'u defalarca minnetle ve rahmetle yad ediyoruz (Mutlu, July, 2018).
>
> All of these events demonstrate us the necessity of commemorating Eliskhan Batur, every time with gratitude and compassion by each member of our community, because his agency enabled us to migrate to our beautiful Turkey and live in freedom. …For all these reasons, we commemorate with gratitude and compassion Eliskhan Batur, who, with the permission and help of Allah, helped us to live freely and as Muslims together with the great Turkish nation whom we belong to.

As it is clear from this excerpt of Mutlu’s speech being Kazakh means being Turkish and Muslim. The role of Islam as a core of Kazakh community was emphasised throughout the ceremony. The reason for this is the ceremony was mainly arranged by religious organisation *Hoca Ahmet Yesevi İlim ve İrfan Vakfı.* The name of this organisation and its functions were stated in the Chapter 6. In addition, the role and contribution of this organisation in the revival and consolidating the Islam in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states can not be overlooked. For example, the opening prayer in this ceremony was delivered by a 10-12 years old Kazakh boy from Mongolia who was a disciple in

Koran courses organised by the same foundation located in Istanbul. After the graduation the boy will go back to his country and spread the word of Allah. Making their young disciple recite prayers in Belgrad forest for the soul of Eliskhan Batyr and other migration martyrs the foundation *Hoca Ahmet Yesevi İlim ve İrfan Vakfı* was showcasing their intentions and results of their work. This is because commemoration ceremonies are unique occasions when the activities of certain groups, communities, organisations and institutions become especially salient and visible as it has been seen from the example above.

Another speech I found interesting for the analysis belonged to Feyzullah Kıyıklık, a former mayor of Bağcılar district in İstanbul, he is also a politician who was elected as Istanbul deputy representing AKP (currently ruling party in Turkey) in 23rd, 24th, 25th and 26th periods. He was invited to the ceremony firstly because of a small number of Kazakh community living in Güneşli/Bağcılar. According to the officials Kazakhs living in Bağcılar district had good relationship since the time when Kıyıklık served as the mayor of district and usually showed essential support for Kazakh community in their various initiatives. In his speech Kıyıklık used following words addressing the participants: *"… Selçukluların çocuklarıyız! Biz yeniden mutlaka, eski hal ve anımıza ulaşacağız! Burada yeniden binlerce Eliskan baturlar çıkacak, Alparslanlar çıkacak, Gazneviler çıkacak, Mahmutlar çıkacak, Yeseviler çıkacak!"*(We are the children of the Seljuks! We will definitely reach our old state and history again! There will again be thousands of Eliskan baturs, Alparslans, Gaznevis, Mahmuts, and Yesevis!). I do believe that re-collecting the great names of Turkic history was a good example for how our past can be instrumentalized to shape our present, especially our political stances. Indicating to the common grounds and aims of the different Turkic groups, the former deputy of parliament attempted to navigate Kazakhs in Turkish political context. I came to the conclusion that commemorating Eliskhan Alipuly was not only a recollecting tragical experience of exodus from Xinjiang, but also it was an act of gratitude which goes to separate entities. The gratitude begins with thanking almighty Allah, then Eliskhan for leading away his people from Chinese oppressors, and finally Turkey which is the saviour of Kazakhs.

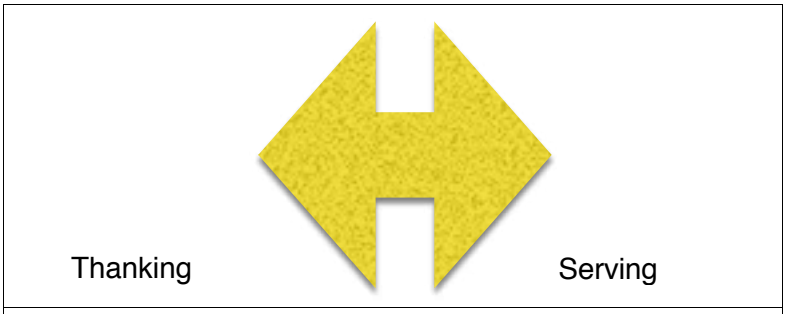


Fig. 14 The Representation of Commemorative Ceremony Functions

Not only the functions of this particular commemorative ceremony, but also inter-ethnic and power relations of its participants are exercised through two main actions which is shown in the Figure 16. In the eyes of Kazakhs Turkey is a great country and their saviour. That is why Turkish nation has more authority and power over Kazakhs. If Kazakhs want to continue to live in freedom and avoid suppression here, they need to adapt themselves to the local political discourse and moreover has to persistently thank and show their gratitude. Hence commemorative ceremonies and festivals are special ways of thanking the host country. The second concept I pointed in the Figure 16 is serving. The women and young men helping to cook and distribute food in the commemorative ceremony served to their guests. *Hoca Ahmet Yesevi İlim ve İrfan Vakfı* serves to all mighty God (Allah) through spreading its words and opening up Koran courses. In the same manner Kazakh community in Istanbul serves to Turkish country through taking side in its political mainstream (for example, through the support of AK party). So, these are only few representations of service performed by Kazakh community members which are most visible during collective rites such as commemorative ceremonies. In the following section, I will develop my arguments on the idea of commemoration act from kinship perspectives.

6.2. NEGOTIATING POWER AND PRESTIGE VIA KAZAKH GENEALOGY

The collective commemorative rites in Kazakh culture are the suitable environment for emphasising one's ancestry. This was clear through the case of Eliskhan Alipuly's commemoration. During this ceremony the young men were wearing T-shirt with a clan name *Tasbike* and an emblem of their clan. Tasbike clan sponsored the publication of a book about the life of Eliskhan Alipuy and distributed it for free to the ceremony participants. The negotiation of power and prestige of specific tribe could be seen through the following sentence uttered in the opening speech by Ibrahim Mutlu during the ceremony: *"Eliskhan Batur da Kerey kazakların gönüllerine taht kurmuş lider ve milli kahramanlarımızdan biridir"* (Eliskhan Batyr, is a leader, who enthroned the hearts of Kerey Kazakhs and one of our national heroes). Thus, Eliskhan is firstly a hero of Kerey tribe, then of the Kazakh nation. Therefore, here I would like to give some detailed information about Kazakh kinship system.

6.2.1. Kay Elsiñ? - What Tribe Do You Belong To?

Clifford Geertz once wrote that the elements of culture are like an octopus, which is poorly integrated creature and anthropologists' task is to find connections and combine dispersed pieces of culture. It means that they should search for strong coherency (Clifford Geertz, 2010, p. 56). Right now, it is impossible to measure how well this work managed to connect all the scattered elements of Kazakh culture, but one thing is for sure that Kazakhs succeeded in creating coherence within their society with the help of their particular kinship system.

The Kazakh kinship system is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Kazakh nation. The historians proposed different time periods of its emergence. Some wrote that it emerged before Mongolian conquest in the 9th-10th centuries while others considered in the second half of the 16th century and

associated with the development of Kazakh Khanate (Meirmanova, 2015; Koptileuova, 2019). Recent studies tend to support the latter opinion. Thus, it is possible to state that due to spatial and military expansion in the 16th century Kazakh territories were divided into three Hordes (Zhuz). Each of these Hordes was governed by a Khan. The Great Horde (Uly zhuz) inhabited the southern territories, the Middle Horde (Orta zhuz) roamed over the central and north-eastern parts, whereas the Small/Junior/Little[29] Horde (Kishi zhuz) covered the western area of the current territory of Kazakhstan (Gumppenberg, 2002:31; O Beachain & Kevlihan, 2011:2; Uehara, 1992: 15-18). Nevertheless, such administrative division did not create any linguistic or cultural changes in the society.

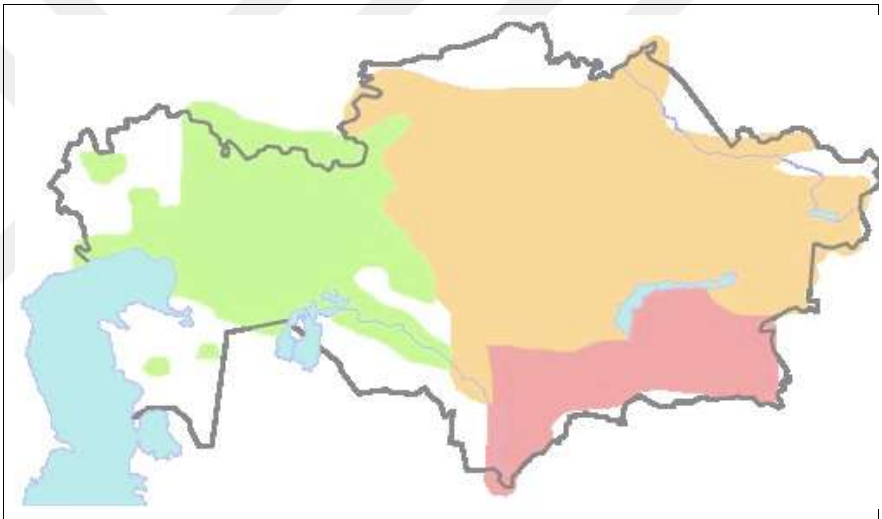


Fig. 15 The approximate settlement of Kazakh Hordes in the 20th century

Today each Horde contain roughly between a half-dozen and ten tribes, whereas each tribe might contain more than a dozen clans. Since the terms like 'tribe' and 'clan' are largely arbitrary, Hancock-Parmer (2014) proposed the following table as a key for interpreting the Kazakh terms.

[29] Kazakh word 'kishi' was translated differently in various literature so I gave all three versions which I have come across so far.

English	Kazakh	Қазақша
Horde	Zhuz	Жүз
Tribe	Taipa	Тайпа
Clan	El or Ru	Ел немесе Ру

Tab. 2 The use of Kazakh terms

The Figure 16 represents one of the widespread schematic representation of Kazakh tribes available on the Internet. This tree with its roots and branches has become an idiom of genealogical reckoning of Kazakhs that goes beyond biological notions of descent, reproduction and transmission. This image does not only show the unimaginable number of Kazakh clans and tribes, but also represents the popular hypothesis of Kazakh ethnogenesis used by national historians. As it is possible to see the roots of the Kazakhs go back to the steppe peoples (Scythians, Sarmatians and Huns) described by Herodotus and other ancient historians. However, what I want to point out is that in this scheme Turik is an ancestor, the father[30] of Kazakhs. According to this interpretation Kazakh is not a 'Turk' but a 'descendant' of Turk. In the next figure similarly, Oraltay (2011) shared his own family tree in his book. In that scheme too Turk is regarded as the forefather of Kazakh nation.

These schemes clearly demonstrate how the genealogy is important for Kazakhs to claim their ethnic identities. As it is seen the most of names here belong to the real people who lived in the past. However, the Kazakhs incorporated the concept of Turk in their family tree, although it is not a person, but an abstract concept and name of a nation. This illustrates how with the inclusion of such terms as Huns or Turks into their big family tree Kazakhs manipulating with genealogy to create the visible paradigm of their national unity.

[30] It is a "father" because in Kazakh family tree does not include the names of female children. If a person had no son, he is considered as childless. Thus his clan, or family tree would stop to grow.

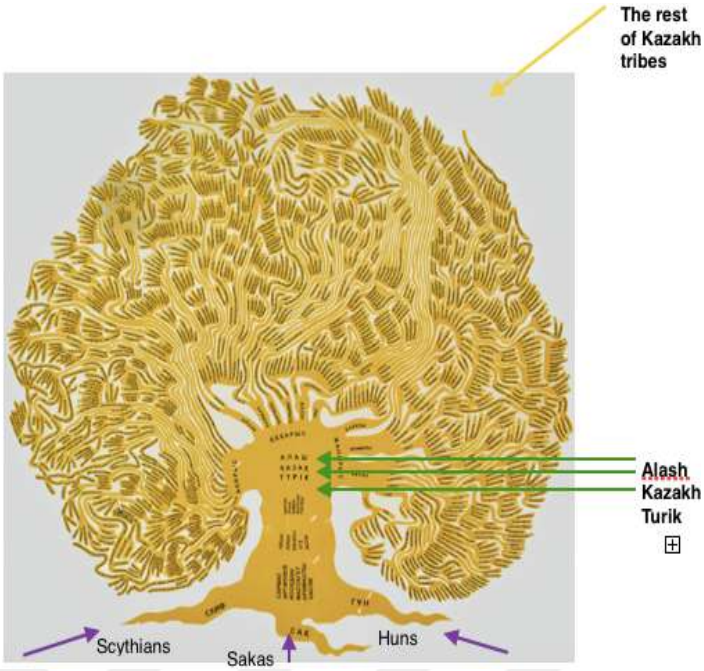


Fig. 16 The Kazakh (Shezhire) Genealogy Tree
kazakh.family.tree



Fig. 15. Hasan Oraltay's Genealogy (Oraltay, 2011, p. 298)

The Kazakh kinship system can be defined as "agnatic kinship, i.e., unilineal descent through males" (Radcliffe-Brown, 1950, p.14). In this context, an original male ancestor and all his descendants through males from three to *n* number of generations constitute agnatic lineage. As it is seen from the figure 14, Alash, an outcast prince who was later proclaimed as the first khan of Kazakhs is considered as their original male ancestor. To describe their kinship

system the Kazakhs also use the word *shezhire* which is translated as "genealogy", but depending on the context can also mean "history" or "chronicle". It is derived from the Arabic word 'shajara' meaning 'tree' (Argynbaev, Mukhanova & Vostrov, 2004, 4). Shezhire is genealogical records which is important source of information for the lineage and clan members. In the past it used to be passed down orally. However, today many Kazakhs are keen on having printed copies of their shezhire. When I went to interview Omar ata, on his table I saw a thick book titled as the Shezhire of Karakass lineage living in Xinjiang. The book had the names of all existing families belonging to this lineage and their colourful photos. It was gift from Omar ata's relatives in Xinjiang. Inspired with this book he was also writing the shezhire of Karakass families living in Turkey. As I have mentioned above the kinship system of Kazakhs is agnatic, so if a person does not have a male child his shezhire ceases its existence. Although daughters belong to the lineage of their fathers, their children do not. For instance, little Hamza, four-year old Kazakh boy had a silver bracelet on his wrist with the writing ESSAGASSY, the name of his lineage. The bracelet was gifted by his father to mark his birth as an event which secured the continuity of their family line. Thus, Hamza, being a boy is not only a carrier of the Essagassy blood, but also its continuer.

In Kazakhs shezhire the concept of *zheti ata* i.e., seven forefathers is essential. The articulation and practice of zheti ata is important, because it does regulate the marital relations within Kazakh society. Since Kazakh kinship is male based system, all the relatives from fathers' side are considered as blood brothers and sisters. Therefore, men and women from the same clan are not allowed to marry unless their ancestors are above the seven ancestors. That is why every Kazakh is expected to know and be able to recite the names of seven generations of their patrilineal ancestors. This tradition is expressed through the proverb *Zheti ata aspay, kyz aspaydi* (Without passing seven forefathers, a girl does not pass) with meaning that marriage of people within the same clan is forbidden. Otherwise, this marriage would be considered an incest. However, the Kazakhs could be more flexible with this regulation when it comes to the relatives from their mother's side. There is not strictly articulated prohibition of

marrying to maternal cousins or any other relatives from mothers' side. This flexibility has been allowing the Kazakhs in Turkey to practice endogamy for many years. To illustrate this, when I first arrived to Mustafa ağabey's house while he was introducing family members to me, pointing to elderly woman said *"Kyzym, Kazakta baba tarafindan kyz almaz, bu Gülsüm'ün yengesi ve bizim damadın annesi"* (Kazakhs do not take wife from their patrilineal relatives, this is Gulsum's sister-in-law, at the same time the mother of our son-in-law). Thus, Mustafa ağabey's elder daughter Sümeye, who is couple of years older than me married to her mother's first cousin. This marriage would not have happened if this couple had been related from their fathers' side in a similar way.

It is clear that the genealogy of Kazakhs is a strong instrument in regulating their social behaviour. However, how is Kazakh shezhire being played out in today's context? More specifically, how does it shape behavioural patterns and identity of Kazakhs living in Turkey? Dinmukhammed Ametbek (2015) argued that existing tribal system in Kazakh community is one of the main features of Kazakhs' self-identification. "For example, when Kazakhs meet each other for the first time, they ask "Kay elsiñ?" which means "What is your clan? … therefore, although Kazakhs are united by upper identity Kazakh, it is possible to say that their tribal identification is still strong." (Ametbek, 2015: p. 34). Therefore, it is important to identify how much impact tribal system has on Kazakhs' ethnic and national identifications. Smith in his theory stated that the association with specific territory can often be one of the boundaries setting qualities for ethnie. However, due to the existing kinship system in case of Kazakhs a geographical location or fixed territory might not be as important as for other nations. For example, throughout my stay in Turkey while having conversation with people I was often asked or heard others being asked *"Nerelisiniz?"* or *"Memleket neresi?"* (Where are you from? or Where is your homeland?). Thus, in Turkey people's identity are strongly bound to the territory where they are born or come from, whereas the verification of Kazakhness does not originate from specific land, but based on kinship. If someone fails to have a clan, he fails to be a Kazakh too. That is why belonging to one of the hordes is considered to be a backbone of Kazakh ethnicity (Muldagaliyeva, 2015: 81) and

as Kesici (2011) argued the idea of ethnic belonging among Kazakhs strongly tied to the kinship. In other words, Kazakhness attained through ancestry. Kesici states:

> This is exemplified by the Kazakh custom that an ethnic Kazakh should not only to be able to name his or her tribe and the *zhuz* to which they belong, but should be able to recite the names of his or her ancestors up to the seventh generation. In order to be included in the Kazakh ethnic group, one has to be Kazakh 'by blood'. This is the main criterion of Kazakh boundary making, next to common language, Kazakh traditions and customs, and a common history (Kesici, 2011: 36-38).

Kesici's arguments resonate with the ideas of Nash (1989) who identified kinship as one of three most widespread ethnic boundary markers. According to him, *kinship*, biological unity of the group; *commensality,* symbol of group members' equality and their brotherhood; *shared cult,* the system of sacred symbols, feelings and values; they all together form a repeated metaphor. The metaphor of *blood*, *substance* and *God* not only create ethnic boundaries but also guarantee its existence.

However, for me Kazakh ethnicity is not an extension of kinship, but rather kinship is a script and practical guidance of being a Kazakh. This system proved its efficacy over the centuries and even here in Turkish environment it holds together the Kazakh society. The tribal system prevented the Kazakhs from scattering around Turkey. Some frequent behavioural patterns that has been practiced through tribal system are the sense of solidarity, marriage rules and commemorating ancestors. According to the tribal script being a Kazakh means helping your clansmen in the days of their joy and misery. Besides, the members of clans are expected to contribute financially to the organisation of commemoration ceremonies for the honour of their original ancestor to raise prestige of their clan. The exaggeration of the clan relations, however, may result in the tribalism, using tribal identity for negative purposes when in the professional field qualifications and skills of a person is ignored, instead tribal identity is taken into consideration.

