



ISSN: 2617-6548

URL: www.ijirss.com



Commemorative practices of honoring world war ii heroes in Kazakhstan

 Dana ORAZBAYEVA^{1*},  Nursultan SARSENBEKOV²

¹*Department of Philosophy, L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, 2, Satpayev st., 010008, Astana, Kazakhstan.*

²*Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University, Kazakhstan.*

²*Department of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and Social and Humanitarian Disciplines, Karaganda, 100000, Kazakhstan.*

Corresponding author: Dana ORAZBAYEVA (Email: orazbaevadana@mail.ru)

Abstract

The article examines the history and practice of erecting monuments to the heroes of the Second World War (Great Patriotic War) in Kazakhstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The aim of the study is to analyze commemorative practices and the cultural significance of monuments, as well as to determine their role in shaping national memory and the heroic discourse. The methodology is based on phenomenological and existential approaches, combined with cultural analysis of symbolic space, ritual practices, and the phenomenon of heroization. The sources include the sites of the monuments, their visual representations, depictions in the media, content analysis of specialized literature, and data obtained from interviews with actors and experts. Special attention was given to field research conducted in Astana and the western regions of Kazakhstan, which involved visual documentation of monuments, observation of ritual practices, and the collection of local narratives. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of the monuments and their role in cultural memory, a narrative approach was employed. Findings indicate that monuments to Second World War heroes function as a cultural code of the Kazakh nation, reflecting resilience, heroism, and national worldview. Case studies of figures such as Bauyrzhan Momyshuly, Rakhymzhan Koshkarbayev, Aliya Moldagulova, and Manshuk Mametova demonstrate that these monuments serve not only as objects of visual representation but also as instruments of commemoration, fostering patriotic consciousness and transmitting cultural values to future generations. Illustrations and related data were obtained as part of the field research.

Keywords: Commemoration, Cultural memory, Heroism, Kazakh heroes, Memorial, Memory sites, Monuments, Symbolic space.

DOI: 10.53894/ijirss.v8i8.10584

Funding: The article was prepared within the framework of the grant scientific project AP22685932 «Practices of Memorialization of Heroes in Contemporary Culture of Kazakhstan» funded by the Committee of Science of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

History: Received: 7 August 2025 / **Revised:** 9 September 2025 / **Accepted:** 12 September 2025 / **Published:** 9 October 2025

Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Authors' Contributions: All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Transparency: The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

Publisher: Innovative Research Publishing

1. Introduction

This article examines a new cultural-discursive perspective on heroism in Kazakh culture. By incorporating new empirical material and considering the processes of cultural renewal experienced in Kazakhstan during the 20th century, the analysis of this phenomenon is expanded. Traditionally, historians have approached the concept of the *batyr* (hero) as a reflection of the characteristics of nomadic culture and statehood. For instance, Nurbulat Masanov regarded the existence of military organizations as a defining feature of Eurasian steppe nomadic societies, playing a significant role in socio-historical development. These organizations were based on the established status-legal hierarchy of various patrilineal groups among nomads and often corresponded to their clan systems [1].

Kazakh researcher Irina Erofeeva notes that from ancient times, military leaders and *batyrs* constituted a key structural element of the military organization in nomadic societies. Moreover, she highlights that heroism flourished among all nomadic peoples of Eurasia from the medieval period onward. The Kazakh people, adhering to a nomadic lifestyle, defended their vast territories with valor and heroism, ensuring the safety of future generations and repelling enemies with steadfast courage.

In Kazakh history, the titles of courageous and heroic *batyr* were awarded to warriors not merely for personal qualities but also in recognition of their social and military roles [2]. Historians assert that *batyrs* often functioned as military leaders and “represented a major socio-military and political group in Kazakh society by the late 17th–18th centuries”. The term *batyr* originates from Old Turkic-Mongol words such as *bahadur* or *bagatur*, originally signifying a person who bravely confronts the enemy and ventures freely into battle [3].

This article contributes to historical discourse by expanding the interpretation of the *batyr* phenomenon, focusing on Second World War heroes - Baurzhan Momyshuly, Rakhymzhan Koshkarbayev, Aliya Moldagulova, Manshuk Mametova. It examines the timing and locations of monuments dedicated to these figures as expressions of cultural memory. Methodologically, the study combines visual and content analysis, media studies, and field research to assess the monuments’ artistic, symbolic, and societal significance, offering insights into how the *batyr* phenomenon is memorialized and transmitted.

By describing monuments erected after the Soviet period in honor of Second World War heroes, the article situates the *batyr* phenomenon within contemporary Kazakh cultural policy and memorial practices, highlighting its role in shaping national identity. As previously noted, in Kazakh history *batyrs* exercised military authority as leaders and typically emerged from specific tribal or clan lineages. Consequently, genealogical records (*shezhire*) function as instruments of cultural memory and collective remembrance [4].

