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TENDENCIES OF ETHNOCENTRISM AND MYTHMAKING IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF KAZAKHSTAN: A REVIEW

∨ *Tendencias de etnocentrismo y creación de mitos en
la historiografía de Kazajistán*

*Tendências de etnocentrismo e criação de mitos na
historiografia de Cazaquistão*

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ABSTRACT

The research relevance is determined by the key roles of historiography in the formation of national identity and relations; therefore, it is important to investigate the nature of its ethnocentrism and the degree of mythmaking to further its development. The purpose of the study is to determine the extent to which contemporary Kazakh historiography is ethnocentric and mythologised. The following methods of theoretical knowledge were used: analysis, synthesis, comparison, abstraction, and generalisation. The study revealed that the concept of ethnocentrism was investigated by scientists back in the early 20th century and has both negative and positive features, so it is assumed that conflict ethnocentrism is negative and adaptive positive. Mythologisation of history leads to the distortion of historical consciousness due to the negative influence of historical myths, so an objective approach is key in the study of the past. Kazakhstan underwent a complex development under the influence of modernisation and urbanisation, which led to the spread of nostalgia-utopia and myths, as well as the influence of colonial experience on the formation of historiography.

KEYWORDS

Adaptability, conflict, historical myth, nostalgia-utopia, identity.

RESUMEN

La relevancia de la investigación está determinada por el papel clave de la historiografía en la formación de la identidad y las relaciones nacionales; por lo tanto, es importante investigar la naturaleza de su etnocentrismo y el grado de creación de mitos para promover su desarrollo. El propósito del estudio es determinar hasta qué punto la historiografía kazaja contemporánea es etnocéntrica y mitificada. Se utilizaron los siguientes métodos de conocimiento teórico: análisis, síntesis, comparación, abstracción y generalización. El estudio reveló que el concepto de etnocentrismo fue investigado por científicos a principios del siglo XX y tiene características tanto negativas como positivas, por lo que se supone que el etnocentrismo de conflicto es negativo y adaptativo positivo. La mitificación de la historia conduce a la distorsión de la conciencia histórica debido a la influencia negativa de los mitos históricos, por lo que un enfoque objetivo es clave en el estudio del pasado. Kazajstán experimentó un desarrollo complejo bajo la influencia de la modernización y la urbanización, que condujo a la difusión de la nostalgia, la utopía y los mitos, así como la influencia de la experiencia colonial en la formación de la historiografía

PALABRAS CLAVE

Adaptabilidad, conflicto, mito histórico, nostalgia-utopía, identidad.

RESUMO

A relevância da pesquisa é determinada pelo papel fundamental da historiografia na formação da identidade e das relações nacionais; portanto, é importante investigar a natureza do seu etnocentrismo e o grau de criação de mitos para promover o seu desenvolvimento. O objetivo do estudo é determinar até que ponto a historiografia cazaque contemporânea é etnocêntrica e mitificada. Foram utilizados os seguintes métodos de conhecimento teórico: análise, síntese, comparação, abstração e generalização. O estudo revelou que o conceito de etnocentrismo foi investigado por cientistas no início do século XX e tem características tanto negativas como positivas, pelo que o etnocentrismo de conflito é assumido como negativo e positivo adaptativo. A mitificação da história leva à distorção da consciência histórica devido à influência negativa dos mitos históricos, razão pela qual uma abordagem objetiva é fundamental no estudo do passado. O Cazaquistão viveu um desenvolvimento complexo sob a influência da modernização e da urbanização, o que levou à difusão da nostalgia, da utopia e dos mitos, bem como à influência da experiência colonial na formação da historiografia.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Adaptabilidade, conflito, mito histórico, nostalgia-utopia, identidade.

Introduction

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to perceive the world primarily through the lens of one's own culture and to believe that one's cultural group is superior to others. This can lead to the evaluation of other cultures through the prism of the cultural norms, often resulting in the judgement of other cultures as inferior or peculiar. This issue is relevant not only for Kazakhstan but for all countries of the world. Considering this, this topic has been researched by many scholars. In particular, the book by Sumner (1906), in which the term ethnocentrism was introduced, is an important work. The book revealed key aspects of this topic, however, as this is one of the first studies, the term was not fully examined. In particular, a typological classification of the term has not been carried out. Essential work for this research is the study of Suleimenov (2002). In his book, the researcher studied the period of the Ancient History of Kazakhstan, but he conducted a thorough analysis of this topic. A characteristic specificity of studies of ancient history is the problem of the formation of ethnos of this or that country, and the researcher managed to fully, based solely on reliable sources, reveal this topic.