While doing fieldwork, once a young man from Nayman tribe told me that Nursultan Nazarbayev, the first president of Kazakhstan was Nayman. This was

a “myth” because Nazarbayev comes from *Shapyrashty* clan of *Ulu zhuz.* However, the young man seemed to ignore the truth even after I revealed it to him. Instead of checking the official websites which clearly state Nazarbayev’s genealogy, he preferred to believe to the created myth because it flattered his pride about his clan. If he further checked the information, he would also find out that surprisingly the current Kazakhstani president also comes from *Ulu zhuz* Horde. This discovery leads to the thoughts that in Kazakhstan regardless the preachings about democracy and their implementations in the form of political elections, the kinship system still continues to affect the power distribution in the government. Some of the scholars pointed out that even during Soviet era the dominant roles in Communist party and in the republican administrative institutions were assigned to the individuals from *Great/Seniour zhuz* (Akiner, 1995; Olcott, 1987; Usta, 2007). This attitude was expressed in the following way by a group of scholars:

> Unlike other ethnic groups, identity policies practiced by Kazakhs include tribal and clan division, new tribalism. Belonging to a wealthy, noble family, *an influential clan*[31] is an additional resource for *the success of the identification* process and, therefore, – the occupation of *the prestigious place in the hierarchy* of social-status structure. Identification principle based on genealogy, regional (territorial) division in the communities continue to dominate interpersonal and intergroup relations traditional Kazakhs – people from the villages. While urban Kazakhs, most of whom have no ethnic stereotypes, genealogical identification does not play a big role in interpersonal relationships (Shaikemelev M. et al., 2019: 12-13).

Moreover, Shaikemelov et al. (2019) express their worry about the growth of the symbolic significance of the tribal identifications or tribalism stating that in future it may contribute to “disunity of the Kazakh ethnic nation, blocking the channels of social mobility, and slowing down the processes of its entry into the space of the political nation” (2019: 13). On the other hand, scholars such as O Beachain & Kevlihan (2013: 7) warn us not to overestimate zhuz or lineage rivalries which I abundantly witnessed in my fieldwork, in contrast to Shaikemelov et al. (2019)

[31] The emphasis added by the researcher

they believe that in future genealogy will be more of the contingent use, especially in the urban contexts and clan politics in Kazakhstan will not result in inter-group conflicts or divisions. Unlike those researchers, instead of arguing for either positive or negative implications of Kazakh tribal identifications, here I want to underline the fact that tribal division of Kazakhs in Istanbul serve as a skeleton of their community. As Svanberg (1989) put it Kazakhs were more successful in establishing themselves as a group with solid ethnic boundaries in Turkey comparing to other East Turkestani ethnic groups and one of the reasons for this was the maintenance of kinship traditions.

6.2.1.1. Tribal Identity Practice of Kazakhs in Turkey: Shaming and Honouring

The Kazakhs migrated to Turkey in the 1950s belong to *Orta zhuz* (Middle zhuz). Orta zhuz consists of six tribes: *Argyn, Kipshak, Kongyrat, Uaq, Nayman* and *Kerey.* Furthermore, each of these tribes are composed of several clans. For example, the tribe Kerey is divided into twelve clans and called “twelve Kereys”. They are *Jadik, Jantekey, Qaraqas, Molky, Sherushi, Könsadaq, Sarbas, Iteli, Shubaraigyr, Merkit, Jastaban* and *Shimoiyn.* Each clan is divided into even smaller branches (Uehara, 1992: 39). Kazakhs living in Istanbul are representatives of three Orta zhuz tribes which are *Nayman, Kerey* and *Uaq,* but people usually use their clans rather than tribes to identify themselves within the community, for example, *Chakabay* or *Tasbike,* but not *Kerey*. Often in the field I witnessed disputes about whose clan is more powerful and smarter; things could get even worse when they asked me to judge their disagreements claiming that outsiders have clearer view on matters. Likewise, there is always a slight tension between the tribes too, each one thinking of themselves being superior to others, they create stereotypes and mock each other. Regardless all those arguments, Kazakh community is quite united when it comes to the funerals and weddings in Istanbul. Smith (1986) once argued that in order to qualify as an ethnic group people must have a “strong sense of belonging and an active solidarity, which in time of stress and danger can override class,

factional or regional divisions within the community" (1986: 30). Thus, I evaluate kinship as a method of practicing and accomplishing sense of solidarity existing among Kazakhs. This unity is mainly acted out through kinship relations. If a family has their child getting married, the people from their clan will contribute to their wedding financially as well as physically, for instance, clansmen cook food, bake pastries, help cleaning the space after the event etc. Behind such help is the philosophy of reciprocity: "I help you today, so tomorrow you help me". Each clan runs the funds where kinsmen contribute monthly certain amount of money and it ensures that there is always a spare money to cover funeral expenses when one of their kinsmen dies. The following story also shows how kinship among Kazakhs can function as a driving force of the solidarity within community.

> My father was an orphan. In Pakistan he used to live and work in the city called Rawalpandi. He was selling sweet drinks. His manager appreciating his industriousness and honesty was even ready marry him to his daughter and make him a companion. My father did not really plan to come to Turkey, until the day he was found by an elderly man, one of the elders of *Nayman tribe*, who asked him to join them. He could not make decision immediately, so the man invited him to stay couple of weeks with Kazakhs in order to make up his mind. Eventually, my father decided to join other Kazakhs heading to Turkey (male, 57).

This is the story of an orphan man whose arrival to Turkey would not have happened if not the interference of his tribesmen. There is even social shaming if certain clan fails to look after their orphan or poor members, because such people have to be protected by their own kinsmen, if not so other tribes will step in and take the responsibility, while helping to a person in need they try not to miss an opportunity shaming the other tribe for neglecting their kinsmen. However, why do Kazakhs still practice this kind of kinship relations? They are not even nomadic people anymore. In addition, there is no necessity for division of pastures between clans or seasonal migration when clans took turns while moving from winter basement to their summer camps or vice versa. The answer to this question could be hidden in the concept of *social sanction* deeply analysed by one of the authors on modern nationalism, Amilcar Antonio Barreto (2009).

According to Barreto (2009), people cooperate either because of the potential social rewards or fear of punishment. He wrote that commitment to one's group is rarely unconditional. Those who cooperate unconditionally are usually referred as fanatics, whereas the vast majority of people who commit for the common goals do so because of the fear of social rejection and ostracism. This is the reason why people conform the rules of solidarity. Groups, therefore, own social sanctions having "honour and prestige on the positive end and shame on the punitive side" (Barreto, 2009: 49). And the efficacy of these measures relies on the spreading of shared values within a specific group.

For instance, I saw how in the funeral of a woman some of the attending women were outrageous because the family of the departed suggested splitting the funeral expenses between the relatives of the departed and the family of her former husband, whom she had divorced more than twenty years ago. This situation led to gossips and arguments between the elders of two clans. Here we can see the enactment of intragroup control underlined by Barreto (2009) which consisted of gossip, rumours and other negative forms of social commentary. Roger Lancaster who studied culture and religion in Nicaragua also argued about the power of hearsay in reinforcing group norms. Within their community the festival Purisima, celebrating the Virgin Mary plays an important role and all members of the society have to contribute to its celebration, those who refuse the partaking will be labelled as *pinche* (stingy) and become the subject of hostile gossip. Therefore, I understand why Kazakhs do not hesitate to spend thousands of dollars on the so-called clan ancestor or hero commemoration ceremonies, even erecting their statues. The material contribution for such events guarantees the prestige and honour of the family. Otherwise, they might fall victims of the sharp tongue of their clan members and ruin their reputation like in the case of the family of the deceased Kazakh woman. Barreto described that the essence of social sanctions is people's dependence on the group in question - the community within people interact and share a common set of expectations. Moreover, this reliance usually makes them too vulnerable to humiliation and shame. "Shame, an extremely public penalty, is a powerful force within tight-knit communities, and it is stronger

sensation than guilt, a private indignity" (Barreto, 2009: 50). The phenomenon of shaming and honouring is practiced to ensure the enactment of appropriate behaviour prescribed by Kazakh society and their social memory both in actions and words. For example, an elderly woman was too upset because someone's daughter-in-law used inappropriate expression in Kazakh to describe meat preparation in the documentary about Kazakhs made by European reporters. Instead of the words "etti osylai koyamyz/jasaymyz" (we prepare, make) in Kazakh the young woman said "etti tastay salamyz" (we throw the meat) which contradicted to the proper language register in Kazakh.

Therefore, it is clear that kinship is the powerful mechanism for sustaining and continuing the sense of solidarity among Kazakhs, which in turn helps to maintain bigger Kazakh ethnic identity. Besides, as it has been seen the commitment to one's kin or identity is ensured through social mechanisms such as social rewards and penalties. If many other Turkic ethnicities used to identify themselves with specific territory or city, Kazakhs were and still are emphasising their tribal identity rather than territory where they come from. Moreover, tribal identity functions as the verification of their Kazakhness and many scholars considered it as the fundamentals of Kazakh ethnicity.

6.2.1.2. The Importance of Great Ancestor Veneration Ceremony

Genina (2015, 123) rightly pointed out that people of power in Kazakhstan try to legitimise their rule through mythologising history. She particularly focused on the example of Karasai batyr from Shaprashty clan. The legendary batyr is believed to have fought the Dzungar enemies in the 18th century. Some oppositional newspapers in Kazakhstan debated that "Karasai batyr was completely unknown to most Kazakhs until 1992 and only when the former President Nazarbayev publicly proclaimed him to be his 8th generation direct patrilineal ancestor. As a result of widescale PR campaign… there appeared an image of a powerful Karasai batyr, the ancestor of President Nazarbayev." (Genina, 1992, 123-124). Therefore, later former Kaskeleng district in Almaty

region, the birthplace of Nazarbayev, was renamed into Karasai in 1993. Two monuments of Karasai batyr was erected in the region: one is in front of the *akimat* (municipality) building and the other on the hill near Shamalgan, the President's home village. Besides, there was lavish commemorative ceremony in honour of the 350th anniversary of Karasai batyr's birth in 2007. Some critics interpreted the veneration of Karasai batyr as historical falsification and distortion of a history for the benefit of rulers.

Nazarbayev is not an only Kazakh who was using his genealogy to legitimise his power. In Kazakhstan especially among the wealthy people it has become very fashionable and prestigious to venerate their ancestors. That is why they love spending a lot of money on giving ʌss for their respective ancestor. Since Kazakh history is based mainly on oral history it seems so easy to find folktales and legends which could testify the good deeds of the chosen ancestor. For instance, when I was a bachelor student during one of the regular summer holidays while visiting my parents I witnessed how some respective elders of our clan came to ask my father for money, because they were planning to give collectively ʌss of Aralbay batyr, whose lineage we belong to. I remember myself being furious and arguing with my parents not to give their spare money for erecting some unknown (at least to me) dead ancestor's monument. It was very naive of me to think that I could change my parents' mind. At that time, I did not realise how strong is the community power of Kazakhs based on tribal relations. My parents like many other members of our lineage being afraid of shame and ostracisation decided to contribute financially to the commemorative ceremony of Aralbay batyr. The money covered such expenses as prizes for horse race winners (a car and money) and fee for artists for setting a show. These expenses were only few to mention.

The examples of commemorating Eliskhan batyr by Tasbike clan in Turkey, Karasai batyr by Shaprashty clan, and Aralbay batyr by Aralbay clan in Kazakhstan demonstrate that for Kazakhs their history is a personal matter. It means that historical events do not necessarily reflect the interests of a single nation, instead concrete ancestors taking place in those events might represent

the interests of currently alive and specific Kazakhs. Therefore, genealogy and historical narratives are central to the legitimation and authority of Kazakhs in Turkey too. Commemorating and venerating clan ancestor through lavish ceremonies are fashionable and prestigious deed for clansmen. Kazakh clans consolidate their position and power within community via these ceremonies. As it has been seen this was common case not only in Kazakhstan but also in Turkey.

Genina (2015, 127) argued that the genealogical ways of demarcating who is Kazakh are intertwined with the state ways of identifying who is Kazakh. The genealogies are used either to legitimise or confront the other as the point of reference for who counts as Kazakh—or not. The state orchestrated nationalism uses the shezhire and ancestors to claim territory and identification of the Kazakh nation with the current state. “In fact, it is the genealogical conception of the Kazakh nation and history and sacralization of particular ancestors as generalized national Kazakh saints and heroes that underpins many claims to political legitimacy by President Nazarbayev and Kazakhstan as a nation-state” (Genina, 2015, 127).

Some journalists did criticise such ancestor veneration ceremonies of Kazakhs for their privatisation of national history. Others seeing widespread popularity of these ceremonies even argued that Kazakhs do not have history as a science of events, since everyone is able to claim ownership over national history and promote a personal history as the national one. This attitude shows that some people do not really consider genealogy, “*shezhire* - its narrative forms, it sources of authority, and modes of transmission as a “real history”” (Genina, 2015, 128). The essence of this debate actually refers back to the difference between historical reconstruction and social memory discussed in section 4.1 of this work.

If some oppositional journalists are looking for a “proper” national history in commemorative ceremonies of people, they may not find one, because commemorative ceremonies, at least in the case of Kazakh ancestry practice is more about collective memory rather than a historical reconstruction. Yet, like

Fabio De Leonardis (2016, 24) pointed out “history and memory are interdependent: the ‘sacred memory’ of the nation needs history as a source of usable past in order to gain legitimacy, whereas history needs memory as a dialectic pole”. The ancestry is something what Kazakh tribes and clan members agree upon to remember and re-collect when they need to legitimise their power and consolidate their prestige within bigger Kazakh community. This is what makes Kazakhs spend thousands of dollars without any hesitation for erecting monuments of their ancestors. Thus, I underline here although the context of Eliskhan Alipuly’s commemoration ceremony was different from Kazakhstani one, in terms of using genealogy to negotiate power and prestige among Kazakhs it had many common grounds. Now it is time discuss another commemoration ceremony carried out in Turkey which took place in Kemalpaşa/İzmir.

6.3. COMMEMORATION CEREMONY OF ŞİRZAT DOĞRU

Upon my visit to some of the houses in Zeytinburnu I was surprised to see the tablecloths or bowls decorated with Kazakh ornaments. These types of things usually are not sold in Turkish markets. When I wondered about their origins, my hosts mentioned about a Kazakh lady who was selling all these staff here in Zeytinburnu. Thus, I decided to pay her visit. This visit would help me to understand how ethnic identity might influence the way we run our businesses and the choice of goods we sell to our customers. I believe that traditional markets in cosmopolitan cities run by migrant groups can be interpreted as a meeting point of diverse groups, where they play out their ethnic and social identities, show off their cultural priorities and values. Therefore, I tried not to neglect business places run by Kazakh entrepreneurs in Zeytinburnu, because there was always good opportunity to meet different people and interact with them. This is how I met Şirzat Doğru’s daughter named Çolpan. She was the lady who was selling tablecloths and bowls to Kazakh housewives in Zeytinburnu. When I came to her shop, she was quite busy like many other

shop owners. In addition, her family was preparing for one-year death anniversary of their father. I caught her in the middle of its organisation. She gave several invitation cards for the commemoration ceremony, so I could share it to other friends in case if they are interested in going to the ceremony in Kemalpaşa/İzmir. Moreover, she handed me an autobiographical book of her father, but said that it is the limited edition, so I had to return it to her after I read it which I did later during the ceremony.

To attend the ceremony, I arrived a day earlier to Salihli, Manisa. It is one of the places where Kazakhs first settled when they arrived to Turkey. In fact, there are still many Kazakh families living in Kurtuluş mahallesi in Salihli. On the ceremony day bus transfer was organised from this district to Kemalpaşa. The place where we were being driven was called Alaş Kımız Çiftliği. As soon as the bus drove up to the valley where the farming was located, magnificent view to the mountain ranges opened up. It was beautiful spot. In the entrance to the parking space there was writing with stones 'Alaş Kazak Vadisine Hoş Geldiniz!'. Above the writing there were swaying flags that belonged to different Turkic countries in Central Asia. Thus, from the very entrance to the farming I was exposed to the various symbols related to Kazakh community as well as whole Turkic world.

It is interesting how the founder of the farming Şirzat Doğru chose specifically the name Alash. In the legends Alash or Alasha khan is described as an outcast prince who was selected by the Kazakhs as their first khan. In chapter 8 I have already written about three zhuzs which are the backbone of that system. The legend of Alash Khan narrates the origin of these three Kazakh *zhuzs*. Olcott (1987, 140-1) claimed that Kazakhs were using the word Alash as a synonym for their nation. For example, the short-lived independent Kazakh government (1917-20) established after the Bolshevik Revolution was named Alash Autonomy (*Alash Autonomiyasy*) and the party that ran it was called the Alash Horde (*Alash Orda*). In the nineteenth-century Khoqand chronicle *Tārīkh-i Shāhrukhī* the Kazakhs were referred to as "Altï san Alash (six components of Alash)" (Olcott, 1987). Thus, it was not a mere chance that Doğru chose the

name Alaş for his farm. The farm has become a manifestation of Kazakh country within Turkey.



Fig. 18. The Entrance to the Alash Farm. Kemalpaşa/Izmir.
***Photo from Fieldwork,* June, 2019**

The family members greeted the guests and were sending them to different yurts to offer tea and snacks. These yurts were not real transportable dwelling of nomads covered with felt, instead these yurts were immovable structures in the shape of yurt that were like pavilions and used for hosting guests in the farm. Due to the change in Kazakhs' life style the yurt might have lost its initial qualities, but it gained powerful symbolic meaning. From this example only it is possible to see how the yurt which once had served only functional purposes, today has become a symbol of Kazakhness and nomadism which is especially meaningful and expressive in foreign environment. The extensive discussion about the use of yurt and similar cultural symbols to express Kazakh ethnic identity will be given in the next chapter. For now, it should be enough to create the context of this commemorative ceremony.

After having teas in the yurts, guests had chance to walk around and chat with each other. Some were taking pictures with horses. Then all of the guests proceeded to the tables laid for them outdoors in the open area. The commemoration ceremony opened with the recitation of verses from Koran and prayers for the soul of departed. In contrast to the commemoration ceremony of

Eliskhan Alipuly, this ceremony was filled up with live stories because it was attended by many people who actually knew Şirzat Doğru in person. Thus, Dogru's commemoration ceremony was platform for his family members, friends and colleagues to share their stories and narratives about his personality. Interestingly, their stories also evolved around the themes of Kazakh exodus from China and homeland. Dogru's grandson, who had welcomed the guests, called the farm itself as "Paradise Farm" and explained that his grandfather decided to establish his farm in this place because it looked very much like the Altay mountains where his grandfather was born and lived until the exodus in 1949.

6.3.1. Şirzat Doğru: the Artchitect of Ergenekon

In the entrance to the farm there were swaying flags belonging to different Turkic countries including Northern Cyprus. The banner with the photograph of Şirzat Doğru also had the images of these flags and even more each of these Turkic nations represented a star in the constellation of Big dipper which symbolised the unity of Turkic world. The flags and message on the banner were powerful statement expressed by the people who founded and own the Alaş farm. The message definitely carried both political and cultural meanings.