In order to foster Kazakhstan’s spiritual and cultural heritage, the preservation and reinterpretation of historical and heroic figures has become a subject of debate. Regional and national cultural identity, as well as intergenerational continuity, are examined in depth. To develop cultural policy and implement cultural projects, research institutions and public organizations have promoted the creation of memorial spaces dedicated to historical figures, including *batyrs*. Interest in regional history, culture, and intergenerational memory, combined with commemoration practices, has become a key aspect of contemporary cultural policy. This process, on the one hand, represents a form of political ideology, and on the other hand, it revitalizes the national cultural code and serves as a means of constructing a national narrative [5].

Interviews with key actors and experts illuminated the cultural codes embedded in the monuments and their value-based meaning in society. Narrative analysis explored the role of the *batyr* figure in shaping national identity. A phenomenological approach was employed to understand the personal essence of the *batyrs* and the process through which they became cultural-historical symbols, enabling a culturally grounded interpretation of heroism.

2. Heroes Who Achieved Public Reverence

In the bloody battles, directly confronting the enemy’s arsenal and flawlessly accomplishing numerous combat missions, Hero of the Soviet Union and People’s Hero of Kazakhstan Baurzhan Momyshuly provides a philosophical and psychological definition of the phenomenon of war in his seminal work *A Book Written in Blood*, developing the idea as follows: “War is a particular and temporary phenomenon, yet one of the most tragic in human life. For many years it predetermines the fate of the homeland and the destiny of the warring people. No matter how long it lasts, war remains forever in human life as a horrifying and tragic event, leaving a profound imprint in the collective memory of the people” [6].

This statement allows war to be considered not only as a socio-political phenomenon but also as an existential trial that radically transforms the ontological status of the human being. In times of peace, society exists within relatively stable structures; however, the sudden outbreak of hostilities disrupts this order and reveals previously hidden dimensions of human existence.

The situation in which an individual takes up arms and is compelled to direct them against fellow humans represents both an epistemological and ethical challenge. Here, the phenomenon of the “existential choice” is actualized, in which the subject attains the authenticity of their existence through the decision to make a sacrifice for the homeland. Thus, the individual’s choice enters the axiological plane: the defense of the fatherland becomes the highest value, embodying the heroic narrative and shaping collective memory.

On the battlefield, human existence is immersed in a “border situation” (after Jaspers [7]), where life and death, freedom and necessity collide. In these conditions, the individual asserts themselves at the macro-level of their own being, becoming a symbol of national resilience. This state can also be interpreted as an epistemological experience, as it reveals new horizons of self-knowledge and collective historical understanding.

Historical consciousness and cultural memory encapsulate this in a concise yet profound formula: “A man is born for his homeland, and for his homeland he dies”. This maxim functions not merely as a slogan but as a philosophical-anthropological expression of national worldview, in which heroism and self-sacrifice attain the status of enduring values.



Figure 1.
Baurzhan Momyshuly Monument in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].



Figure 2.
Rakhymzhan Koshkarbayev Monument in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].

One of the first monuments dedicated to Bauyrzhan Momyshuly, who became a symbol of courage and heroism, is located in the city of Taraz. It was erected on the square in front of the regional drama theater, which serves as an important cultural center for the region. The bronze sculpture embodies the qualities of determination and valor [9]. In Kazakhstan, a tradition has developed of gifting monuments to the capital on its anniversary dates. For example, Jambyl Region presented

a monument to B. Momysheuly to Astana on the city's 10th anniversary (see Figure 1). Additionally, in Almaty, a monument honoring Bauyrzhan Momysheuly has been erected in the Park of the 28 Panfilov Guardsmen.

One of the decisive moments of the Second World War was the raising of the Victory Banner over the Reichstag, in which the Kazakh soldier Rakhymzhan Koshkarbayev played a direct role. It is evident that monuments erected in honor of Kazakh soldiers serve as a key instrument in the heroization of their deeds. At the same time, the memoirs of war participants, which document their personal experiences, hold particular value. These memoirs not only reflect courage and resilience under front-line trials but also reveal the phenomenon of readiness for self-sacrifice. Accordingly, the monument to R. Koshkarbayev was established in 2016 at the intersection of B. Momysheuly Street and R. Koshkarbayev Street in Astana (see Figure 2), coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the capital.

One of the highest duties during wartime was defending the homeland from enemy invasion. This mission constituted a moral obligation for the soldier, determining his purpose. As B. Momysheuly noted:

"The concept of duty encompasses categories such as reason, feeling, will, conscience, honor, justice, truth, and love, and it stands in opposition to the contradictory phenomena of human life. Only the awareness of duty elevates the soldier above everything else" [6].