Tomohiko (2008) studied the issues of general problems of historiography in Kazakhstan. He described the key elements that had a decisive influence on the formation of modern historical science. In particular, it concerns post-colonial trends in the country. A. Abselemov (2020) focused on the issue of the formation of historical conditions for the development of the historiography of Kazakhstan. The period of the 20th century was considered in the article, and the author managed to describe in detail the influence of the Soviet leadership in the context of counteracting the development of national historiography. The development of historiography in modern Kazakhstan has been studied by Tastulekov et al. (2019). The researcher was able to describe in detail the evolution of the formation of Kazakh historical science and describe its state in modern times. Abil (2021) also investigated this topic and focused his attention on the consideration of the ideas of historians of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The author was able to fully explore the scientific heritage of other scholars but allowed inaccuracies in certain aspects.

This paper examines the occurrence of ethnocentrism and myth-making in Kazakh historiography, which is becoming increasingly important for understanding the development of national identity, cultural perspectives and interpretations of Kazakh history. The main problem lies in the intricate complexity of historiography, which involves not only the analysis of historical events, but also the examination of other historians' interpretations of these events. The complexity of this issue is further exacerbated by the fact that historiography is shaped by a variety of elements that encompass the social and political context of several eras.

The authors aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of how ethnocentric perspectives shape Kazakhstan's historical narratives, as well as a systematic evaluation of the mythmaking in these narratives. Recognising the diversity of historiographical viewpoints, different perspectives have been integrated to better understand historical interpretations. The influence of different time periods and social contexts on the development of Kazakh historiography has also been explored. The current state of Kazakh historiography was assessed, examining its challenges and developments in the context of ethnocentrism and mythmaking, thereby contributing to the discourse on national identity and historiography.

The purpose of the research is to determine what degree of ethnocentrism and mythmaking in the historiography of Kazakhstan currently exists. The objectives of this work are to consider the theoretical aspects of the concepts of ethnocentrism and historical myth, analyse how the historiography of Kazakhstan was formed in different periods, consider the main examples of mythmaking in Kazakh historiography.

Materials and Methods

The primary research method of this study is analysis. In particular, this method involves considering the concepts from the point of view of different theoretical approaches, which will make it possible to find out their different aspects and possible interpretations. This method was used to conduct a detailed analysis of the scientific literature related to the research topic, identify key concepts, theoretical approaches and cognitive problems. In addition, a critical analysis of primary sources was necessary. It should be understood that the subject of this scientific work is not historical events, but the interpretation of these events from the point of view of certain scholars. Thus, through the use of the method of analysis, the ideas, and approaches to the interpretation of past events expressed by Kazakh historians were considered in detail.

Synthesis was used to combine different aspects, sources, and concepts to create a complete and more in-depth picture. This method was used to combine general theoretical knowledge, identified during the analysis of the issue of ethnocentrism and historical myth, with specific examples of Kazakh historiography. In particular, the concept of ethnocentrism was determined to be quite broad and can have both negative and positive features. Through the use of the synthesis method, the approaches of different authors to the interpretation of history were examined and the types of ethnocentrism they use were identified. In addition, through the use of this method, it was possible to find out that it is necessary to strive to establish adaptive ethnocentrism as the leading in modern historiography.

The next method used in the course of the research is the method of comparison. Modern historiography of Kazakhstan covers many scholars, so it was important to compare their ideas and views in the discourse of ethnocentrism and mythmaking. In addition, it was necessary not only to compare the views of historians as the general conjuncture of Kazakhstan in different periods, through which it was possible to find out what factors contributed to the formation of historical myths.

The abstraction method was primarily used in this study. Most historical processes are politically, culturally, and socially coloured. Therefore, it was necessary to approach the research on the positions of objectivity and independence from the influence of any views to derive the most accurate results. Another method was the method of generalisation. After studying the material and deriving the results, it was necessary to systematise this information to create general conclusions.

Results

Understanding ethnocentrism has different approaches. In particular, it can be seen as a negative phenomenon, manifested in the refusal to accept other groups and an inflated self-esteem of one's group. However, ethnocentrism can fulfil both negative and positive functions. In particular, ethnocentrism limits intergroup interaction, maintains a positive identity, and preserves the integrity and specificity of the ethnic group.