Fig. 19 The Banner of Commemorative Ceremony of Şirzat Doğru. *Photo from Fieldwork,* June, 2019

The children and close friends of Doğru who shared their stories during the ceremony together clearly expressed Turkish ultranationalist narratives and also

underlined Doğru's contribution to the strengthening the idea of Turkic unity. His Turkish friend named him an 'Architect of Ergenekon'[32] and called the Alaş farm the heart, centre and symbol of the whole Turkic world. Thus, the Alaş farm is not only an exotic destination for cultural tourism which offers the kymyz, mare's fermented milk to its visitors, but also a platform for spreading and consolidating the ideas about Kazakh and Turkic identities. This idea of Alaş farm being the cradle of Turkish culture was actively promoted via Turkish media too. Looking through the appendices of Doğru's autobiographical book I could see many articles from Turkish newspapers with headings such as "Reviving a Lost Turkish Culture", "Ege'deki Turkistan" or "Tanrılar içkisi kımız" (2008, pp.247-55). The narrative about Pan-Turkism was repeatedly expressed in the ceremony and I was convinced even more about serious involvement of Doğru and his family into Turkish nationalist undertakings when I saw a photo of Alparslan Türkeş, the veteran ultranationalist former military officer and the founder of Nationalist Action Party (NAP), on horseback upon his visit to the Alaş farm in their family photoalbum.

What I also noticed that family members of Şirzat Doğru, his children, nephews and nieces were eager not only to keep alive his legacy, but also to expand further his projects on the development of Turkic ideology. Therefore, although Doğru was buried in Balçova, during the ceremony his family asked the governor of Kemalpaşa district to give permission to construct his *türbe* (mausoleum) in the farm area. The district governor in front of the crowd positively answered to the request of the family. The family only had to submit written application to the municipality and they could begin the construction of the mausoleum. Right now, I do not know how the story of potential mausoleum ended, whether it is being constructed or not, but mere fact of expressing the desire to build such architectural object shows the family's attempt to maintain the name of their ancestor and make it known to the farm visitors. In case if it is built, it will not only remind us about the person named Şirzat Doğru, but also

[32] In the myth about the foundation of the First Turkic Khanate, Ergenekon is mentioned as a valley where Turks took refuge for four centuries. When finally Turks managed to get out of the valley, it served later as a capital of Khanate.

add some kind of saintliness to his personality. I predict that after many years of its building his mausoleum will become a place of worshippers who heartily support nationalist Turkish political spectrum. The reason for this is that mausoleums and statues are commonly known as physical manifestations of social memory. Through such constructions social memories are materialised, because most of them are built to remember something or someone important from the past. Lenin's tomb in Moscow, Anıtkabir (memorial tomb of Atatürk) in Ankara, and the mausoleum of Hoca Ahmet Yassawi in Turkestan are only few famous examples of the human attempts to sustain the past and manipulate the people using the past. Since all the discussions in this chapter are evolved around the social memory, here comes the sub-section where I interpret Alaş farm itself as nothing else than commemorative project.

6.3.2. Alaş Farm as a Commemorative Project

The farm Alaş was founded in 1987. According to Doğru's memoirs (2008) and the words of his daughter Çolpan his father was looking for a place to set his farm for almost four years and finally found it 35 km away from Izmir. The valley where today Alaş farm is located is in the outskirts of the mountain Nif and its three sides are surrounded by the mountains. I evaluate the project of Alaş farm as both cultural revival and commemorative project. As it has been well established from the beginning of this dissertation Kazakhs from Xinjiang who settled in Turkey before the exodus led nomadic lifestyle. However, after settling in Turkey the Kazakh community had to adjust to their new environment and embrace sedentary lifestyle. It seemed that there was no way of going back to the old way of life.

Doğru was from the first-generation settlers who once used to be a nomad and thus most probably living for many years in Turkey he must have had a nostalgia for his past lifestyle. Therefore, after succeeding in trading business he decided to realise his dream. However, it was not an easy task as he shared it in his book. Towards the end of 1980s the former Kazakh nomads in Turkey

were too old to teach him making kymyz. Ironically, he got help and support from German kymyz producers Ernst Hartmann and Hans Zollmann, who were able to recreate kymyz making in Germany and establish own kymyz producing factory. Doğru even bought his first mare from these people. The person who connected Doğru with these Germans was his cousin who went to work in Germany similarly to other Turkish migrants in the 1960s. So, with the "German" kymyz recipe and mare Doğru began making kymyz first for his family and later for sale. I interpret the Alaş farm as a project of commemorating nomadic life-style. Therefore, the aim of this project was to recollect and re-learn such habits as horse riding, mare milking and kymyz making, the traditions that define the culture of Kazakh people. This claim was derived from the description of the memory types substantially discussed by Connerton (1990, pp.22-36). Here I argue that the Alaş farm was created on the basis of Kazakh community's *social habit memory*. In order to understand what exactly the social habit memory means first we need to look at three main categories of memory classified by Connerton.

The first class is *personal* memory which refers to acts of remembering events from someone's own life history. It is described as personal memory because it is located in and refer to personal past. As Connerton argued personal memories are significant in our self-descriptions, because our self-knowledge, and our conception of our own character and potentialities largely depend on how we view our past actions. A second class of memory claims is *cognitive* memory which includes various uses of 'remember'. For example, remembering the meaning of words, lines of poem, stories, jokes, or mathematical equations, or truths of logic, or facts about the future etc. In contrast to the first type of memory, these memory claims do not need any information about the context and episode of learning in order to be able to maintain or use memories of this class.

A third group of memories, which is of particular interest to this research, is called *habit-memory.* This category holds the capacity to reproduce a certain performance. "Thus, remembering how to read or how to write or how to ride a

bicycle is in each case a matter of our being able to do these things, more less effectively, when the need to do so arises" (Connerton, 1990, p. 22). As Connerton wrote this class of memories do not recall how or when or where humans have acquired the knowledge in question; it is only by the fact of performance that people are able to recognise and demonstrate to others what they do remember. In fact, Doğru's family and farm workers performing such tasks as milking the mares or pounding its milk in wooden barrels to mix before leaving it to brew demonstrate certain aspects of nomadic traditions that they do remember. In addition, the performances in the farm such as wearing traditional clothes and serving kymyz to guests in the yurt shaped pavilions create an illusion of Kazakhs living in Turkey still being nomads.

According to Connerton among the aforementioned three categories of memory the habit-memory is the most difficult one to distinguish. This is because "habit is an intrusive feature of our mental life and is often present where at first sight it appears not to be" (1990, p. 23). One of the exceptional examples in demonstrating the vitality of habit memory for human being was shown in the case of a former Russian soldier named Zazetsky who suffered from rare form of amnesia that caused by severe brain damage during war. Not only Zazetsky suffered a devastating loss of personal and cognitive memory, but also his habitual patterns of behaviour were negatively affected by memory loss. For instance, he forgot how to gesture with his hands, when he was given a needle and a spool of thread and was asked to stitch the pattern, he did not know what to do with the materials in his hands. Connerton claimed that this area of loss should be called as nothing else than habit-memory.

In terms of losing their habit memory it is possible to draw parallels between Zazetsky and Kazakh society in Turkey. If Zazetsky forgot behavioural patterns such as gesturing to someone or greeting manners practiced by people from his own society, Kazakhs forgot the main habits they used to have when they had been nomads for example, making kymyz or yurt. However, in contrast to Zazetsky Kazakhs in Turkey still have personal and cognitive memories in place which means they still know what the word '*kymyz'* stands for and would

recognise immediately the yurt if they saw one. The foundation of Alaş farm simply meant the recollection of former nomadic habits and being able to perform those habits once more in a foreign context. Thus, in order to achieve this goal Doğru and his family sought assistance from outsiders, like German consultants and Kazakh relatives living in Xinjiang.

Social habits are different from individual habits, because in the most occasions individual habit does not have meaning for others and it does not really rely on others' conventional expectations. Whereas "the meaning of a social habit rests upon others' conventional expectations such that it must be interpretable as a socially legitimate (or illegitimate) performance" (Connerton, 1990, p. 35). Thus, social habits are essentially legitimating performances. Thus, from the mere fact of applying the rule or code, or from the failure to apply them, the society infers that a particular rule or code has been remembered or forgotten. Now I understand why Emine apa was so frustrated while watching documentary shot by Swedish film-makers about Kazakhs in Istanbul where someone's daughter-in-law marinated meat in the "wrong way". She had concerns that the youth is forgetting not only how to speak Kazakh, but also the way how certain Kazakh food is made. Not only from the documentary, but also observing Kazakh wedding ceremonies in Zeytinburnu Emine apa realised how some rules and codes inherent to Kazakh culture is being forgotten. Not only she, but many other elders today love spotting mistakes in execution of cultural codes by Kazakh youth and I believe that in doing so elders mainly rely on their social habit memory.

6.3.2.1. The Yurt: from Transportable Dwelling into Immovable Construction

The essential step in creating the aura of nomadic life within the Alaş farm was to have the yurt, transportable nomadic dwelling. However, instead of usual felt covered yurt, the visitors to the farm will see a huge immobile yurt with metal

structure fixed with concrete. Moreover, there are several metallic yurt shaped pavilions. Inner side of the big yurt has been decorated in traditional Kazakh style. Here we see how two cultural elements: horse and yurt can function as social memory triggers. It is possible to say that Doğru via using these two elements was able to exercise the social memory of Kazakh community based on the narrative about on nomadic lifestyle. The horse and yurt were not chosen by chance to represent the idea of nomadism. Carole Ferret (2016) called them as the most obvious emblems of nomadism. The reasons for these are, firstly domestication of the horse developed and facilitated mounted pastoral nomadism; secondly, the yurt due its transportability and comfort has become an example of perfect nomadic dwelling (Ferret, 2016, 182-186). Therefore, the Alaş farm does not only introduce the Kazakh identity to outsiders, but also gives the chance to many Kazakhs to relive the experience of being true nomad which is riding horse and drinking kymyz in the yurt. In Kazakhstan making kymyz is part of everyday life and in summer almost in every village it is possible to drink kymyz. It is not produced to revive the nomadic culture or to attract the tourists, but here in Turkey, in Aegean region we can see that the meaning of kymyz making process expanded to political, cultural and economic dimensions. Thus, it is clear that the Alaş farm is an example of both commemoration and revival project of Kazakh culture that has been successfully implemented in foreign context by a single Kazakh family.

6.3.2.2. How Did Transnational Ties of Kazakhs Help Realise the Alaş Farm Project?

Doğru had elder sisters who were married at the time of exodus thus did not leave China together with their parents. Like many other Kazakhs in Turkey in the 80s Doğru was able to re-connect with his relatives in Xinjiang and even visit them. This allowed him to involve his nieces and nephews from Xinjiang into the Alaş farm project. Two of them were invited to Turkey and worked in Doğru's farm: milked the mares and looked after the horses. From all these

actions evolving around kymyz making project in Turkey, it is possible to conclude that although it was planned as a local project it had international aspect which was expressed through consulting with German experts and inviting workers from China. This shows how strong the transnational ties of Kazakhs are i.e., Kazakh helping another Kazakh to get in touch with German consultants or networking with family members both from homeland and abroad. This refers to my initial argument about Kazakh diaspora being a cultural practice, stance and claim rather than a fixed entity, the approach widely argued by Brubaker (2005), Clifford (1997) and Thomas Faist (2010). As Brubaker (2005) argued diaspora cannot be regarded as a fixed entity within one country, because it is vibrant and is practiced through social relationships across the borders. Transnational ties of migrant and minority groups are even more enhanced owing to modern technology. Thus transnationalism, as sociologists argue, has repercussions for the continuous flows of resources across borders, for example, knowledge transfer and financial investments. It is clear that Alaş farm is a product implemented on the basis of Kazakhs' transnational ties.

Today it is impossible to imagine any society without transnational ties. This was demonstrated with an example of Mexican communities of Aguililla (Michoacan) and Redwood City (California) in theoretical framework of this research. Despite living in small provincial towns and distant rural areas people are still exposed to the circulation of money, goods and information. This brings my second argument which is identity as a script. In a sense due to the globalisation many minority and migrant communities are applying the model of transnationalism in their social relationships and Kazakhs in Turkey are not an exclusion. In this case, Alaş farm is only one of the examples of their transnational projects. Moreover, as I learnt from Çolpan hanım in the first years of Kazakhstani independence many VIP people from Kazakhstan came to visit the Alaş farm including the president Nazarbayev himself. She showed the photos where she was greeting guests in her traditional dress. According to her, apart from local Turkish and Kazakh guests, the farm often visited by their

Kazakh relatives and acquaintances who once migrated to Europe, not mentioning many Kazakhstani students in Turkey like me who also come here when they feel homesick. If transnationalism is interpreted as a particular form of behaviour or global script used by many migrant and minority groups, then from the piece of information given by Çolpan hanım it is possible to realise that the farm itself is not a mere commemoration project of Kazakh nomadic past, but also a modern stage where Kazakhs enact their preferable identities and practice transnational ties across the borders.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the difficulties of journey from Xinjiang to Turkey is deeply set in Kazakhs' social memory. The recollection of their loss and trauma caused by the exodus reaches its apex during commemoration ceremonies. There the martyrs of exodus are commemorated and thanked through public speeches and prayers. Moreover, the commemoration ceremonies function as thanksgiving act towards Turkish nation who offered shelter to them. Interestingly enough, these ceremonies usually become a platform for negotiating power and prestige of individual clans within Kazakh community. Thus, some ceremonies are organised to claim and legitimise financial and social power of certain clans. As a result, the history for Kazakhs becomes a personal matter, because their unity derives from their genealogy. This aspect particularly demonstrates the similarity of Kazakhs both in Turkey and Kazakhstan.

The commemorative ceremony in the Alaş farm and the farm itself constituted the successful commemoration project of nomadism. The farm shows how Kazakhs do rely on their social habit memory, while recollecting their nomadic past. In order to create an illusion of nomadic life in Turkey Kazakhs had to demonstrate and perform certain cultural codes to others. According to the Kazakh community and many researchers, horse and yurt are considered to be

the most appropriate symbols defining Kazakh culture, therefore via performing such actions as kymyz making, horse riding and setting up yurts despite being kilometres away from their homeland the Doğru family was able to show to others how well they do remember their Kazakhness and retain their social habit memory.

CHAPTER 7

PERFORMING IDENTITIES IN THE ALTAY VILLAGE FESTIVAL

Chapter 7 discusses the role of festivals in creating and reinforcing ethnic identity. This chapter particularly focuses on the festival which took place in a small Kazakh village called Altay in Ulukışla district, Niğde province of Turkey on July 19-20-21, 2019. The festival of brotherhood and thanksgiving was held regularly in the village since 2006. The minority groups rarely get to reflect upon their ethnic belonging and as a matter of fact they just live with it. However, festivals are cultural events which clearly interrupt that everyday routine. Festivals are an extraordinary occasion where people put more effort into expressing their ethnic identity. The chapter discusses the functions of the given festival and aims of its organisers and participants, including social and political aspects of the event. It is expected that evaluating the festival such as one in Altay village will disclose many aspects of Kazakhs' identity issues as an ethnic group. The Altay village festival can be interpreted as a statement of Kazakhs about their belonging not only to single Kazakh community but also to wider Turkish society.

7.1. FESTIVAL IS AN INSTRUMENT IN NEGOTIATING IDENTITY

Holding regular festivals and commemoration ceremonies is one of the methods used by ethnic groups to bring their voices to the wider public. Since festivals are connected to cultures and places, they help bind people to their communities, foster and strengthen group identity, and are essential for cultural heritage transmission. Today owing to digital technologies festivals is gaining even more visibility and is spread globally. As a result, festivals are extended beyond the local, reaching out for wider and more diverse participation, cultural connectedness and sense of belonging.

The concept of festival was defined by scholars in various ways and there are no right or wrong answer to it. All of the definitions equally contribute to the understanding of it and highlight one or another aspect of the festival. For example, Alessandro Falassi (1987, 1) stated that “a festival is an event, a social phenomenon, encountered in virtually all human cultures”, whereas Donald Getz (1991) defined a festival as a sacred and meaningful time, a special occasion constituting a series of performances organised to celebrate harvest, a notable person or important product. The length of festival might vary from one weekend up to several weeks in the case of larger festivals. Robert Janiskee (1980, 97) characterised festivals as ‘formal periods or programs of pleasurable activities, entertainment or events having a festive character and publicly celebrating some concept, happening or fact. The comments above demonstrate that festivals are an important cultural practice accepted in all cultures.

Maryanne Njeri Kahuno (2017, 30) in her research on Kenyan festival Lamu called a festival as a themed, public celebration. Kahuno stated that in order to qualify an event as a festival, it should be held by and for the public. Moreover, if the public is not invited, an event is considered as private party and even selling tickets to the public is not sufficient enough to call a celebration as a festival. Kahuna (2017, 33-34) stressed that a festival should manifest a shared purpose, cultural values and traditions. Celebrating culture and the identity of the people hosting the event is one of the major purposes of cultural festivals. Cultural identity usually comprises such concepts as language, religion, shared beliefs, symbols, habits, customs, historical experiences, rituals, values, world-views, common descent and place (space). While it is harder to observe those concepts in people’s everyday life, during festivals most of those concepts become very salient. For example, the easiest thing to do during the festival is to spot cultural symbols such as food, clothes, music and dance of local community. Similarly, many other scholars (Getz, 1991, 1997:11; Frisby and Getz, 1989, 7-11) underlined the role of festivals in maintaining and creating cultural identity. In their understanding festivals encourage ethnic understanding and thus help to celebrate and safeguard local history and traditions. Moreover,

through festivals people assert their cultural values and present them to visitors. Jaeger and Mykletun (2013) on the basis of regional festivals in Norway discussed how festivals functioned as occasions for expressing collective belonging to a group or a place where people had opportunities to create united histories, cultural practices, and ideals. Therefore, it is important for anthropologist to be able to read festivals since they display elements endowed with cultural meaning and educate the observer a lot about the festival hosting community.

There are different types of communities which host regular festivals. One of them is migrant groups. The main purpose of migrants' festival is to reinforce their group identity. In general, migrants use different methods to maintain their culture and promote their connectedness to their new environment. Some of the methods might include small-scale cultural events, activities and community groups, as well as online forums and websites promoting virtual bonding. After being involved in such events migrants have an opportunity to connect with their fellow compatriots, to make new friends, improve relationships with their host communities and to overcome cultural barriers. However, among those events cultural festivals stand out, because they have greater visibility thus have more potential to foster cultural connections and challenge stereotypes. For instance, Europe's largest cultural heritage street festival London's Notting Hill Carnival was initially organised to ease racial tension which bothered African Caribbean migrants and their host community (RICHES[33] , 2014).