Two types of this issue are distinguished: conflict and adaptive. These types arise due to the social structure, interethnic relations, and cultural peculiarities of the ethnos (Yildiz et al., 2023). Conflict ethnocentrism is expressed through the rejection of others' values and attempts to impose one's own. This can cause hostility, distrust and blaming other ethnic groups for their problems. Adaptive ethnocentrism involves understanding the peculiarities of other cultures but from the perspective of one's values and group. It promotes a tolerant attitude towards differences between groups in Table 1.

Table 1. Peculiarities of different types of ethnocentrism
Tabla 1. Peculiaridades de los distintos tipos de etnocentrismo

Adaptive	Conflict
Contributes to the formation of national identity	Contributes to the spread of chauvinistic sentiments
Enables greater cooperation with representatives of other nationalities	Contributes to the spread of intolerant attitudes towards representatives of other nationalities
Preserves the integrity and specificity of the ethnic group	Contributes to the creation of historical myths and the distortion of historiography in general

Source: own elaboration based on M. Yildiz et al. (2023). Fuente: elaboración propia a partir de M. Yildiz et al. (2023).

According to the Table 1, adaptive ethnocentrism is seen in historiography when there is a focus on the accomplishments, values, and unique culture of one's own ethnic group, highlighting their significant and positive contributions throughout history. This fosters a sense of affiliation, coherence, and favourable self-perception. Nevertheless, the historical accounts of other ethnic groups are duly recognised, examined, and integrated into the overarching narrative. Multiple historical perspectives are embraced with openness. Analysing the beneficial relationships and linkages between different groups. Valuing one's culture yet maintaining an objective approach to studying it. Conversely, conflict ethnocentrism influences historical narratives by deliberately excluding, distorting, or disregarding the history and accomplishments of other groups. The assertion of the superiority, significance, and exclusive reverence of the histories of a certain ethnic group above others is generally founded on divisions along racial, ethnic, or religious lines. This promotes a narrow-minded and biased mindset and does not encourage the development of comprehensive and inclusive national narratives. The act of portraying external opposition groups as menacing adversaries and attributing internal issues to them is a common occurrence. Insufficient scrutiny of the historical background of one's own group from various perspectives. The intricacy of historical interconnections becomes obscured.

Another key concept of this study is historical myth, which is a specific, usually disfigured form of historical consciousness. In this type of consciousness, specific knowledge and interpretations of past processes, events, phenomena, and facts are conveyed through images,

symbols, legends, legends and other emotional-psychological, irrational and intuitive elements, which are combined with selected logically rational explanations (Yildiz et al., 2023). The concept of historical myth comes from the world of classical and archaic myth, which emerged during the transition from the spiritualisation of nature to the personification and symbolic representation of the cultural world. Its primary sources are the oral reports of members of the older generation who witnessed and witnessed historical events and are the memory keepers of certain communities such as ethnicities, societies, cultures, etcetera.

The distinctive feature of myth is the relationship between the heroes of the past and modern generations, where modern descendants participate in the lives and actions of historical characters. The main concept of time in mythology consists of the division into original (sacred) time, where the creators of history act, and secondary (profane) time, relating to modernity. Classical plots of myth are connected with heroic and genealogical legends about “settler ancestors”, “founder-ancestors”, and other historical and revolutionary epochs, and feats. In traditional and, to some extent, pre-modernised societies, historical myth serves as a means of social, ethnic, and religious consolidation of communities (e.g., calendar festivals, agrarian cults, religious rituals associated with classical mythology) (Yildiz et al., 2023). The information matrix of the historical memory of Kazakhstan’s society acts as a dialectical structure, its functioning is situational and subject to the semantic pragmatics of different discursive logics. It should be noted that the complex process of unfinished national and Soviet modernisation, the historical memory of Kazakhstan is in a fragmented state, in which different epistemologies and practical interests are observed (Tastulekov et al., 2019).

Nostalgia-utopia is a phenomenon of historical memory that actively emerges and develops during transitional periods of social transformation, especially during modernisation and urbanisation. This universal process affects cultures that are on the edge of traditionalism and capitalism. Modernisation generates not only improvements in infrastructure and medicine but also shocks and expands the range of civilizational neuroses, especially relevant for fans of traditional culture who find themselves in a new anthropological space and face marginalisation. Modernisation and urbanisation lead to the emergence of the marginalised individual whose conflict of identities arises from a state of ‘not yet here but no longer there’, where traditional hierarchies are losing their relevance and new ones have not yet been established. This creates a need for therapeutic nostalgia for a simpler and more comprehensible traditional culture (Nurtazina and Toktushakov, 2017). The formation of the national narrative of cultures that have undergone colonial experience takes place in the context of confrontation with the imperial narrative. When public discourse is separated from the popular environment, national culture tries to prove its identity and at the same time uses the colonial arsenal as a source of legitimacy (Turenko et al., 2021). In general, the information matrix of the historical memory of Kazakhstan society reflects the complex interrelationships between modernisation, national culture, nostalgia-utopia, and colonial experience that influence the formation and development of historical consciousness and identity.

In the middle of the second half of the 1990s, many pseudoscientific works on history emerged in Kazakhstan, the authors of which had no professional connection with historical science (Tomohiko, 2008). These studies promote unfounded theses about the need for a complete revision of the historical model of world and national history, which emerged based on scientific research. One of the famous representatives of such a pseudoscientific current is Daniyarov (1998), who was characterised by a particularly aggressive approach to

historians. His theory, with ethnocentric content, is based on the idea of the identity of the Mongols of the XIII century and Kazakhs, as well as the origin of Genghis Khan from Kazakhs. He considers every other view to be the result of deliberate falsification. In general, the researcher does not cite any methodology that he used in the course of writing his works. He also puts forward several axiomatic statements but accompanies them with aggressive and unfounded abuse of historians. He emphasises the importance of factuality in historical scholarship, in particular facts recorded in primary sources. As a result, pseudoscientific theories such as the one presented by the researcher rely on inappropriate methodology and use of a limited list of sources. They rely on inappropriate methodology and the use of a limited list of sources. They openly attack professional historians and ignore the fundamental principles of historical science.

Modern historiography of Kazakhstan reflects the high stability and vitality of mythological representations of the past, as well as the ability to adapt to new challenges of social development. The processes of economic liberalisation and democratisation, which contribute to a decrease in the emphasis on ethnicity and group values, increase the need for stable symbols and ideals reflecting the heroic past of the country and the people. As contemporary prospects remain uncertain and positive changes cannot always be expected, historical myths about strong heroes and “external” enemies, unfortunately, remain relevant (Amanova et al., 2016).

The reinterpretation of a country’s history is often expressed in the form of science-like forms, but with a simplified methodological scheme, where irrational interpretations of events and social development are usually hyperbolised. Since myths are based on an ethnocentric view of the world, they aim to emphasise positive aspects for one’s people, which can lead to conflicts with other people. “Patriotic” approach to the study of history is also an important component of mythmaking, as it helps to illuminate the past in terms of cultural and value preferences and political interests of a particular ethnic group in the modern world (Kaeasayev et al., 2023; Espolov et al., 2020).

Generally speaking, modern Kazakh historiography, despite the insignificant spread of historical myths, is at a fairly high academic level. Appeal to national spiritual roots at the new stage of ethnos development is justified. To prevent this, it is important first of all to avoid unsettled mythological construction. It should also be based on true and scientifically proven facts. In addition, it is necessary to build the community of a multi-ethnic society rather than fragmenting it into “national groups” with “national histories”.

Discussion

The topic of ethnocentrism and mythologisation is a relevant research question for many contemporary scholars. In particular, Etinson (2018) considered the problem of general theoretical aspects of the definition of ethnocentrism, which was outlined by Sumner (1906). Also Etinson (2018) argues that looking at Sumner’s (1906) scholarly legacy as a whole, a certain conundrum arises. Firstly, there are circumstances where there is reason to believe that the culture of one person prevailing under certain conditions over another can be justified and appropriate. For example, some groups may have higher literacy rates or lower infant mortality rates, which is considered positive. If such aspects are believed to be beneficial, then it should be possible to recognise cultural superiority in some cases. Secondly, belief in

the benefits of some aspects of culture can be justified from a rational point of view. When one considers why an individual or group adopts a certain belief, it is clear that this belief has certain advantages over alternatives, such as truthfulness, plausibility, or efficacy. Likewise, when an individual or group adopts a certain cultural practice, it may be a rational move because the perceived benefits of that practice are important to their well-being and society as a whole. It is this labelling that seems to be the problem for W.G. Sumner. If ethnocentrism is seen as a belief in the superiority of one's culture, then the question arises as to why this belief should be doomed. Thus, an important direction for further research is to address this problem to create a strong theoretical basis for the issue of ethnocentrism.