The Kazakhs in Turkey also belong to the category of migrant groups and it is essential to analyse their collective ceremonies, because the festivals represent extraordinary occasions when people put more effort into expressing and exhibiting their ethnic identity to themselves and outer world. That is why since 2006 a small Kazakh village called Altay in Ulukışla district, Niğde province of Turkey was regularly holding thanksgiving and brotherhood festival. This chapter will focus on the specific Altay village festival which took place on July

[33] Renewal, Innovation and Change: Heritage and European Society. https://www.riches-project.eu

19-20-21, 2019. Here I try to unravel the functions of the given festival. I believe that evaluating the festival such as one in Altay village will disclose many aspects of Kazakhs' identity issues as an ethnic group. Furthermore, I argue that Altay village festival promoted a sense of identity and responsibility which enable Kazakh people to feel that they belong to not only one Kazakh community but also to wider Turkish society. But before setting out for the discussion it is useful to set the context of Altay village festival by looking at village's historical and geographical background.

7.2. ALTAY VILLAGE. HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

The village of Altay was established in Niğde province, Ulukışla district in 1954 and the first village settlers arrived in August 30, 1955. The distance from the village to Ulukışla district is 29 km and to Niğde, the province centre is 48 km. Initially the village was named as Ural by local civil servants, but Kazakhs insisted on changing it to Altay, referring to their homeland in Xinjiang. In 1955 in accordance with the Settlement law No. 2510, 165 families moved to this village. Each person in the village was allotted 30 decares of land. Additionally, 3 decares of garden land were given to each individual (Liman, 2006, pp.35-37). Today there are many empty and crumbling old houses which were once built for Kazakhs by Turkish government. The primary school opened in 1957 functioned only until 1995. Afterwards, due to the decrease in the number of students it was closed down. Today primary and secondary school children study in Ulukışla commuting there by school bus, while high school students stay in boarding schools in Bor, Niğde and Ankara (Anadolu High Schools). The mosque in the village was constructed in 1961 by villagers themselves. In the garden of the mosque there used to be madrasa. Today madrasa is used as guesthouse. During summer festivals visiting Kazakhs from Europe and Istanbul

stay there. There is also a building in the form of Kazakh yurt[34] which is called *Kazakh uy.* It was built for the 50th anniversary of Altay village and is used for banquets and other events. During the month of Ramadan families in the village in turn give *iftars* (sunset meal, break of fast) in this building. Although, apart from Altay there were other Kazakh villages in Develi/Kayseri, Ismil/Konya[35] and Sultanhani/Aksaray, almost all their villagers left to Istanbul and other big cities, as well as to Europe looking for better living conditions. Among them only Altay village survived and today it is the only village in Turkey with Kazakh inhabitants. From 1955 till now the village's population saw essential changes, due to mass migrations the number of families from initial 165 in 1955 today dropped to 15. Only around 100 people live in Altay.

In the past people in Altay used to work in leather industry. Some of the Kazakhs who established leather factories in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul were originally from this village. Leather factories operated as family businesses and still continue to be so, though the number of Kazakhs who deal with leather reduced enormously. This happened because of the economic crises in Asia and Russia in 1997-1998 which had immense negative effect on the sector and led to decline in both production and export of leather in Turkey. It is useful to look at the work of Ingvar Svanberg (1989) *Kazak Refugees in Turkey* who did ethnographic research in the village Altay in 1979. Svanberg wrote that he was helping in the workshops in the village, assorting leather and delivering the loads of ready pieces to people during his trips to Istanbul. Therefore, it is clear that in the 1970s and 1980s leather business in the village was blossoming and bringing a lot of profit to Kazakhs there. For instance, my host in Altay village works full-time in Niğde branch of the General Directorate of Highways, but still occasionally receives orders and keeps his workshop open for visitors. Most of his orders are received during winter time from late October till the beginning of March. His elder brother living in Istanbul helps him to sell and find customers for his goods.

[34] A portable, round tent-dwelling of nomadic groups in the steppes of Central Asia which is made of easily assembled wooden structure and covered with felt.
[35] For example, in Ismil today only two Kazakh persons live.

Since leather industry stopped being profitable for people in the village, most of them moved to Bor, neighbouring town. In the village there are no shops. The grocery shopping is done either in Bor or in Ulukisla, sometimes in Niğde. If someone does not have own vehicle it is not always easy to go to the centre. Thus, locals even have an expression which has become almost a saying *"Borga bardym, zorga bardym"* (Went to Bor, Went with hardship). Possibly this geographical isolation also has been helping inhabitants of Altay village to maintain their Kazakh identity throughout the years.

7.2.1 Arrival to Altay Village

My first visit to Altay village took place in May, 2019. Following the advice from a villager I took train from Kayseri to Ulukışla station. The train ride was about two hours, nevertheless the conductor was worried about me, because I was the only person in my car. When I told them that I was going to Altay village, he was somehow relieved and changed my seat to the car closer to the train's head. Looking at my face, the conductor asked if I was going to see my relatives over there. I nodded. Although not many people in Turkey can really differentiate between Kazakhs and other Turkic origin ethnic groups from Central Asia, this conductor at least seemed to know about the existence of Kazakh village in Niğde province. While the train was approaching the station, I saw a tall man standing beside his car. He was Mustafa Kök, the former *muhtar* (head of a village) of Altay village. Kök is the head of *Altay Köyü Güzelleştirme-Kazak Kültürünü Tanıtma ve Yaşatma Derneği* and he was actively involved in the organisation of Altay village festival in 2019. As soon as I descended from the train, he gave me a firm handshake and welcomed to the village. Kök's family essentially helped me during my fieldwork in the village. From now on I will be referring to him as Mustafa ağabey. It took us around half an hour to reach the village from the station. The empty lands and hills surrounded Ulukışla district reminded me my own village back in Kazakhstan. My initial aim was to meet people in the village and learn about their way of life. There I learnt that they had forthcoming festival and while leaving the village to Istanbul

Mustafa ağabey's family made me promise to come back for the summer festival.

7.2.2. From Football Tournaments to Village Festival

According to Liman (2006) people in Niğde learnt about Altay village or heard its name owing to the football tournaments, because it had strong football team during the 70s and 80s. In the beginning of the 1990s the village people decided to organise annual football tournament in Altay village for only Kazakh football teams from different regions of Turkey such as Istanbul, Develi/Kayseri, Ismil/Konya and Sultanhani/Aksaray. Around 1000 people used to attend these tournaments. These tournaments continued to take place till 1994. They served as bonding event for Kazakhs. When there no more players left in the village, the head of village came up with different idea for gathering Kazakhs. This time it was festival, with this aim in 2004 Mustafa Kök, former village muhtar sought help from Kazakhstani Embassy. However, the first festival took place only in 2006 with sponsorship of Kazakhstani Embassy. It was organised as both the celebration of the 50th year of village's establishment and Thanksgiving Day for Turkey. Around 1300 people attended the first festival and 72 participants were from Kazakhstan including 8 deputies of Kazakhstani parliament and around 20 musicians and dancers. Talgat Mamashev, the first vice-president of the Presidium of the World Association of Kazakhs also attended the event. While football tournaments were exclusively for Kazakhs within Turkey, the village festival gained international dimension. Afterwards, Altay village began to host this festival regularly in summer. These festivals had double aims, the first was to gather the scattered Kazakhs and remind them about their origins and the second to demonstrate their relatedness, brotherhood to the hosting Turkish culture despite their difference in physical features or any other aspects. Besides, many Kazakhs would call the festival as Thanksgiving Day for Turks who opened arms to Kazakhs in times of crisis. Thus, Altay village festival was not a type of event organised by Kazakhs only for Kazakhs, it served wider purposes.

7.3. ALTAY VILLAGE TRADITIONAL BROTHERHOOD FEAST (ALTAY KÖYÜ GELENEKSEL KARDEŞLİK TOYU)

Altay village festival in 2019 was initially planned to take place on June 22-23, however due to mayoral election in Istanbul on June 23, the festival was postponed to July 19-20-21. This is understandable because Kazakhs from Istanbul would constitute the majority of festival participants, without their contribution it was meaningless to have such event. At the same time this act of postponing the festival shows how Kazakhs in Turkey are dedicated to their legal obligations as Turkish citizens, their loyalty to Turkish government. In addition to it, among Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu there were many supporters of Binali Yıldırım, who was running for the post of mayor from AKP (Justice and Development Party). Since the results of the first mayoral elections on 31 March, 2019 was annulled, as Yıldırım's supporters some Kazakhs hoped for his victory at least in the second run. Thus, rather than going to the festival in village, they decided to stay in Istanbul for the period of elections.

As Jaeger and Mykletun argue in the context of identity "festivals serve as an arena which satisfies the need to belong and … facilitates the development of place and personal identities" (2013, 213). According to them festivals may develop or strengthen a sense of belonging to a certain place. This is important especially when societies are challenged and contested in different ways. Individuals who identify themselves with a specific place or a group are usually from a common origin and share a culture and history. Thus, people's organisation and participation in a festival is "a confirmation of people's coming together for the purposes of social cohesion, to showcase one shared culture and demonstrate a sense of belonging in the community" (Kahuno, 2017, 41). However, what makes unique Altay village festival in this context, that Kazakh participants during the event develop or demonstrate the sense of belonging not only to one place. Throughout the festival Kazakhs demonstrate competing senses of belonging to different regional and national entities.

First of all, as a region the village Altay in Niğde province is the birthplace of many festival participants who nowadays live in Istanbul and Europe. Festival is

their chance to refresh their childhood memories, visit their relatives, and pray for their departed relatives in the village cemetery. Secondly, Kazakhs in the festival are the thanksgiving side. It is a friendly act towards Turkish people who warmly welcomed Kazakhs upon their arrival to Turkey. This act of gratitude links to their migration history and adds different kind of belonging i.e. to actual Altay mountains in East Turkestan where Kazakhs' ancestors led nomadic pastoral life for several centuries before their exodus in the 1930s and 1940s. Therefore, although the festival in Altay village physically takes place in Turkey, during the event people can still be spiritually connected to their ancestors in Altay mountains. In this context, it is necessary to acknowledge the importance of 'territory' or place as a uniting element in the construction of ethnic identity. However, here the notion of 'place' is not only geographical territory demarcated by boundaries, but also as a space bestowed with cultural meaning and values. This is because Barth (1969) already underlined in his work that place does not necessarily indicate a territory defined by boundaries, it is the space where continual negotiation and expression of cultural practices, beliefs and values take place.

Kahuno (2017, 30) pointed out that humans in order to make the world meaningful invest space with cultural meanings. As a result, members of the ethnic group begin closely associate themselves with place and the notion of cultural identity is transferred to place.



Fig. 20 A Kazakh girl in traditional costume singing with *bağlama. Photo from Fieldwork,* July, 2019

Therefore, the simple act of renaming the distant Turkish village to Altay by Kazakhs demonstrate how groups value their connection to the place. Furthermore, ethnic groups who live remotely from their people and dwelling place began to experience the lack in 'sense of place' (Kahuno, 2017). Especially, under these circumstances, festivals are significant events in creating and maintaining cultural identities. Therefore, the place where a festival occurs usually has specific qualities and provides an opportunity for its inhabitants to present their own culture to others. In other words, festivals strengthen people's connection to specific place.

Altay village was not a random choice for hosting the ethnic festival. In Altay village Kazakhs have an opportunity to develop their sense of belonging to both actual geographical place and cultural space fulfilled with Kazakh cultural patterns, ancestors' narrative and the national discourse. However, it is clear that the sense of national belonging promoted during the festival similarly to the regional belonging has ambiguous character. On one hand since the festival was sponsored by Kazakhstani Embassy it is expected from Turkey's Kazakhs to develop and strengthen their belonging to Kazakhstan as it was prescribed by national policy of Kazakhstan, because in the framework of Kazakhstani nationalism Kazakh diaspora anywhere in the world is seen as an extension of Kazakhstani state. On the other hand, the festival organisers and local participants also attempt to boost their belonging to Turkish community. In my opinion, this ambiguous nature of belonging to different nations and regions was best demonstrated with the performance of a young Kazakh girl who played *bağlama*[36] and sang Turkish folk song "Mağusa Limanı" in Kazakh traditional costume on the festival day. Using cultural symbols from both nations such as traditional music instrument and costume, the girl performed her sense of belonging to more than one place.

[36] Turkish traditional stringed musical instrument.

7.3.1. Altay Village Festival Arrangement

The preparations for Altay village festival in 2019 began long before the summer and it started with negotiations about festival's budget with Kazakhstani Embassy and local authorities of Ulukışla district and Niğde province. For this purpose, Mustafa ağabey and village's current muhtar Osman Uysal had regular trips to Ankara and Niğde. As soon as financing was approved, the village people began to prepare themselves for the forthcoming event. The men and women in the village collectively did repairs and cleaned local mosque and the Kazakh uy.

The festival lasted three days. The first day was welcoming the guests from other cities and countries. The organisers were responsible for their transportation and accommodation. The festival participants were mainly accommodated in students' dormitory in Niğde, except those who opted for staying at their relatives. The second day was a ceremonial day, whereas in the third day the guests were taken on Cappadocia tour.[37] The ceremonial day consisted of two parts. The first part took place in the village itself in the morning of July 20, whereas the second part was on the same day evening in Niğde. When I arrived to Niğde the day before the festival, I was lucky enough to find myself amidst the hustle and bustle of festival preparations. This time I was picked up from Niğde bus station by Mustafa ağabey and his wife, because on that day together with few other villagers they were setting up Kazakh yurt in the main square of Niğde. They also had to go to the police station to apply for special permit to have ceremonial walk in the town, so the road policing unit of the town was informed beforehand to take measures for seizing the traffic during the procession. After picking me up from the station Mustafa ağabey drove to the local street market to buy ingredients for the dish which was going to be served on the festival day. The women from village were calling from time to time and asking us to bring certain things they considered necessary for the feast. When we came back to the village late night from Niğde, we saw that

[37]Touristic destination with its well-known cone-shaped rock formations, UNESCO World Heritage sight located in Central Anatolia including Niğde province.

almost all the preparations had been finished, a big banner with welcoming words was hanging in the central street. Mustafa ağabey's house was also full of guests, his children working in Istanbul and elder sister from Sweden with her family, all gathered in his house and were excited for the next day.

The next day, the festival in the village started with breakfast for guests in Kazakh uy, the tablecloth spread on the floor had *baursaks* and *shelpeks*[38] served with milk-tea. Then villagers proceeded to welcome local authorities, the district governor of Ulukışla and mayor of Niğde province, there were also several teaching staff members from Niğde University. The festival opened with prayer recitation and commemorating the Kazakhs who lost their lives on Himalayan slopes and the desert of Taklamakan on their journey from Xinjiang to Turkey. The prayers were followed by official opening speeches of the governor and mayor. Afterwards the festival continued with the concert. The performers included both Kazakhs from Turkey and Kazakhstan, from Turkey there were mainly teenagers and children who danced and sang. In addition, the festival guests saw the open-sky photo exhibition where the old images of the first Kazakh settlers in Turkey and Altay village. There were also couple of stands where people sold items and souvenirs symbolising Kazakh identity such as traditional caps, waistcoats, and hand-made purses decorated with Kazakh ornaments.

After the concert the crowd were distributed *pilav*[39]. The food usually represents essential part of festivals. However, it is interesting to observe how food with the same ingredients can carry different meanings depending on the nature of the festival. For example, Soileau (2005, 93-94) stated that in Alevi festivals once the passersby and poor are given the cooked food, it is considered as *lokma* - consecrated food. Moreover, in some Alevi festivals the distribution of pilav can be interpreted as an act of commemoration of saints or religious events which

[38] Fried puffy bread from Kazakh cuisine similar to doughnuts which are served on special occasions.

[39] A dish made of rice and meat usually cooked for the big rituals such as weddings or funerals in Kazakh community. Since it is the dish common for Persian, Turkish and Central Asian cuisine, there are various types of pilav: with or without meat, combined with spices such as saffron or cumin seeds, combined with legumes etc.

had profound impact on Alevi community. However, in the Kazakh festival the distribution of pilav is less religious act and more of the culture demonstration. This food is made with an intention to make others taste dish from Kazakh cuisine. That is why Mustafa ağabey and his wife drove all the way to food market run by Afghani migrant-vendors in Niğde to buy 40 kg of Basmati rice which is considered to be more suitable for Kazakh pilav. Besides, feeding the strangers in the festival is an act of thanksgiving, it is the reminder of the times when Turkish community provided food and roof over head to Kazakhs helping them to survive in difficult times. Thus, with the act of food distribution they want to express their gratitude to the hosting community.

7.4. THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FESTIVAL IN NİĞDE

7.4.1. The Symbols of Nomadism

The second part of festival took place in Niğde. While the village programme of the festival mainly involved Kazakhs as both participants and spectators, the programme in the town of Niğde was planned to get more attention from local Turkish citizens. It was done with an intention of introducing and exposing Kazakh identity to others. In the evening, the townspeople watched the concert of Kazakh performers in the central square. The concert programme did not differ from the one in the village. However, there were two other elements of the festival in Niğde which created special ambiance. The first element which attracted many Turkish citizens was the Kazakh yurt. The crowd queued up in front of the yurt to go inside and take photos. Apart from genuine curiosity some people expressed special interest in the yurt, because it has symbolic meaning not only for Kazakhs, but also for Turkish people. This is because the Turks or Anatolian Turks are the descendants of nomadic Oghuz tribes who migrated to the lands of the historical Byzantine Empire, the current territory of the Republic of Turkey from Turan valley, located between the rivers Amu Darya and Syr Darya in Central Asia. Their great migration lasted approximately thousand

years (Güvenç, 2003)[40]. In Turkey, the discourse about Turks of being nomads and living in tents before their settlement in Anatolia is supported and enhanced not only through official historiography but also through popular culture. For instance, the historical fiction and adventure TV series *Diriliş: Ertuğrul* (Resurrection: Ertuğrul) portrayed the life of Muslim Oghuz Turks who led nomadic life. Therefore, some of the Turks did not want to miss the rare opportunity of experiencing historical nomadic tent-dwelling and connect with their past.

This shows the importance of visual symbols in performing and exposing ethnic identity. The act of Kazakhs building permanent yurt in Altay village or setting up temporary yurt in the city centre demonstrates their intention to assert their Kazakh identity through their nomadic heritage. It is interesting to observe how this idea of nomadism or nomadic culture has become a driving force of Kazakh nationalism. Today the idea of nomadism is strongly emphasised not only by Kazakhstani state but also by small Kazakh communities like in Turkey. The word 'heritage' means preserving both material and immaterial culture of societies which come from the past. The states politicise their heritage for different purposes and the most common one is creating national identity.

Carole Ferret (2016, 176) named politicisation of heritage as *patrimonialisation*, that is officially promoting and protecting. As Ferret argued heritage promotion is especially crucial for young states which need to invent or consolidate their national history. Therefore, after the dissolution of the USSR, Central Asian republics began to run intensive patrimonialisation campaigns. Kazakhstan was not an exception. Being the largest and wealthiest of the five Central Asian countries, it claimed to be the heir of the Eurasian steppe nomads. Kazakhstani state saw nomadism as the foundation of the nation's identity. Ferret stated that in Kazakhstan celebrating nomadism was less perilous than the revival of Islam despite the contribution of the latter not only to spiritual, but also ethnic

[40] See more in Güvenç, B. (2003) *Türk Kimliği* pp. 80-120.

awakening of Kazakhs especially in the first years of independence[41]. As a result, nomadism was embedded into Kazakh national identity in the form of visual symbols. Ferret (2016) identified two the most obvious emblems of nomadism which are horse and yurt. The reasons for these are, firstly domestication of the horse developed and facilitated mounted pastoral nomadism; secondly, the yurt due its transportability and comfort has become an example of perfect nomadic dwelling (Ferret, 2016, 182-186). Therefore, nation-building engineers took up the image of horse to enhance its symbolic value. For example, in Kazakhstan's coat-of-arms there are two unicorns depicted under *shanyrak* (the wooden roof of a yurt) which are called *Pyraqs* the same as the prophet Muhammad's winged horse.