This issue was studied in his book by Yilmaz (2015), who focused his attention on the totalitarianism of J. Stalin. The subject of this scientist's study was the development of historical science in three Soviet republics—Ukrainian, Azerbaijani, and Kazakh in the period from 1936 to 1945. As the author notes in the results of the study, national historiography and culture in general were subjected to strict control and repression by the authorities. The Stalinist regime actively promoted the ideology of communism and emphasised the unity of the Soviet nation, suppressing the national peculiarities and manifestations of different peoples, including Kazakhs. The policy of "great Russian chauvinism" was aimed at the subjugation and Russification of different national groups, including Kazakhs. In the context of historiography, this meant imposing a Russian-centric history and attempting to diminish the role and importance of national heroes, events, and cultural achievements. An important part of the policy was the rewriting of history in favour of the ideology of the party and the state. The historiography of Kazakhstan has been redesigned to emphasise the positive aspects of Soviet influence on the development of the region and to oppress any critical or negative accounts. Many historical studies and publications were censored. Events that could be perceived as a threat to the official narrative were distorted, and historians and scholars who expressed dissent or simply worked on objective research may have fallen under repression. In general, this opinion should be accepted, as it explains why the national historiography of Kazakhstan did not develop for a considerable period and tends to be mythologised.

Abil (2021) studied the scientific and creative heritage of Bakhti (2002). In general, the ideas of this scholar are similar to those presented in this study, namely in the context that the conclusions of Bakhti (2002) are largely unfounded and contribute to the mythologisation of the historiography of Kazakhstan. However, one of the theses of Abil (2021) stands out, namely that this scholar argues that the researcher has no basis in his views and does not refer to other scholars. Abil's assertion that Bakhti's (2002) utterances are not entirely correct. In this study, Bakhti's reference to the writings of Suleimenov (2002) on the ethnic origin of Kazakhs shows his efforts to corroborate his ideas with scientific sources. In general, it is important to understand that the mythologisation of historiography is an ambiguous process, often independent of a single author. A large number of factors influence the perception of history, and the diverse views and research disseminated by scholars can create a complex image of the past. Thus, supporting ideas by referring to previous scholarly works is an important aspect in the formation of a credible historiography.

The persistence of historical myths and periodic inflation of ethnocentric narratives is common across many nations' historiographical development. Post-colonial India also witnessed the emergence of Hindu nationalist revisionist histories glorifying ancient Indian achie-

vements, denigrating medieval Muslim rulers and amplifying divisions (Truschke, 2020). In many African nations, colonial narratives shaped historical understanding until post-independence, when there was a shift towards reclaiming indigenous perspectives. The immediate post-independence period saw African countries largely retaining colonial legislation, but by 2015, much of it had been replaced by laws written locally (Zhanbulatova et al., 2020). The impacts of Soviet repression and censorship on centralizing historical narratives were more pronounced on the former SSRs than on wholly sovereign nation-states. The abrupt switch to national history building in the 1990s dislocated objective analysis more in Kazakhstan than in steadily decolonized regions. However, the trends towards critical re-examination and diversifying national histories are gaining strength, in line with globalizing academia. The development of historiography in Kazakhstan has been closely tied to the construction of a national identity. This is a common trend worldwide, where countries use historiography as a tool to forge a distinct national identity, often post-independence. The Balkans have indeed experienced similar trends in reinterpreting history to reinforce national narratives. The emergence of new nation-states and the stateless nations in the Balkans, as well as the creation of “national” territorial states, have been covered in academic literature. Additionally, there has been a focus on the temporality of the Balkan wars, showing a dynamic and disputed process in the making and remaking of Southeast Europe over time (Novozhenov, 2023).