Fig. 21 The yurt, Niğde, Turkey. *Photo from fieldwork*, July 2019

[41] The impact of Islam on Kazakh nation-formation was discussed in detailed manner in the Chapter 6



Fig. 22 The immobile yurt, Altay village, Turkey. *Photo from fieldwork*, July 2019

As Ferret (2016, 182-186) underlined that state's patrimonialisation of nomadism gave an impetus to the construction of immobile yurts. In Kazakhstan yurts are built along roads and in towns. The Kazakh uy in Altay village also represents modern-day immobile yurt. Besides, the cafe in Alaş farm in Kemalpaşa also had summer houses built in the shape of yurt. Thus, it is clear that the construction of immobile yurts became important part of Kazakh nation-branding. However, Ferret (2016) criticised these immobile buildings for not having the essence of the real yurt (and of the tent), which is mobility and transportability. She disapproved this attempt to transform nomadic culture into "fixed and ossified" museum piece (Ferret, 2016, 186). Despite this, we can not ignore the contribution of symbolic and immobile yurts to the strengthening of Kazakh identity in both Kazakhstan and overseas.

Although the yurt and horse are central figures in nomadic symbolism, there are some additional elements too. For example, the clothes traditionally worn by historical nomads have also an input into exposing Kazakh identity. Kazakhs who do not wear traditional costumes on a daily basis, however are eager to put on their ornamented caps, headdresses and waistcoats during special occasions such as Nauryz celebration or meeting with officials. Altay village festival was not an exception, both young and adults had at least one element of traditional costume. Some of the clothes were bought during their trips to

Kazakhstan, whereas others gifted by Kazakhstani visitors and guests. Few Kazakh families still have some items of clothes inherited from their ancestors in Xinjiang. They include silver belts, fur caps or male *shapans* (coats). Festivals and celebrations have favourable environment for wearing such traditional garments, because they exhibit identity of participants and organisers to the masses. Those who did not have such clothes were satisfied to wear Kazakhstan flag T-shirts. Kazakh people equipped with all these nomadic symbols proceeded to another stage of the festival which was marching through the main streets of Niğde.

7.4.1. The Solemn Procession

The cortege walk or *kortej yürüyüşü* as it was referred by festivals organisers was another highlight of the festival in Niğde. It was so because a collective walk is not something which takes place usually in Altay village festival. The last time when Kazakhs walked together during the festival was in 2006. Therefore, in 2019 the solemn walk in Niğde had special effect on both participants and gazers, the collective walk enhanced the visibility of festival, so of the Kazakhs. The positive effect of collective marching on people's bonding was recognised by many scholars. One of them, a historian William McNeill (1995, 2001) brought the concept of 'muscular bonding' underlining that people, who sing and move together are more efficient in performing tasks. He argued that rhythmical muscular movements of people raise euphoric feelings in them and enhances group solidarity. He stated that throughout history moving and singing together have made collective tasks more efficient. To support his arguments McNeill (1995) used various examples of the traditions from ancient Greek to modern-day states (McNeill, 1995, 114–15).

However, I wonder did 'muscular bonding' happen among Kazakhs when they marched through the streets of Niğde? What did participants experience while walking down the streets? To discuss these questions, it is useful to begin with an outline of event. The ceremonial walks of Kazakhs in Niğde started at 7.00

pm. The main traffic junction was closed and the procession consisting of both young and old Kazakhs marched through the big streets of Niğde waving Turkish and Kazakh flags. While walking down the streets many people were looking at us with curiosity and exclaiming “Bunlar kimler? Galiba Kirgizlar geçiyor” (Who are they? Seems like Kyrgyzs are parading). Overhearing viewers’ baffled speeches elderly Kazakh uncles were joking with each other: “Brother, are you Kirgiz? People say you are Kirgiz”. Kazakhs from Turkey carried big Turkish flag and walked in the front, whereas Kazakhs from Kazakhstan mainly students like me and people who came to spend their summer holiday in Turkey, made the second group of the procession. We carried Kazakhstani flag. The distance between two groups was around two meters. Most of the people from both groups barely knew each other. However, my case was different, on one hand since the beginning of my fieldwork I bonded with the villagers and many families from Istanbul who came to the festival. On the other hand, I was Kazakhstani citizen like people in the second group, they spoke in my mother tongue and we had many things in common. This situation made me hesitate and struggle at first in deciding which group to join in. Then I decided to walk back and forth between the two groups without clearly sticking to any of them.

Therefore, I argue that ethnic festivals are spaces where people are able to see not only the physical manifestation of glory and pride in one’s ethnic identity, but also insecurities, otherness and the state of in-betweenness. The physical distance between two groups of marchers which I witnessed could be a metaphor for the relationship of Kazakhs from Kazakhstan and other parts of the world. For outsiders and spectators of the parade, the Kazakh marchers represent homogenous group, whereas in reality there is a cultural gap due to different historical experiences of each of them. For example, Kazakhstani Kazakhs might judge and express hostility towards their newly acclaimed compatriots. This is because they see Kazakhs from China, Mongolia or Turkey as the descendants of wealthy people who once fled the country because of Communist oppression (Genina, 2015, 14), whereas the diaspora members consider themselves pure and authentic Kazakhs because their language and

traditions were not affected by Russian culture as it happened in Kazakhstan. As one of the festival organisers mentioned the festival's main purpose was to unite Kazakhs regardless their background and remove existing boundaries between them. Therefore, not only collective marching of Kazakhs revealed the existing distance between group of Kazakhs from Turkey and Kazakhstan, but also it pushed the groups towards each other.

7.5. THE CORE COMPONENTS OF THE FESTIVAL

From my data I was able to distinguish six core components of the Altay village festival which are demonstrated in Figure 22. It is important to know, however that these elements are common to any other festivals too. What makes unique Altay village festival is not the elements per se but the nature and content of those elements. The issue here was to disclose the meaning of those components and to identify which of them were emphasised more than others. In the following paragraphs I will be discussing all six components one by one.

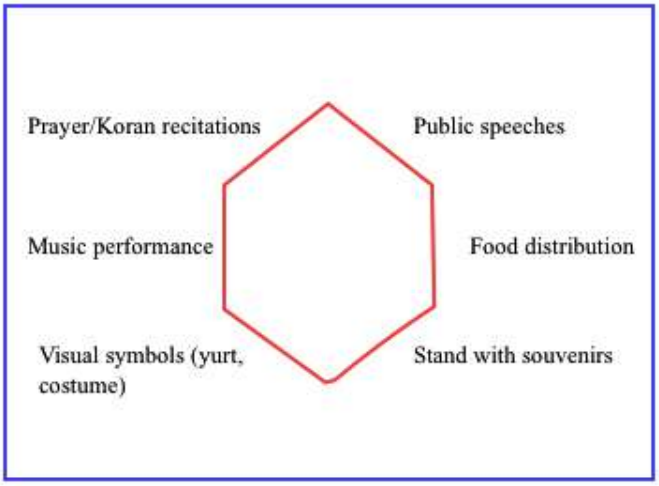


Fig. 23 The festival components

7.5.1. Prayers

The prayer component at the beginning of the ceremony does not only demonstrate Kazakhs' religious belonging which is Islam but also indicates to the fact how their religion is important for them. While their traditional clothes, music instrument or nomadic dwelling show Kazakhness at symbolic level, their religion is not something merely symbolic. Most of them are practicing Muslims and their life is intertwined with Islamic canons and this attitude was projected through the festival. In Chapter 6 I argued that being Muslim equals to be a Kazakh and the Altay village festival transcended this message in very explicit manner.

7.5.2. Politics and Poetics of the Festival

I argue that the public speeches in the festival delivered by different officials deeply politicised the event. Kahuno (2017) stated that festivals are platforms for both policy-makers and cultural producers who intend to support identity. Other researchers (Lüdtke, 2005) too pointed out that festival environment is quite favourable for political campaigns. Karen Lüdtke, (2005) who did research on the annual festival *La notta della Taranta* in Salento, Italy, observed how this event did not only engage the interests of individual artists performing Taranta music and dance but also local politicians' interests. The politicians in the region of Salento via sponsoring and supporting this particular festival tried to reach maximum visibility on the media and gain popularity amongst festival participants to secure their publicity and votes.

In my opinion, festivals are suitable space for political agenda, simply because it attracts the crowd. Through festivals political parties can reach bigger audience. Therefore, Altay village festival made possible for me to learn about Kazakhs' political attitude and their preference for certain parties. For instance, a Turkish woman with her daughter in the group of Kazakhs from Istanbul particularly caught my eye. I wondered how she was affiliated to Kazakhs and whether she was married to a Kazakh man. It turned out that she was working for AKP (The

Justice and Development Party)[42] and for years she had been closely working with its Kazakh members, therefore, was happy to accept their festival invitation. For potential or current ruling parties in Turkey Kazakhs are part of electorate. Political parties such as MHP (The Nationalist Movement Party)[43] or AK party gain the trust of Kazakhs usually triggering their feelings based on history, brotherhood, common culture and religion. Altay village festival is another opportunity for local political organisations to get closer to their potential voters. At the same time Kazakhs are also not mute or passive voters in Turkey, in fact by inviting the chosen party officials to their festival as if they tried to say "ethnically we are Kazakhs, but politically we are still dedicated Turks".

7.5.3. The Role of Cultural Symbols in Festival

The Altay village festival was abundant with the symbols specific to Kazakhs. As it has been argued in paragraphs above most of those symbols were inspired with the history of Kazakhs being nomads. Ferret (2016) argued about how modern-day Kazakhstani state manipulates the concepts from nomadism in order to assert its national identity. The festival showed that not only Kazakhstani state, but also small diaspora communities rely on these symbols while claiming their identity. The most obvious symbols of Kazakhness exposed during the festival were yurt (immobile in the village, mobile in Niğde city centre), traditional clothes of Kazakh participants and musical performance which featured dombyra music and Kara Jorga dance. It is possible to say that festivals enable communities to interpret and re-interpret their cultural identity. As a result, festivals contribute to the conservation of cultural heritage practices, and also to their reinterpretation and innovation (Hall, 1990, p. 223; Elias-Varotsis, 2006, p. 28). Altay village festival in a way was a project of revival, because owing to the festival cultural memory of Kazakhs was triggered and some traditions of nomadism was once again were reinvigorated, this is particularly important for younger generation.

[42]Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (The Justice and Development Party), currently ruling party in Turkey
[43] Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (The Nationalist Movement Party)

7.5.4. Food Distribution

Since the village festival name included in its name Kazakh word '*toy*', the feast, it would be hard to imagine the feast without food. In fact, as a festival component food is the most flexible one for various interpretations. It has spiritual as well as symbolic meanings. Kazakhs pursued two aims while distributing the food in the festival, the first is to showcase a dish from Kazakh cuisine and the second is to express gratitude to Turkish people for feeding them in difficult times. That is why the food distribution was an act of thanksgiving.

7.5.5. Musical Performance

The component of musical or stage performance stand out among all of the elements. In fact, if we define festival as a public celebration, it is the dance and music which transforms the simple event into a festival, because neither prayers nor public speeches can provide celebratory effect to the festival as musical performance does. Therefore, this sub-section is longer comparing to the ones above. It describes the aims of musical performance in the festival and explains the choice of particular musical instruments and dance forms to represent Kazakhness.

Many local participants of the festival every year look forward to see musicians and dancers from Kazakhstan. In the previous chapter I described how organised *kurultays* contributed to establishing links between Kazakhstani state and its diaspora. In the same manner since the country's independence musical performances of Kazakhstani artists also had tremendous role in propagating, even ascribing and asserting Kazakh identity to members of Kazakh community in Turkey. Regional and state orchestras of traditional music, dance companies and individual artists from Kazakhstan have been regularly visiting and performing in Turkey with or without state support. These performances usually take place in *Nauryz* and Kazakhstani Independence Day celebrations. In addition to it, festival in Altay village provided another platform for Kazakhstani

artists. Some people say that they were attending the festival only because of these live performances. It is the rare chance to hear live Kazakh music.

The situation of Kazakh performers from Turkey is different. Unlike Kazakhstani performers almost all of them are self-taught amateur musicians and dancers. The festival organisers expect them to perform for free. One of Kazakh artists was clearly irritated with this fact and refused to attend the festival: “Last year, I drove all the way from Istanbul to the festival and no money for performance, no covered travel expenses. For me it is not worth going there.” Besides, some of the performers from Turkey were children. Kazakh-Turk Association in Zeytinburnu usually offers Kazakh music and dance classes to the children. This is done upon the request of individual parents who want their children to grow up connected with their culture. However, courses are not always funded by the association. For example, in 2019 active Kazakh mothers hired a dance teacher and sew costumes for children themselves. The dance teacher was a Kazakhstani student who came to study in Istanbul for her master’s degree. Together with the children she created special Kazakh-style performance for the 23rd April, 2019 Children’s Holiday in Turkey which was performed outside their school. The same children came to perform in village festival. Due to both individual initiatives and Kazakhstani state projects, it is possible to say that Kazakhs in Turkey, especially those in Istanbul are largely exposed to Kazakh music and dance. What I understood through observing multiple cultural events of Kazakhs in Turkey, is that they mostly perform the role of audience and not actively participate in stage performances. However, Altay village festival did not involve only stage performance, people also danced and sang beyond the stage.

It is usually true that the music and dance of migrant and minority groups might change under the influence of majority group. This happens because culture is dynamic and changes in their food or music traditions are inevitable. After migration to Turkey Kazakhs’ music culture was also affected by local culture. Therefore, during weddings or bridal henna nights, Kazakhs enjoy performing Turkish music and traditional dances such as *Ankara Havasi* or *Romani*

dances[44]*,* moreover they hire Turkish musicians for these events. However, in the festival people performed one Kazakh dance called *Kara Jorga*. Kazakhs were showing their rejoice through this dance and even made their Turkish guests including the local district governor and other officials join them while dancing. Thus, the festival allowed Kazakhs to swap their roles with Turkish people. While in regular celebrations such as weddings Kazakhs dance to Turkish music, in the festival Turkish people danced to Kazakh music. In the context of festival Kazakhs performed their identities through actual performances of music and dance. Since I began to explore the theme of music in this chapter it will be helpful for the reader to learn more about Kazakh musical instruments and dances which contribute to creating and maintaining the Kazakh identity not only in Kazakhstan but overseas. Therefore, following paragraphs are dedicated to *dombyra*, the traditional musical instrument and Kara Jorga dance.

7.5.5.1. Dombyra As a Symbol of Kazakh Ethnic Identity

Genuine Kazakh is not a man, genuine Kazakh is dombyra
(Kazakh proverb)

Scholars claimed that for many centuries *dombyra*, the modest two-string traditional nomadic instrument served as a tool to communicate in-depth feelings of Kazakh people. It was also used to accompany different dances. Therefore, it was part and parcel of nomadic life. The ethnomusicologist Jennifer C. Post (2007) defined dombyra as an instrument with multiple social roles. According to her dombyra does not only provide entertainment, but also helps to retain cultural memory of Kazakhs. As Post underlined the symbolic evidence of it is seen almost everywhere. The instrument is often displayed on the walls of living rooms in the houses or in the form of giant monuments, for example like one in the entrance to the city Olgii in Western Mongolia, the region primarily inhabited by Kazakhs (Post, 2007). From Lias's (1956) account we can see that despite all the hardships, Kazakhs managed to bring dombyra

[44] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3rfA1s89PY&feature=emb_rel_pause In the 27:20 minutes of the video it is seen how groom dances with his friends *misket* or *Ankara havasi.*

and skill to play it with them to Turkey. Lias stated that in the 1950s almost every child, men as well as women were able to play dombyra and compose songs.

> When a bard sang his songs, he sometimes accompanied himself on the **dumbri**, which is a long wooden instrument rather like a guitar but with only two strings. Plucked by the fingers of a master, like Karamullah, each string of a **dumbri** often seems, though I cannot understand how, to be producing two notes at once, and in such hands, each note always sings on sturdily till the next plucking of the string. I heard it played a number of times at *Develi*, sometimes very well and sometimes indifferently (Lias, 1956, p. 13).

Notwithstanding, today the Kazakhs in Turkey rarely can play dombyra apart from few exceptions. It seems that not only playing, but also finding the actual instrument itself is a problem for them. At the same time, it is clear that Kazakhs became aware that they were loosing their skills in playing dombyra thus in Zeytinburnu both in KATEAD[45] and Kazak Turks Foundation they organise short-term dombyra classes for children. Once by chance in the Kazakh-Turk Foundation centre I witnessed one of those classes. The teacher was from Kazakhstan.The children seemed enjoying the class. Another Kazakh male interviewee told me that unlike children he did not take formal dombyra classes: *"*We try to sing Kazakh songs with dombyra. I did not learn it from teacher or someone else, did not take lessons. None taught me, with own ability and effort I learnt to play dombyra. Today I have couple of songs in my repertory to perform in front of Turks".

Although in Turkey not all Kazakh households own or play dombyra at least in several houses I saw toy or real dombyra hanging on their walls. This attitude demonstrates that dombyra was transformed from being a mere musical instrument into a tangible national symbol. Similar to immobile yurts mentioned in the previous paragraph dombyra also gained greater symbolic power today. Thus, whether you play it or not, just having it at home or listening to its recorded melody, connects you to your ancestors' land. Kazakhstani cultural policy also glorified dombyra up to a point when it became equal to Kazakhness. In 2014 the Kazakh traditional art of dombyra *kuy* (musical

[45] Kazak Turkleri Arastirma ve Egitim Dernegi

piece/composition) was inscribed into the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Moreover, in 2018 the first President of Kazakhstan signed a decree about National Day of Dombyra to be celebrated every year on the first Sunday of July[46]. This was done with the aim to consolidate further the idea of safeguarding and reviving national culture and identity.

There are many stories of nation-building which used musical instruments as a symbol to support newly created ethnic and national identities. For instance, the bagpipe became the symbol of Scottish nation, regardless the fact that many other cultures in the world — from India to Britain, and from Libya to Sweden play bagpipe. Vivien Williams (2019), who explained the choice of bagpipe by Scottish as their national symbol, wrote that in the 18th century some English authors presented bagpipe as the lowest step in the hierarchy of musical instruments, moreover bagpipe music was ascribed to brothels and ill-houses. Some people believed that bagpipes carried Luciferian characteristics, i.e. shape of a goat, one of the possible representations of the devil, and it was frequently made of goat skin too. This discrimination or pushing it to the society's fringe, however, made this instrument to gain more attention from Scottish people and eventually they made it a weapon against their rivals, who did not much like it, transforming bagpipe into Scottish national symbol.

Although in Kazakh community dombyra music or musicians did not receive much criticisms from Muslim religious clericals like bagpipe did from Anglican church in the past or at least there are no written evidence for that, it is a fact that dombyra has been transformed into a national symbol. According to neo-institutionalism theory supported by Meyer (1997) and his fellow researchers "many features of the contemporary nation-state derive from world-wide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes" (1997, p.144-145). Therefore, for newly established nation-states many instruments are available out there for promoting and consolidating their nationhood. It is obvious that today Kazakhstani national policy is following common global scenarios which has been tested and approved by many other states. This case with musical instrument is only one of them.

[46] http://en.unesco.kz/the-national-day-of-dombra

The logical question would be why dombyra was chosen to represent Kazakhness whereas there are plenty of other traditional music instruments played by Kazakhs. For example, why did not they choose *kobyz*[47], another popular cello or fiddle like Kazakh traditional instrument made of hollowed wood and goat leather? This is because in Kazakh culture kobyz is always associated with Korkyt Ata, a legendary philosopher who is considered as the first shaman and the creator of this instrument. He is believed to be born and lived by the river Syrdaria in Kazakhstan. However, the myths about a sage, Korkyt and his kobyz are not unique to Kazakh culture, instead they are common heritage of several Turkic peoples. Moreover, the book of *Dede Korkut*[48]*,* which consists of twelve epic tales*,* is also part of Oğuzname, oral/mythical history of Oghuz Turks and their legendary king Oghuz Khagan (Ercilasun, 2020). Oğuzname has become a pride for such Turkic countries as Azerbaijan, Turkey and Turkmenistan. Therefore, choosing dombyra as national symbol for Kazakhness was more relevant than kobyz. When Philharmonic orchestra from Nur-Sultan city came to perform for Independence Day celebrations in Istanbul and Ankara, December, 2019, at the end of the concerts Kazakhstani Ambassador presented gifts to the mayors of both cities. Ankara mayor received dombyra, whereas Istanbul mayor was presented kobyz, two instruments symbolising Kazakhness and Turkicness respectively. It should be concluded that dombyra was intentionally popularised to increase national self-consciousness among ethnic Kazakhs not only in Kazakhstan but also overseas whereas Korkyt and his kobyz will continue to symbolise brotherhood of Turkic nations.

As it has been stated several times the festival is a platform where people demonstrate many symbols which represent their ethnic identity. That is why it is not surprising that dombyra players and singers were essential part of concert programme in the village festival. In everyday life some Kazakhs in Turkey keep dombyra in their houses because of purely symbolic attachment to it. However, festival provides an opportunity to demonstrate dombyra and its music to the

[47] See more about the instrument *kopuz* in Mehmet Fuad Köprülü (1980, pp. 72-73)
[48] See more about the book of *Dede Korkut* in Karl Reichl (2011, p. 687) *Medieval Oral Literature* and Felix J. Oinas (1978, p. 312) *Heroic Epic and Saga: An Introduction to the World's Great Folk Epics.*

bigger audience, many of those whom are outside of Kazakh ethnic group. Therefore, in the festival the musicians from both Kazakhstan and Turkey not only perform with their dombyra, but also celebrate their instrument as Kazakh national symbol.

7.5.5.2. Three Countries, One Dance: Tale of Kara Jorga

The dance Kara Jorga is characterised with the movements based on the dynamic flexing and expansion mainly of the arm joints, even though legs and hips are not excluded. That is why sometimes practitioners of the dance call it as *Buyn biyi* too i.e. “the dance of joints”. Sometimes dancers may cross their legs and swing on their feet. There are no fixed number of directions or turns one has to perform while dancing. In social setting Kara Jorga is fully improvised, with the only condition to follow the rhythm. Kara Jorga was danced throughout the festival. All ages and genders took part in this dance of joy. Kazakhs even made their Turkish friends join their dancing in the village as well as in the main square of Niğde.

The term Kara Jorga from Kazakh can be translated as black pacer. Kazakh dance scholars Dauren Abirov and Aubakir Ismailov (1984) defined the dance as the showing off the young men in the public through exhibiting their skills in horse riding. The word *jorğa* in the Old Turkic - Russian dictionary (1969: 274) was given as a derivation of the words *jor* or *jorï* which have following meanings: 1. to go, to walk, to move 2. to explain, to interpret 3. to have legal power or to go within legal or judicial context. From the etymology it is clear that the dance Kara Jorga is a remnant of nomadic past which today is not only a social dance but also a symbol of Kazakhness. This again goes back to the argument about how Kazakhs or Kazakhstani state manipulate their nomadic past to create their present national and ethnic identities.

I would like to point to the events that transformed Kara Jorga from simple social dance into a national symbol. In 2009-2011 both in Kazakhstan and China choreographed mass performances and spontaneous flash-mobs of Kara

Jorga were quite popular. University students, construction as well as white collar workers were performing it in different places including shopping malls, offices and construction sights. Those particular years Kazakhstan was celebrating the 20th anniversary of its Independence and I suppose the performances were done to awake certain nationalistic feelings, whereas performances held in People's Republic of China had different aims. The Kara Jorga dance performance of Chinese Kazakhs in August 30, 2009 was even listed into Guinness World Records Book as the largest group dance where over 13,000 Kazakh peasants and herdsmen took part, it was the tribute to the 60th anniversary of PRC (People's Daily Online, 2009).

The case of Kazakhs in Turkey might slightly differ but still it supports the argument about Kara Jorga functioning as a national symbol. Lias (1956) while staying among Kazakhs in Develi witnessed and took photos of the dance performances of Kazakhs which he later described in his book. He stated that in Kazakh culture generally women did not dance in public because in Islamic context it was associated with immoral behaviour. Thus, the dances were performed mostly by men. During his stay in Develi he was presented two dances: Kara Jorga (black pacer) and Bugy (roebuck). Both of them were performed by a man and accompanied with dombyra music. Lias's photos reminded me my own fieldwork photos taken in summer 2014 in Altay region, China. The position of dancers and dombyra player, their manner sitting on a carpet spread on the grass were similar. In fact, when I first saw the image in the book I thought they were pre-taken somewhere in Altay. Out of two dances only Kara Jorga survived among Kazakhs in Turkey. Roebuck dance according to the photos of Lias included a handstand, thus it was not a dance to be performed by the crowd, simply because not everyone would do the handstand without long training in advance.

Two changes happened to Kara Jorga since the time of Lias's visit to Kazakh community Turkey which are first, the gender of performers, from solo male dance it became group dance of men and women of all ages; secondly, it is more often danced to a pop-song which carries dance's name, rather than

dombyra melody. Once a lady, whose movements seemed more delicate and skilful comparing to others told me that dance comes from inside of her, she assumed that the ability to dance Kara Jorga to be coded in every Kazakh people's genes. Similarly, another informant told that he used to hear his father saying: *"janim Kara shertilgende, jani bar adam oinaydi"* literally meaning "when lovely Kara is played, every alive man would dance". Another informant could not help expressing her sorry that Kara Jorga today is also being used by Kyrgyz people as their national symbol. She believed that Kara Jorga belongs to only Kazakhs. They had more right to practice it, because their ancestors continuously practiced it in Turkey regardless staying away for years from their initial homeland in Xinjiang.

Today it is hardly possible to imagine any celebration without Kara Jorga dance. But their purposes differ according to the context, in the weddings people dance it to enjoy themselves and celebrate the union of two young people, while in the public ceremonies and festivals it is done to express Kazakh identity. In Turkey, Kara Jorga was not swept away by history like other Kazakh dances such as Bugy or Ayu bi (the dance of bear) once performed by masters who came to Turkey. Kazakhs believe that it represents them. More importantly, Kara Jorga is a better link to the nomadic past of the Kazakh people comparing to other dances such as Ayu bi (bear dance) or Bugy bi (roebuck dance) because Kara Jorga encompasses the concept of horse. Younger generation in Turkey might have stopped eating horse meat, but still continue dancing or rather playing horse dance. Therefore, in almost all the documentaries about Kazakhs' life produced by TRT AVAZ the audience should expect to see two images: one is a man playing dombyra and the other is people dancing Kara Jorga in traditional costumes. That is the public image of Kazakhs created via music and dance.

7.5.6. The Financial Matter of the Festival: Does it Really Matter?

Many written sources about festival today come from the field of tourism management where researchers argue about festival as a tool to boost the economy of either a region or a country in the case of large-scale festivals. In fact, many festivals around the world are organised to create more jobs for local communities, to establish local brands and to support local businesses and entrepreneurship such as hotels and restaurants. In this context Altay village festival is far from what has been described in most of research papers. The villagers do not really financially benefit from the festival. All expenses of the festival are covered by Kazakhstani Embassy. There was no big exposure of goods to be sold during the festival, couple of small stands with handmade souvenirs was all that constituted the market of the festival. Few guests from Istanbul probably managed to buy some homemade butter and cheese from local families in the village. But this type of trading was not systematised as a strong element of the festival programme.

However, it is possible to claim about indirect economic impact of the festival. I call it indirect because it does not involve actual trading, instead it provides opportunity for networking of Kazakh businessmen. It means that the Altay festival is a good platform where entrepreneurs from both Turkey and Kazakhstan negotiate perspectives on their future partnerships. Two main areas for business cooperation are tourism and textile industry, because both of these areas are considered as strong side of Turkish economy. Via small talks with guests of the festival I learnt that Kazakhstani entrepreneurs were particularly interested to be retailer for wholesaling textile companies in Turkey. But again, even in this context of business we can trace the influence of ethnic identity, because festival attendants instead of cooperating with any Turkish company decided to sign-up the contract with Turkish companies run by Kazakh businessmen.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, three-day Altay village festival was an event which not only exhibited but also consolidated Kazakh ethnic identity. The process of identity construction within festivals relies on different cultural practices involving many elements. I was able to distinguish six core elements of Altay village festival. Each component of the festival highlighted identity of Kazakhs living in Turkey from different angle. Despite the fact that festival happened in a small village, it was able to encompass various historical and cultural contexts which go far beyond the actual physical setting of the festival. Participation of Kazakh people from other countries showed the importance of the event at international level. The purpose of individual organisers and participants in the festival differed from each other. However, above all Altay village festival brought Kazakhs together to enhance their social cohesion and identity. However, as explained above Altay village festival was special, because the festival hosting community refused to claim belonging to one specific regional or national, geographical or cultural setting. The cultural space created by Kazakhs within the festival stretched from Altay village in Niğde province to mountains in Xinjiang, from Turkey to Europe, Kazakhstan and China. On the whole, the festival described here was a successful means of communication between different Kazakh societies and generations.

CONCLUSION

When I began to write this thesis I realised that Kazakh community had a far complex nature than I have imagined. There were so many layers to their culture and the number of pieces that has to be brought together was exponentially growing with every theme. The coherency that Geertz was advising anthropologists to find seemed even did not exist in this society. Simply choosing an approach to the problematics of their ethnic identity was not an easy task. Nevertheless, the point of departure for this research was focusing on ethnic identity not as a rigid structure, but rather flexible entity which can be regularly negotiated by community members. For this reason, the given work analysed the discourses and practices associated with ethnic identifications of Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul. This included discussions of the concepts such as social memory, kinship system, physiognomy, and collective events such as commemoration ceremonies and festivals. These elements apart from being strong negotiation methods of Kazakhs' ethnic identity, also function as symbols, intensifiers, and simply the tools that help these people to shape and articulate their ethnicities when they are challenged, questioned and doubted by both outsiders and insiders.

The work's theoretical skeleton is constructivism, however, the concept 'identity as script' from institutional theory was applied as a supporting method of analysis. This is because from the very beginning of this work I argued that ethnic identity was a cultural practice that is subject to changes and negotiations. I believe that Meyer's framework of script is the convenient theoretical approach that is able to demonstrate practical nature of ethnic identities. That is partially preconditioned with the universality of the concept. Throughout this work it was possible to see how Kazakhs in Turkey emphasise their ethnicity in accordance with the scripts promoted by official institutions such as states or individual script writers, who are influential figures so-called community consultants such as tribal chieftains (e.g. Qalibek Hakim who led the second exodus from Xinjiang), writers (e.g. Hasan Oraltay and Hizribek Gayretullah in the 1960s dedicated his works to show the loyalty to the idea of

Pan-Turkism) and religious leaders (e.g. Halifa Altay). Kazakhs can be and will be motivated enactors of offered scripts, especially if it is beneficial for their positions, for example, it was clear from Omar ata's claiming himself being dedicated Turk while seeking financial support from Turkish prime-minister in organising Kurultay of Kazakh diaspora which was paradoxically an extension of Kazakhstani state project in strengthening Kazakh ethnic identity overseas. The cases of fully and partially accepting, enacting, or rejecting the identity scripts indicate to how much agency, the degree of control Kazakhs in Turkey can have over their ethnic identity. The examples of it especially were extensively shown in Chapter 7.

In addition to the notion of script, the idea of collective memory extensively advocated by Connerton also essentially contributed to binding some irregular and distant pieces of Kazakh culture throughout this work. To be more specifically, the social memory of Kazakhs from Zeytinburnu was helpful in finding missing coherency in their culture and identity practice. Moreover, it was connecting thread between the generations through which I could see both the changes and stability in their ethnic identifications. Various political atrocities in the 30s and 40s of 20th century in Xinjiang, China made the ancestors of Kazakhs currently living in Zeytinburnu flee their homeland. Their escape was so traumatic that it is etched in Kazakhs' collective memory and up until now continues to influence their self-perception and worldview. The memory of exodus is an essential element in expressing Kazakh identity in Turkey, because fore-mostly the Kazakhs left their ancestral homeland to prevent the loss of their ethnic and religious identities. Their escape was a response to the threats of abolishing and silencing their identities. Therefore, the collective memory of shared loss and trauma today partially shape Kazakhs' political stances and their ethnic identifications. The most significant finding from this work is understanding how Kazakhs' past influence their present lives, especially their self-identification processes. As a result, younger generations have to make decisions in political, economical and cultural matters they recall the behaviour scripts of their ancestors.

When do exactly these ethnic identifications become relevant? Where and how do Kazakhs play out the scenarios emphasising their ethnicity?

From this research it is clear that Kazakhs' ethnic identities become extremely salient when they interact with the members of other communities. This is because the physical encounter with other ethnic groups is the initial step in the establishment of Other and Self. The findings from this work show that there are basic communities against which Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu emphasise their ethnicity. The first group of such communities is Central Asian Turkic ethnicities. Regardless physical similarities they do see each other as separate ethnic groups because of the information coded in their collective memory. In the past these peoples used to distinguish themselves on the basis of their occupation i.e. animal husbandry and farming/trading. This distinction until now has been maintained in their social memory. Moreover, today each others' peculiarities are narrated as fundamental ethnic cues. However, this does not mean that the groups from East Turkestan see each other as complete strangers, instead they demonstrate strong shared sense of solidarity. This loyalty and support for each other originated from their similar physiognomy, language, shared history and geography.

The second group which interact with Kazakhs are Turkish citizens, particularly the citizens of non-Central Asian descent or to be more precisely, Turkish people who does not have physical features similar to Kazakhs. Here I use the term Turkish citizen instead of Turkish ethnicity, because the term Turkish ethnicity itself would be problematic, considering the fact that the whole country of Turkey is a culture mosaic and melting pot of ethnicities. Turkish citizen can be anyone from ethnic communities such as Arab, Kurdish, Zaza, Georgians, Greeks, Circassians, Assyrians to name the few. Moreover, this work does not contrast Kazakhs against so called Turkish people, it is not possible to do so because Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu are already considered as Turks. Thus, here and now Kazakhs are enacting their own part from bigger Turkish nation script. However, as it was seen from the analysis and discussions in this work Kazakhs with their presence sometimes might disrupt the harmonious picture of

Turkish nation in Istanbul. It is the time when ethnic identity negotiations begin. The distinctiveness of Kazakhs from the rest of Turkish citizens stem from several facts such as Kazakhs' physiognomy, their social structure based on kinship and the relatively newly independent state that was promoting itself in overseas as one and only country where Kazakhs all over the world do belong.

The Chapter 4 clearly demonstrated the facts of Othering and essentialism practiced against Kazakhs due to their physical features. The nature of Othering Kazakhs was unique, because they were not a regular Other, instead they were *outsider within,* that is a group partially accepted by the community. This acceptance makes a great honour for them. In the 1970s the group of Turkish community which accepted Kazakhs as the Other other were mainly *ülkücü* people, the group devoted to ultra-nationalist ideas. This in turn led essentialisation of Kazakhs and began to associate all of them with fascism. In the times of tensions physical features of Kazakh community became visual manifestation of their political views. Moreover, the current and historical narratives existing within Kazakh community display the powerful role of their physical features. They are one of the few Kazakh ethnic cues that were constant since the day of their settlement in Turkey. Since the physiognomy of Kazakhs is culturally loaded and difficult to change, it has become a criterion by which how one Kazakh can measure the authenticity of the other Kazakh.

What it means to be Kazakh in Zeytinburnu? How do they express their attitudes and opinions about their identity?

The Kazakhs' attitudes towards their ethnicity have been changing in the historical timeline. At first not only in Zeytinburnu, but also in the whole Turkey to be a Kazakh meant being model minority i.e. hard-working, law-abiding and practicing Muslims. Their efforts were directed to adaptation and acceptance of Turkish culture. The Kazakhness in the 1960s was emphasised only in unusual situations. However, in the 1970s the active involvement of some of the second-generation Kazakhs in the political terrorism in Turkey showed that the model minority scenario cherished by Kazakh settlers at their arrival was gradually changing. To be a Kazakh for the insiders equalled to be a real Turk, whereas

for the opposite side it meant to be a fascist. Today there are many ways of being a Kazakh in Zeytinburnu. One can show his or her Kazakhness via sense of solidarity, for example, going to the pharmacy that is managed by Kazakh owner or doing grocery shopping only in the supermarket where Kazakhs do work. However, the most vibrant element of being Kazakh in Zeytinburnu is being a part of the kinship discourse. It is not enough to belong to a certain tribe, but one has to be loyal to his tribe and contribute to its elevation in the social hierarchy through good deeds and helping kinsmen. Consequently, the Kazakh genealogy becomes an instrument in negotiating power and prestige of the tribes. The more money a tribe own, the more lavish gets their commemoration ceremonies of ancestors. As we can see the kinship system of Kazakhs has multiple functions. On one hand on the basis of blood relations it serves as a paradigm of national unity. In this case Kazakh ethnicity should be regarded as no more than a big extended family. On the other hand, similar to physical features kinship is also another way of verifying someone's Kazakhness. Unless someone's tribe name is inscribed in the family tree shown in Chapter 6, one cannot be considered Kazakh.