In the context of the myth formation of modern historiography of Kazakhstan, it is important to consider not only the influence of ethnic Kazakh historians but also foreign influence. Thus, the issue of the influence of the Russian worldview on the historiography of Kazakhstan was studied by Mykhailovych (2022). The subject of this scholar’s research is the ideology of the “Russian world” and its influence on historiography. The author notes that the history of Kazakhstan has deep ties with the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, which had a significant impact on the formation of modern Kazakh national consciousness and history. The impact of the “Russian world” on the historiography of Kazakhstan can be perceived from different positions. Under the influence of the Russian-centric view of history, several events and processes in Kazakhstan can be interpreted or distorted. Historical facts and events may look differently from a position that perceives history through the prism of the interests of the “Russian world”. In addition, the influence of the “Russian world” can affect the information space and discretely influence historical research, distorting the objective picture of the past. One should agree with these ideas, as Kazakhstan has been a part of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union for a long time, given that Russian-centric views play a rather strong role in the modernity of this country.

Burkitbay and Satanov (2020) also investigated the issue of the current state of historiography of Kazakhstan. In their general conclusions, they argue that modern historical science in this country is too ethnocentric and not devoid of mythologisation. The researchers argue this position by the fact that several researchers without a sufficient level of argumentation emphasise the role of the Kazakh people in the formation of decisive importance in the region of Central Asia. In particular, the argumentation of the ethnic kinship of modern Kazakhs with the states of the Middle Ages. In addition, among many historians, there is a peculiar selective approach to the study of the history of Kazakhstan, as a result of which some aspects of history may be curtailed or insufficiently studied because of the desire to highlight the positive aspects of the past. One of the arguments of the researchers is the influence of power, according to which the political interests of the ruling elite can influence

the creation of an image of the past that supports certain national or political agendas. In addition, the authors draw attention to the fact that many modern historians of Kazakhstan are quite manipulative, due to which historical facts can be interpreted in such a way as to emphasise certain aspects and banish ideas of national greatness. It is necessary to disagree with the opinions of these authors, because, as already noted in the results of this study, the modern historical science of Kazakhstan is rapidly developing and getting rid of the tendencies of negative ethnocentrism and mythologisation. Of course, there are researchers whose activities are focused precisely on spreading myths and creating dubious theories, but their ideas are not the leading ones in the historical science of the country.

The study focused primarily on the broad influence of the political and social context on Kazakh historiography, rather than being limited to its connection with current events. In addition, the perspectives were limited in scope, focusing solely on Kazakh history without drawing comparisons with the dynamics observed in other former Soviet republics in Central Asia. The suggestions made are theoretical in nature and do not constitute specific policy or curriculum reforms.

In general, it should be noted that this topic is quite difficult, given that there is a large number of scholars who have different views on history, as well as considering various external factors. Despite this, the modern historiography of Kazakhstan has a high level of objectivity and is rapidly developing in this direction.

Conclusions

As a result of the research, it was determined that ethnocentrism can be considered a world-view concept, according to which when considering certain phenomena, a certain ethnic group is at the centre of attention, and all others are evaluated concerning it. It can be both positive, as it allows the formation of national identity, and negative, given the possibility of resolving inter-ethnic conflicts.

The mythologisation of history manifests itself in a distorted form of historical consciousness. Based on this, historical myths are a negative phenomenon, so the study of past events requires the most objective approach. Kazakhstan has passed a long way of development during the whole period of history, but in modern times it is under the influence of modernisation and urbanisation ideas. Given this, a frequent phenomenon in the formation of historiography is nostalgia-utopia. In addition, the colonial experience of Kazakh society contributes to the development of national currents that can lead to the spread of myths about the historical past. In 1990, the pseudoscientific theories of Daniyarov and Bakhti were actively disseminated. These theories hurt the formation of modern historiography of Kazakhstan, as they do not have a serious factual basis, but had a fairly broad message in the context of the formation of national ideas of Kazakhstan.

To date, Kazakh historiography is quite resistant to the spread of historical myths and conflict ethnocentrism. Although historical myths are quite widespread in society, given the rise of national ideas, however, a significant level of objectivity and moderate adaptive ethnocentrism can be observed at the scholarly level. It is important to realise that the fight against myth-making historiography should take place not only at the scientific level but also at the political level. In today's liberal and globalising society, it is necessary to find

the right approach in the context of developing national identity, without spreading hatred towards members of other nationalities. Further research should conduct a comparative content analysis of history textbooks from multiple Central Asian countries, relating shifts in political administrations with changes in academic narratives using citation analysis, and formulating specific decolonization programs to diversify national curriculums across the region. More empirical evidence and policy-relevant directions would strengthen the practical import of the research conclusions.

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