According to the field discussions about authenticity, it was concluded that Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu consider themselves as the pure and authentic Kazakhs comparing to other Kazakhs in the world. This is because they were not contaminated with the communist ideologies of neither Russian nor Chinese Communist Parties. Unlike their brothers from Kazakhstan or China they did not stop practicing their religion either. Besides, these claims were even more reinforced by the nation-building projects initiated by Kazakhstani state who also saw as genuine Kazakhs and sought their help in the matters of reviving Kazakh culture in the newly-born state called Kazakhstan, particularly the revitalisation of Islam. In return Kazakhs living in Turkey had to embrace the Republic of Kazakhstan as their new ancestral homeland though their real homeland was East Turkestan. One of the nation-building initiatives engineered by Kazakhstani government was the repatriation of Kazakh diaspora. This policy did not go as smooth as some diaspora members expected. The reason for this was the fact that Kazakhstan was too idealised and romanticised as

homeland. The encounter of Kazakhs from Turkey and Kazakhstan was more of a strong collision of hybrid identities rather than the long-awaited reunion of blood brothers. That is why the Kazakhs from both worlds did and still challenge, question and doubt each other's Kazakhness.

Despite the negative experiences and being judged for escaping country in the difficult times, there was an input of Kazakh returnees from Turkey in the nation-building policy in Kazakhstan. Although comparing to other countries the number of returnees was relatively small, they were the ones who most contributed to the country's economy and revival of religion. Thus, the Kazakhstani independence created Kazakh diaspora of Turkey which in turn made its many members discover their new ancestral homeland. Even the homeland status of East Turkestan had been lost, its image was not removed from social memory of Kazakhs. It will exist as long-lost paradise of their ancestors.

What are the means of exhibiting and performing Kazakh ethnic identity in Turkey?

We should understand that for Kazakhs collective memory is not only a narrative of their past, but also a collective identity project. Their collective memory is something that holds them together and helps it to maintain and reproduce their ethnic identity in special occasions such as festivals and commemorative ceremonies. As we could see the Kazakhs maintained in their social memory the elements, which they believed were the most suitable in representing and performing Kazakhness. The discourse of genealogy, narratives about nomadism, the tangible elements such as musical instruments, traditional clothes and yurts all help to project the image (concept) of genuine Kazakh that has been passed down through four generations of Kazakhs in Turkey. The collective ceremonies where the Kazakhs perform their ethnic identity also function as thanksgiving act towards their saviour - Turkish nation. The Chapter 9 showed that not only the commemoration of Şirzat Doğru, but also his legacy the Alaş farm itself constituted the successful commemoration

project constructed on the idea of nomadism. Via reviving the process of kymyz making the Doğru family was able to show to others how well they do remember their Kazakhness and retain their social habit memory. Similarly, the role of Altay village festival in staging Kazakhness to the gazers is essential. A small and isolated village through the festival in 2019 was able to bring together not only people from different backgrounds, but also managed to manifest various historical and cultural contexts which went far beyond the actual physical setting of the festival. The meeting of Kazakhs from different countries in the festival temporarily enhanced the social cohesion of bigger Kazakh community. I conclude that the village festival was in a way a response to the collision of hybrid identities after Kazakhstani independence, where people could not only show-off Kazakh symbols, but also look at each other without judging and accusing for not being an authentic Kazakh. Any kind of collective celebrations organised by Kazakhs in Turkey will function as a setting for social interactions and that is why it also should be interpreted as an arena where Kazakh culture is constantly reproduced. As a result, even a complete stranger attending such events will have an opportunity to witness the cultural values and ideals of Kazakh people.

What is next?

The Kazakhs spent in Turkey for more than 65 years. It is more than a half-century and it is obvious that the Kazakhs here experienced different social transformations. To describe these changes, I do not really like to use the terms acculturation and assimilation, because neither of them accurately defines the Kazakh society. For instance, the Kazakhs in Turkey, except few elderly people, do not speak Kazakh language, do not lead anymore nomadic life, do not live in the yurts, and do not eat horse meat, thus in traditional paradigm it is considered that they are completely assimilated and fully absorbed by majority culture. If I had adhered to that paradigm, I would not even have talked about the ethnic identity issue of the Kazakhs. However, as it is seen from this work the Kazakhs compensated their loss of cultural materials with the materials from

their social memory and at the moment use it as powerful source in recreating their ethnicity. My observations make me think that Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu will maintain their coherency as society in this manner at least for another twenty years.

Although, the large-scale projects like repatriation and Kurultays today acquired more moderate character comparing to the first days of independence, the Kazakhstani state will continue to shape ethnic identifications of Kazakhs. There will be more married couples similar to Hüseyn and Aynagül, who manage to combine their hybrid identities. The transnational ties created through studies, business and marriage between Kazakhstan and Turkey will continue to shape the self-perception of the Kazakhs living in Turkey. For instance, one Kazakh man, who is now married to a Kazakh woman from Kazakhstan, shared that when he was younger, he did not exclude the possibility of marrying to Turkish woman. He said that he was a strong Türkçü, so in terms of wife candidates he did not limit himself to only Kazakh ethnicity, she could be anyone from Turkic ethnic groups. However, his visits to Kazakhstan changed his opinion. He became more and more interested in his Kazakh identity. Thus, Kazakhstani ideology will still have important role in awakening and triggering the ethnic identity of Kazakh people here. However, Kazakhstani state is probably going to less and less intrude with the lives of Kazakhs in Turkey, instead the relationship between Kazakhs of two countries will be evolving on its own pace and independently from the state projects. The reasons for these are firstly, the newly elected president of Kazakhstan seems less interested in developing strategic relations with Kazakh diaspora and secondly, today the social media connect far more Kazakhs in the world than people could have ever imagined. The Kazakhs throughout the world do not need any kind of facilitator or mediator to remind themselves about their roots. It is enough to look through the Instagram or Facebook pages with various content related to Kazakh people and their history.

The Kazakhs in Zeytinburnu can identify themselves as Turkish, Kazakh, or Muslim depending on various situations. This work showed that they emphasise

their Kazakhness, not only while encountering and interacting with other ethnicities, but also when someone from their clansmen or ethnic group is in trouble. Even if some Kazakhs refuse to identify themselves as purely Kazakh or reject some cultural values of Kazakh people, they might still practice sense of solidarity within own tribal and ethnic groups, because there are existing social sanctions based on the concept of shaming. The careful watchers: the active members of diaspora, community consultants make sure that others, passive members of Kazakh society do their part in being good Kazakhs, help another Kazakh who is in trouble regardless which country they come from. This was seen in July, 2020 when during the pandemic when the Kazakhs from Turkey collected money and for that money, they bought ventilators and sent them to Kazakhstani COVID patients.

The last but not least projection of this work is about the place of Zeytinburnu in Kazakhs' self-identification. There are some Kazakh families who are selling their flats and moving out from this neighbourhood. Nevertheless, it is possible to say this district will continue to have an important cultural meaning for Kazakhs living in Istanbul. Apart from that, while I was in the field I realised that in terms of location it is very convenient district. The reason for this it has good public transport system such as MARMARAY, metro and buses. In addition, from there it is easy to visit many touristic and sightseeing areas of Istanbul located on European side. Thus, maintaining Zeytinburnu as Kazakh neighbourhood seems quite beneficial from both cultural and practical aspects.

One of the experiences I wish I had written about in this work is self-identification of Kazakhs from mixed families where only one of the parents is Kazakh. Unfortunately, I did not have an opportunity to interview those people and compare how do they feel about their Kazakhness and learn about their struggles. For future researchers who will deal with the themes of Kazakh diaspora and Kazakh ethnicity this area is worth to explore. Apart from that, because of religious and cultural similarities of Kazakhs and in general Turkish people this work did not really compare and contrast cultural identities, it rather focused on how as an ethnic group Kazakhs negotiate and expose their

identities. Therefore, for future reference it would be useful also to find out the ethnic identifications of Kazakh diaspora living in an environment unrelated to Kazakh culture. The Kazakh diaspora living in Germany and France should be of special interest in this occasion. The writing of this thesis may come to an end, but it does not terminate my relations with Kazakhs in Istanbul, in Turkey, because that is what humans usually do: they cherish the relations that are valuable for them.

EPILOGUE

In the morning of one summer day in 2020 Altay ağa called and told me that he had transferred substantial amount of money to my Turkish bank account. He requested me to find an easy way of sending this money to Kazakh person whose house was burnt down couple of days ago in Koyandy, a village located near Nur-Sultan. It was a collective financial support provided by Kazakh community in Turkey to help this poor man. This was an easy task, I promised that I would make sure that remittance achieve the fire victims. Unfortunately, the second part of Altay ağa's talk really broke my heart. He shared that we lost Bağila apa, the mother of all Kazakhstani students, the stalwart of not only Köse family, but also whole Kazakh community in Turkey. I knew that she was sick, but I did not expect we would lose her so soon. Since she was not picking up her phone, just the night before I asked about her health from Altay ağa who reassured me that she was fine and was even discharged from hospital, because she was getting better. At that moment the news struck me. This meant that I will not be able to see her again, show my work to her, drink her tea and laugh with her. Alas! There will not be any more scoldings of Bağila apa, for me having too long artificial fingernails, for coming home late from my interviews, for using dishwasher instead of washing dishes with my hands, for late-hour conversations with my friend on the phone etc. I will miss her mannerisms, the way how she was pronouncing 'patura' instead of 'fatura' in Turkish, her way of sitting on a balcony on chair with one leg up and smoking cigarettes. Zeytinburnu will not be the same without you Bağila apa! Rest in piece!

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APPENDIX 1. ETHICS' BOARD APPROVAL

T.C.
HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Girişimsel Olmayan Klinik Araştırmalar Etik Kurulu

Sayı : 16969557 -543
Konu :

ARAŞTIRMA PROJESİ DEĞERLENDİRME RAPORU

Prof. Dr. Lale Doğan
ASLI GİBİDİR

Toplantı Tarihi	: 07 MART 2019 PERŞEMBE
Toplantı No	: 2019/07
Proje No	: GO 19/248 (Değerlendirme Tarihi: 07.03.2019)
Karar No	: 2019/07-16

Üniversitemiz Edebiyat Fakültesi Antropoloji Bölümü öğretim üyelerinden Doç. Dr. Mark Lewis SOİLEAU'nın sorumlu araştırmacı olduğu, Aray RAKHİMZHANOVA'nın doktora tezi olan, GO 19/248 kayıt numaralı, ***"Etnik Kimliği İfade Etme ve Yaratmada Dans Pratiklerinin Kullanılması: Astana ve İstanbul Kazaklarının Örnek Olayları"*** başlıklı proje önerisi araştırmanın gerekçe, amaç, yaklaşım ve yöntemleri dikkate alınarak incelenmiş olup, 08 Mart 2019–31 Aralık 2020 tarihleri arasında geçerli olmak üzere etik açıdan **uygun bulunmuştur.** Çalışma tamamlandığında sonuçlarını içeren bir rapor örneğinin Etik Kurulumuza gönderilmesi gerekmektedir.

1.Prof. Dr. Nurten AKARSU	(Başkan)	9 Doç. Dr. Gözde GİRGİN	(Üye)
		İZİNLİ	
2. Prof. Dr. Sevda F. MÜFTÜOĞLU	(Üye)	10 Doç. Dr. Fatma Visal OKUR	(Üye)
İZİNLİ			
3. Prof. Dr. M. Yıldırım SARA	(Üye)	11. Doç. Dr. Can Ebru KURT	(Üye)
İZİNLİ		İZİNLİ	
4. Prof. Dr. Necdet SAĞLAM	(Üye)	12. Doç. Dr. H. Hüsrev TURNAGÖL	(Üye)
5. Prof. Dr. Ayşe Lale DOĞAN	(Üye)	13. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Özay GÖKÖZ	(Üye)
6. Prof. Dr. Mintaze Kerem GÜNEL	(Üye)	14. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge DEMİR	(Üye)
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8. Doç. Dr. M. Özgür UYANIK	(Üye)	16. Av. Meltem ONURLU	(Üye)

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Ayrıntılı Bilgi için:

APPENDIX 2. ETHICS COMMISSION FORM

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KOMİSYON MUAFİYETİ FORMU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
ANTROPOLOJİ ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 25/01/2021

Tez Başlığı: Negotiating Diaspora Identities: Kazakhs in Turkey (Diaspora Kimliklerinin Müzakeresi: Türkiye'deki Kazaklar Örneği)

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.
4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, mülakat, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kurul/Komisyon'dan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

25.01.2021

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Tarih ve İmza

Adı Soyadı: Aray RAKHIMZHANOVA
Öğrenci No: N15144631
Anabilim Dalı: Antropoloji
Programı:
Statüsü: ☐ Yüksek Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Bütünleşik Doktora

DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI

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HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ETHICS COMMISSION FORM FOR THESIS

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
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ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Date: 25/01/2021

Thesis Title: Negotiating Diaspora Identities: Kazakhs in Turkey

My thesis work related to the title above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
3. Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity.
4. Is not based on observational and descriptive research (survey, interview, measures/scales, data scanning, system-model development).

I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board/Commission for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

25.01.2021

Date and Signature

Name Surname: Aray RAKHIMZHANOVA
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Department: Anthropology
Program:
Status: ☐ MA ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Combined MA/ Ph.D.

ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

Assoc. Prof. Mark Lewis SOILEAU

(Title, Name Surname, Signature)

APPENDIX 3. ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORİJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
ANTROPOLOJI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 25/01/2021

Tez Başlığı: Negotiating Diaspora Identities: Kazakhs in Turkey (Diaspora Kimliklerinin Müzakeresi: Türkiye'deki Kazaklar Örneği)

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 238 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 19/01/2021 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı %5 'tür.

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2- ☒ Kaynakça hariç
3- ☐ Alıntılar hariç
4- ☒ Alıntılar dâhil
5- ☐ 5 kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

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Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

25.01.2021
Tarih ve İmza

Adı Soyadı: Aray RAKHIMZHANOVA
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Anabilim Dalı: Antropoloji
Programı:

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Doç. Dr. Mark Lewis SOILEAU
(Unvan, Ad Soyad, İmza)

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
PH.D. DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Date: 25/01/2021

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Name Surname: Aray RAKHIMZHANOVA

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Department: Anthropology

Program:

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Assoc. Prof. Mark Lewis SOILEAU

(Title, Name Surname, Signature)

APPENDIX 4. THE NUMBER OF REPATRIATED KAZAKHS AND THEIR SETTLEMENT IN DIFFERENT KAZAKHSTANI REGIONS

	China	Georgia	Mongolia	Pakistan	Poland	USA	Turkey	Other countries
Republic of Kazakhstan	54123	81	25414	41	40	176	1138	5527
Akmola	1802	1	6003	0	4	8	14	35
Aktobe	31	1	64	0	0	3	14	24
Almaty	31215	13	4133	1	5	3	340	4460
Atyrau	3	1	4	0	0	6	12	26
Western Kazakhstan	1	0	51	0	1	7	3	10
Zhambyl	553	3	13	14	1	6	5	32
Karagandy	1192	2	5835	0	1	5	12	46
Kostanay	2	5	417	0	1	5	4	16
Kyzylorda	18	2	18	0	0	2	9	18
Mangystau	14	24	5	2	2	2	227	54
Southern Kazakhstan	328	5	135	16	8	4	211	47
Pavlodar	49	4	3882	0	0	5	9	13
Northern Kazakhstan	5	0	941	0	1	0	3	4
Eastern Kazakhstan	14062	2	1591	0	1	4	9	23
Astana city	736	3	1335	3	9	38	88	372
Almaty city	4112	15	987	5	6	78	178	347

Retrieved from www.stat.gov.kz

APPENDIX 5. THE TRANSCRIPTS OF SOME PUBLIC SPEECHES DELIVERED IN THE COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY OF THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELISKHAN ALIPULY

THE OPENİNG PRAYER-SPEECH DELİVERED BY FEYZULLAH KIYIKLIK İN THE COMMEMORATİON CEREMONY İN HONOUR OF KAZAKH HERO ELİSKAN BATUR:

Amin! Euzubillahimineşşadanirracim, bismillahirrahmanirrahim! Rabbimiz Allah'ım: “Yiyiniz, içiniz, israf etmeyiniz!” demiş. Şükürler olsun, Ya Rabbi! Şükürler olsun, Ya Rabbi, verdiğin nimete, şu güzel alnımıza, şu güzel bugünümüze! Ya Rabbi Hz Muhammed salaleihessalamı selam ediyoruz! Onu dayma destekleyeceğimizi, Onun yolunda gideceğimizi, Ona güzel bir ümmet, Sana da güzel bir kul olacağımıza söz veriyoruz! Sen bizim dualarımızı kabul et, Ya Rabbi! Onun ailesi ve arkadaşlarını da Selam ediyoruz! Ya Rabbi dünyada her şeyin güzelliğini ver! Ve cehennem azabından bizi koru! Bize daima iyi insanlarla birlikte eyle! Onlarla dost et, arkadaş et, komşu eyle! Akraba eyle, ortak eyle! Hayırlı evlatlar ver, torunlar ver! Hayırlı eşler, hayırlı işler nasip et, ya Rabbi! Ve dualarımızı kabul et Ya Rabbi! Ya Rabbi bizlere sana kul peygambere ümmet, ibadetlerini yerine getiren, namazlarını kılan oruçlarını tutan, haçlarına giden, zekatını veren daima doğru konuşan, yalan söylemeyen, namuslu, ahlaklı, edepli, emin ve güvenilir ve Ya Rabbi, çalışkan, cesur, üretken, cömert ve sabırlı, merhametli insanlar olarak yaşat ya Rabbi! Evlatlarımız da aynı şekilde...Bu ettiğimiz dualar eder kabul et! Hesap gününde bizi affet! Anamızı babamızı Affet! Bütün müslümanları affet! Müslüman olmayanlara dünyadayken yolu göster, hidayet et! Ve bizim güzel hareketlerimizle onların hidayetlerine bizi vesil hakkı kıl, Ya Rabbi! Yarabbi şu anda güzel bir olay için toplandık. Bu toplantımızı hayırlara vesile kıl, yarabbi! Yıllarca önce atalarımız Altaylardan buraya Büyük meşakkatler ile geldiler. Ve çok büyük sıkıntılar çektiler! Elhamdülillah sizlere ve bizlere yetiştiler. Yarabbi onlardan sen razı ol! Bizde onlardan razıydık! günahları varsa affet! Cennetine girenlerden eyle Yarabbi!

Bize de akıl ver, ihsan ver, çalışkanlık ver! Aramıza sevgi ve saygı ver! Merhamet ver, birlik ver, beraberlik ver! Ve birlikte yürümeyi, birlikte hedefimize ulaşmayı bizlere nasip et, Yarabbim! Ülkemizde ve bütün İslam ülkelerinde akan bu kanın durması için sen bizim aramıza sevgi ve saygı ver! Cesaret ver, feraset ver ve vesilet ver! Yarabbi ettiğimiz duaları kabul et! Geçmişlerimize rahmet bize de merhamet eyle! Güzellikleri arttır ve çirkinliklerden uzak tut! Toplantıya tertip eden şimdi çalışan bütün arkadaşlara güç, kuvvet ver! Ve bizlerde de onlara yardım etme isteği ve arzusu uyandır!

MC: 05.00 Değerli misafirler, değerli konaklarım, sayın başkanım değerli STK temsilcileri bugün 110’ıncı yılını anmakta olduğumuz Eliskan baturun tüm kazaklar için çok önemli, çok değerli bir konumu var. Bunu bilmek lazım buraya Pakistan'da göç esnasında vefat etti. Ancak onun açtığı

çığırda birçok atalarımız atalarımız Türkiye'ye gelmek için uğraş verdiler, gayret ettiler Eliskan baturu anma komitesi adına Sn. Ibrahim Mutlu beyi sahneye alıyorum.

THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY IBRAHIM MUTLU (The length 15:42 minutes)

07:00 I: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim! Assalamagaleyküm ve rahmetullahi ve berekatuh! Değerli büyüklerim, değerli hazirun, değerli yurtdışından, yurtiçinden gelen misafirlerimiz hepinize ayrı ayrı hoş geldiniz diyorum! Hepiniz hoş geldiniz şeref verdiniz davetimizi icap edip geldiğiniz için organizasyon komitemiz adına hepinize çok teşekkür ederiz! Bu gün Eliskan Batur atamızın 110'ıncı doğum günü münasebetiyle onu anmak, misyonunu anlamak, ona vefamızı şükran ve minnetimizi ifade olarak hatimler, dualar hediye etmek ve İnşallah hep birlikte güzel bir gün geçirmek niyetiyle buraya toplandık. Her milletin onlara yön vermiş, ışık olmuş, önder olmuş, gönüllere taht kurmuş, tarihte yerini almış milli kahramanları, şairleri, ilim adamları, gönül adamları olmuştur.

Eliskan Batur da Kerey kazakların gönüllerine taht kurmuş lider ve milli kahramanlarımızdan biridir. Kendisini rahmetle ve minnetle yad ediyoruz. Bugün Doğu Türkistan'da yaşayan soydaş ve akrabalarımız hür değildir, esirdir. Esaretler halen devam etmektedir. Zalim Kıtay'ın, Çinlilerin artarak devam eden zulmünü, sosyalleştirme kampları adını verdiği, ve on binlerce kardeşimizin yargılama yapılmaksızın aylarca tutulduğu ve işkencelerin yapıldığı hapishaneleri hepiniz yakından biliyorsunuz. Sosyal medyada haberlerini izliyorsunuz. Bütün bu olaylar bizlerin güzel Türkiye'mize göç etmemize özgürce hürriyet içinde yaşamamıza vesile olan Eliskan batur'u her bir ferdimizin her zaman minnetle ve rahmetle anmamız gerektiğini, onun çok güçlü net bir vasile tüferasiti olduğunu ve dirayetli bir lider olduğunu açıkça net bir şekilde göstermektedir. Bütün bu sebeplerle bizi hürriyete kavuşturan mensup olduğumuz büyük Türk milleti ile beraber hür şekilde ve müslüman olarak yaşamamızı Allah'ın izni ve yardımı ile vesile olan Eliskan batur'u defalarca minnetle ve rahmetle yad ediyoruz. Rabbimiz kendisine yol arkadaşlarına ve tüm göçe iştirak edip vefat etmiş olan geçmişlerimize gani gani rahmet eylesin! Mekanları cennet olsun!

Eliskan Batur'un basiret, feraset, dirayet ve gayretleriyle elhamdülillah bugün hürüz ve müslümanız rabbimize sonsuz hamd ve şükürler olsun! Eliskan Batur'un göçe Karar vermesindeki amacı ve Misyonu neydi Çin Devleti 1930 Yılların başından itibaren (the sound of passing by car, pause of the speaker for a moment)

10:00. Çin Devleti 1930'lı yılların başından itibaren çeşitli uydurma bahanelerle bilinçli ve organize olarak Kazakları öldürmeye, liderlerini tutuklamaya başlamıştır. 1932 yılı güzünde de bir Kazak köyünü komple kuşatıp baskınla 137 kişiyi kadın çoluk-çocuk demeden topluca katletmiş, köyde ne işe yarayan şeyler varsa yağmalayıp almış ve yakıp yıkmıştır. Bu olay Kazakların büyük göçüşüne en büyük etken olmuştur. Kazakların can, mal ve namus emniyetinin kalmadığı amaçta görülmesi üzerine Eliskan batur'un babasına hatim merasimi yapmayı hükümete toplanma için bir bahane olarak gösterip, çok büyük bir kalabalığı toplanmış ve bu toplantıda göç kararı alınmıştır.

Eliskan batur Kazakların güçlü liderlerinden biri Alip Batur'un oğludur. Vatanını, milletini seven, milli duyguları yüksek, kendini de iyi yetiştirmiş biriyidi, Çinceyi de çok iyi biliyordu. Liderlik vasıfları vardı, olayları iyi analiz edebiliyordu ve ileri görüşlü idi. Eliskan'ın bu önemli vasıfların oradaki Kazaklar da biliyordu. İyi de bir savaşçı idi. Bu sebeple o bölgedeki Kerey Kazakların toplantıya çağırılmasında katılım oldukça çok yüksek oldu. Eliskan Batur'un henüz 25 yaşında olmasına rağmen göç fikrini kabul etmesinde, onaylanmasında, göçün lideri olmasını kabul etmede, ve göçü iştirak etmede bu çok etkili oldu. Hatta bazılarının yaşı İleri ve toplumda yeri ve saygılı olan bazı kişilere göçün lideri olmasına teklif ettiler. Bu şahıslar "Evladım akıl yaşta değil, baştadır" diye lider olup sorumluluk almada en uygun kişi Eliskandır diyip, teklifleri kabul etmemiştir. Ve Eliskan'a tabi olduklarını herkes içinde deklere etmişlerdir.

Vatanı terketmek vatandan göçmek kolay bir durum değildir. Bu sebeple önce başka bir ülkeye değil, aynı ülke içinde Düngen[49] Müslümanlarının yaşadığı Gansu'ya göç etmeyi tercih etmişlerdir. Niyeti Eliskan'ın orada Gansu'nun başındaki Müslüman general ile işbirliği halinde tekrar bulunduğu memleketini geri almaktı, fakat, Çinli General Müslüman tarafı ile değil, Çinli tarafıyla muamele yapmış, Müslüman Kazakları birbirine düşürmüş, Kazakları gruplara bölmek için Eliskan'ın konumunun üstüne birini ükürday[50] diye getirmiş. Diğerlerine birkaç tane teyci[51] diye unvanlarını vererek aynı seviyeye getirmiş. Bazılarına zalı Düngenleri vermiş ve Kazakları birbirine düşürmüştür. Ve Gansu'da 5 bine yakın insanın ölmesine sebep olmuştur bu (ıh-ıh-ıh) Düngen general ve bunun üzerine Eliskan burada hayatın olmadığını artık yok olup gideceğini anlayıp, aşağıda bütün insanları yavaş yavaş kulisler yaparak, konuşarak, ederek tekrar razı etmiş göçe ve Büyük hicre 1939 yılında başlamıştır. Burda Gansu'da büyük göçün 5 sene geçmesine bu hadiseler sebep olmuştur. Ve Nihayet güçlü güç …. büyük göç, güçlü silahı olan Çin askerlerine, Himalayı aşma gibi çetin tabiat şartlara rağmen başarıyla tamamlanmış ve Bütün Türklerin anavatanı ve kalesi güzel Türkiyemize kadar ulaşıp halkımızın hür bir şekilde yaşadığını hepimiz biliyorsunuz.

Değerli halkımız, eğer Eliskan Batur bizleri buraya kadar getirmeseydi, bugün Müslüman olacağımız, hür yaşayacağımız belli değildi. Onun için bunun farkında olup, göç gayesine uygun yaşamamız gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Değerli halkımız, bu ve benzer geçmiş tarihi olaylardan şu an ülkemizde ve dünyada cereyan olaylardan her zaman ders ve ibret almalıyız! Ona göre tedbirler almalı, kendimizi, milletimizi ve vatanımızı güçlü tutmalıyız! Çünkü emperyalist zalim devletler olduğu müddetçe hiçbir zaman, hiçbir yerde zulüm haksızlıklar ve işgaller hiç bitmeyecektir. Bunun çok yakın örneklerine yıllardır çevremizde görmekteyiz. Hep beraber Irak'ta, Suriye'de, Doğu Türkistan'da, Mısırda, Filistin'de, Myanmar'da, Keşmir'de olan olayları ve akan Müslüman kanını, tecavüze uğrayan kardeşlerimizi her gün basın yayından duymakta, takip etmekteyiz. Birlik ve beraberlik içinde kenetlenmiş olmadıkça, kolayca bölük-pörçük olabildikçe, ayrı ayrı düşünebildikçe, ufak bir menfaatte zalimlere, alçaklara menfaat

[49] Not Turkic but Han Muslims
[50] Military status
[51] status

karşılığında ajanlık edenler, uşaklık edenler oldukça her bir Müslüman topluluğun ve her bir Müslüman devletinin başına Suriye'nin başına gelenler gelmesi ihtimal dahilindedir.

Herbir ferdimiz vatanını ve İslam ümmetini en az kendi canı kadar seven, hür bir vatan olmadan ne güven içinde bir hayat sürebilmenin, ne de dinimizi ve namusumuzu koruyabilmenin imkanı olmadığını çok iyi bilmeliyiz! Değerli, halkım hepimiz milli kahramanlarımızı, tarihimizi, mazimizi çok iyi bilmeliyiz! Neslimize de bunu öğretmeliyiz! Her birimiz milli ve manevi değerleri haiz toplumu düşünen malından, canından, vaktinden Allah için fedakarlık edebilen hayırlı insanlar olabilmeli yeya yetiştirebilmeli veya olanlar varsa sahip çıkıp desteklemeliyiz ki yarın bir sıkıntıda elimizden tutabilecek yeni Eliskanlar çıkabilsin! Bunun yolu da doğru bir şekilde Islamı öğrenme ve yaşamaya maddi ve manevi değerlerin güçlü olmasına bağlıdır. Bunun da sağlanabilmesi ilim-irfan müessesi ve insanlardan faydalanmak, böyle müesseseler kurmak, böyle insanlar yetiştirmek, yetiştirmekte ve yetişmekte olanları maddi ve manevi desteklemek, böyle insanlara sahip çıkıp desteklemekle olur! Hepinizi saygıyla ve muhabbetle selamlıyorum. (15: 42)

MC: Ibrahim Mutlu beyi teşekkür ediyoruz! Şimdi onursal başkanımız sayın Feyzullah Kıyıklık başkanımızın selamını almak için sahneye davet ediyoruz. Buyrun başkanım!

THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY FEYZULLAH KIYIKLIK (The length 15 minutes)

16:34 F.: Selamünaleyküm! Değerli kardeşlerim, hanımefendiler, beyefendiler, sevgili yavrular ve İstanbul dışındaki illerden gelen kardeşlerimiz, Ata memleketinden gelen yazarlarımız ve sivil toplum oluşum başkanları! Allah'ın selâmı, rahmetli bereketi üzerinizde olsun! Allah gündüzü ve geleceğinizi hayırlı eylesin, İnşallah! tabi (hm-hm-hm) Eliskan baturu arkadaşlar sizler çok daha iyi yakından tanıyorsunuz, biz sadece böyle bir kahramanın olduğunu duyuyor, ama sizin kadar onu hissetme imkanımız olmayabilir. Ancak, değerli kardeşlerim bu birlikteliğimizi devam ettirmeniz lazım! Yeni Eliskanlar çıkartmanız lazım! Yeni yeni liderlerimiz olması lazım! Bunun da yolu bir arada ve birbirinize sevgi ve saygıyla bağlı olmadan geçer. Ne olur, geçmişimizi unutmadan yaşamak, geleceğe sağlam adımlar atabilmemiz için kendimizi ve geçmişimizi çok iyi tanımamız lazım! Ve ben isterim ki burdaki Kazak Türkleri kardeşlerimiz kaç tane dernekleri, vakıfları olursa olsun, bunlara bir çatı dernek oluşturup ve onu merkez kabul edip, onun vasıtasıyla 5 yıllık 10 yıllık 20 yıllık, 50 yıllık, 100 yıllık planlar yapılması lazım arkadaşlar gideceği yeri, ulaşacağı yere önceden kararlaştırmayan toplumların gidebileceği hiçbir yer yok!

Şu İsrailoğullarına bakın 2000 yıl devletsiz yaşadılar, ama bir planları olduğu için bir hedefleri olduğu için 2000 yıl sonra devlet kurdular ve şu anda, maalesef, 15 milyon katil İsrail insanı 7-8 trilyon insanı idare ediyor. Biz millet olarak gerçekten çok güzel bir milletiz! Dünyaya da hiçbir zaman zulüm etmemişiz, mesela, biz Çinlilerin ana da bize yaptıklarının binde birinin hiçbir millete yapmamışız, kimsenin dinine karışmamışız, kimsenin diline karışmamışız, herkese saygı göstermişiz!

Bundan yıllar önce Fransa'da bir toplantıya katılmıştım orda beni konuşmacı yapmışlardı onlara şunu söyledim: Bakın, Gelin, bizim Güneydoğumızı gezin. En az 10 tane millet, 10 tane dediğim var çoğunuzun haberi yok ve biz bunlara hiç karışmamışız dinine, diline hiçbir şeyine, ama dedim siz 250 yıl Afrika'da kaldınız milletin ne dini kaldı, ne dili kaldı, ne ırkı kaldı! Biz Müslümanlar olarak dedim İspanya, Portekiz, Fransa'nın yarısı, İtalya'da 750 yıl kaldık biliyorsunuz Endelus Emevi devleti. Ve bu millet içerisinde burada binlerce cami, medrese vs. yapıldı, kitaplar yazıldı, ilim adamları yetişti, ulema yetişti. Ama siz geldiniz şu anda dedim İspanya'da, Fransa'da, İtalya'da bir tane cami bırakmadınız. Gelin dedim, sizi bir onu da götüreyim kilise var.

Biz orada 500 yıl kaldık burada öyle değil mi? Onun için biz büyük bir milletiz, büyük bir topluluğuz, bizim mutlaka planlarımızı güzelce yapıp, dünya toplumlarına - dünya toplumlarına da, arkadaşlar, hürriyet ve demokrasiyi taktırmamız lazım! Şu anda böyle bir imkanımız var, hakikaten, Sn. cumhurbaşkanımız Recep Tayyip Erdoğan dünyada sözü ve sazı için bir insan olmaya başladı. Bunu da inşallah neticelendiriceğimize inanıyorum. Batının, Amerika'nın şu anda sıkıntısı buradan koyun. Biz ---- siz hepimiz Eliskan baturlar'ın çocuklarısınız, daha nice güzel insanların, gazilerin vs. çocuklarıyız! Selçukluların çocuklarıyız! Biz yeniden mutlaka, eski hal ve anımıza ulaşacağız! Burada yeniden binlerce Eliskan baturlar çıkacak, Alparslanlar çıkacak, Gazneviler çıkacak, Mahmutlar çıkacak, Yeseviler çıkacak! Batı bundan çok korkuyor! Onun için de bizi durmadan, maalesef, ahlakımızı, edebimizi değiştirmeye çalışıyor. Ne olur! İbrahim Bey demin güzel söyledi, arkadaşlar, bizim aslımızı koruyabilmemiz için inancımızı çok iyi tanımamız lazım! İslam'ı çok iyi bilmemiz lazım! Çok güzel yaşamamız lazım! bunlara—– bunlara uzak durduğumuz müddetçe bizi dejenere ederler, ve bir müddet sonra da kaybolur gideriz. İnançsız toplumlar hiç ayakta kalamamış. İnancına sıkı sıkıya bağlı olmayan toplumlar mutlak surete kaybolmuş gitmiş. Unutmayın, övdüğüm için değil, kızdığım için ama kendi toplumumu da bu konuda eksik gördüğüm için söylüyorum. Eğer İsrail ta-a-a 2000 yıl sonra yeniden devlet kurabilmişse, yanlış da olsa inancına bağlılığından dolayıdır. Biz bu bağlılığı mutlaka sağlamalıyız !

Allah razı olsun, onlar Himalayalarda ölmüşler, hastalanmışlar, efendim, Altaylarda şehitler vermişler, Pakistan'da ayrı sıkıntılar çekmişler, Türkiye'ye gelirken ayrı sıkıntılar gelmiş-çekmişler, Türkiye'ye gelmiş çeşitli yerlere yerleşmiş, sonra bir araya gelmiş dernekler kurdunuz, vakıflar kurdunuz. Elimizde imkanlarımız var, arkadaşlar, bir tek şeyimiz eksik, birbirimize daha saygılı olmak zorundayız, birbirimizi daha çok sevmek zorundayız, eksiklerimizi değil, güzel taraflarımızı görmeyi başlamamız lazım. Eğer birbirimize daha çok seversek, şuna inanıyorum ki ben en az 10 yıl sonra bakarsanız ki, siz dünyanın tanınmış topluluklarından olursunuz, o da, arkadaşlar, sadece sizi kurtarmaz, belki, Altayları da yeniden kurtarabilir, bir Eliskan Batur bu kadar insanın kurtuluşuna sebep olmuş, öyle mi?! Sizden de yüzlerce Eliskan baturlar çıksa, belki Altayların da kurtuluşuna sebep olursunuz, Çin zulmünden de insanlarımızın kurtuluşuna sebep olursunuz.

Bu imkanlarımız var, Türkiye'de bu imkan var, Türkiye'de çok iyi bir devlet adamımız var ve devleti idare idare eden insanlarımız var. Bir tek eksiğimiz var birimizi - birbirimizi daha çok sevmek, birbirimize daha çok saygı göstermek ve birbirimizi daha çok ileri götürmek. Ben bunu sağlayacağınıza inanıyorum. Biz Kazaklara ilgili vakıfları kurarken biz bunları düşünmüştük, o zaman. Niye? Mücevher var! Mücevherin ortaya çıkarılması lazım, İbrahim bey bu işleri biraz daha ilerletsin, (laughing and smiling) Inşallah! Bizler de yardımcı olalım. Bak! Yazarımız çok güzel şeyler yapmış! O da biraz daha çaba göstersin. Allah'ın kullarına daha fazla sarılalım! Birbirimizi daha çok sevelim! Ve güzel geleceklerin bizi beklediğini de bilelim! Ben ömür boyu gelecekten hep umutlu oldum ben o umudu ettikçe Allah onları verdi! 26:59.

APPENDIX 6. LYRICS OF THE SONG *Can Ükecan Türkistan*

Ah yüring ortak oynaylık can ükecan Türkistan
Deryalarnı boylaylık yar hürriyet
Ah balıklarga arz eytib can ükecan Türkistan
Biz Hüdaga yığlaylık yar hürriyet

Ah romalım bar beş güllü can ükecan Türkistan
Oynamakka aşkım bar yar hürriyet
Ah oynay desem koymaydı can ükecan Türkistan
Aramızda düşman bar yar hürriyet

Ah kaşıng kara eyleme can ükecan Türkistan
Yatga köngül bağlama yar hürriyet
Ah yatga köngül bağlasang can ükecan Türkistan
Taşlab ketse yığlama yar hürriyet