Following the principle of traditional Kazakh thought, "*Өсер елдің ұлдары, бірін бірі батыр дейді*" ("In a flourishing nation, men call one another heroes"), Momysheuly's recollections provide a concise and compelling characterization of R. Koshkarbayev's feat:

"A person never plans to perform a feat. A feat is born in the moment. War exposes both noble and weak qualities precisely in such moments. These moments become a biography, a testament passed from generation to generation. Rakhymzhan revealed himself at such a moment. His biography was written in fire" [10].

The courage of R. Koshkarbayev in fierce battles resonates with the Kazakh people, who have absorbed the spirit of steppe freedom. Erecting a monument in his honor symbolizes recognition of his deed and historical duty toward the hero.

Drawing on the diaries and memoirs of legendary figures such as B. Momysheuly and R. Koshkarbayev, we seek to reconstruct the frontline experience of Kazakh soldiers. Even under the harshest conditions, a person does not lose hope; the will to live remains unextinguished. B. Momysheuly, R. Koshkarbayev, A. Moldagulova, and M. Mametova are not fictional characters but real individuals whose recollections demonstrate how wartime trials foster an existential relationship to one's own being. In the context of bloody warfare, only patriotism and love for the homeland enabled individuals to overcome the fear of death.

Thus, analyzing the past allows us to draw parallels with contemporary zones of violence and offers the possibility of preventing future manifestations of terrorism. The examples presented above are testimonies of war participants who preserved the memory of their experiences. Each soldier who demonstrated valor at the front overcame numerous hardships through spiritual resilience. Victory was made possible through the unity of the front and the home front.

For a nomadic people living in harmony with nature and valuing freedom, the Second World War represented a limitation of that freedom and a disruption of the familiar order. War demonstrated that human beings can reveal their inner essence and personal agency under extreme conditions. In such circumstances, *compassion* for one's neighbor assumes special significance. As F. Dostoevsky noted:

"Compassion is the chief and perhaps the only law of existence for all humanity" [11].

During war, compassion and mercy are precisely what preserve humanity within the human being.

Despite the tragedy of the times, the capacity for decision-making and readiness for decisive action become expressions of reflection. A striking example of existential choice is the act of M. Mametova, who voluntarily went to the front after the repressions of the 1930s, which claimed the lives of many Kazakhs. Her decision can be viewed as an act of courage and self-sacrifice. As Jaspers [7] rightly argued, the roots of such tragedies lie in the "*denial of God*" [7] expressed not only as a loss of religious faith but also as spiritual emptiness—a condition characteristic of war instigators.

American scholar Erika Marat notes that, in Kazakhstan, as in other Central Asian republics, with the attainment of independence, "*the military and their symbols of power*" came to be seen as a source of national identity, and the images of heroes were institutionalized as part of state symbolism [12].

According to Kazakh researcher Medeuova [13], within the Kazakh memorial paradigm, the Second World War functions as a form of "*collective memory*," reflected in the preservation, restoration, and erection of new monuments dedicated to this period, particularly in the post-Soviet and independent eras [13].

3. Kazakh Women Heroes of the Second World War in Monuments and Memorial Culture

American scholar Christopher Rees has noted that certain monuments dedicated to participants of the Second World War play a significant role for society. Furthermore, the impact of these monuments depends on how attentively local communities engage with and understand the issues related to the war. In this context, the commemorative practices in Aktobe Region, the historical homeland of Aliya Moldagulova, can be regarded as a meaningful illustration of this phenomenon [14].

As a Hero of the Soviet Union, monuments honoring Aliya Moldagulova have been erected across various regions of Kazakhstan. However, first and foremost, we considered it methodologically appropriate to focus on the monument located in her native village of Kobda, Aktobe Region, using a field research approach as the subject of this study.



Figure 3.
Monument to Aliya Moldagulova in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].



Figure 4.
Monument to Aliya Moldagulova in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].

Following Kazakhstan's independence, one of the earliest monuments dedicated to Rees [14] was erected in 1995 in the village of Aliya, Kobda district, Aktobe region, on Y. Gagarin Street (Figure 3). Ontologically, the monument articulates the enduring significance of national identity, while from an axiological perspective, it manifests the value-laden dimension of heroism within collective consciousness. The sculpture, crafted from marble, depicts Moldagulova in full-length military attire, thereby symbolically embodying courage and national service [15].

The marble monument is situated within a landscaped and fenced area. Interviews with local residents revealed that villagers and schoolchildren place floral tributes at the monument twice annually, a practice that has become a firmly established local tradition. Hermeneutically, this ritual may be interpreted as a ceremonial re-reading of collective memory. The first tribute is traditionally placed on Victory Day, while the second coincides with Moldagulova's birthday. The institutionalization and persistence of this ritual, particularly in Kobda district, illustrate the phenomenological stability of historical consciousness and the communal acknowledgment of heroic women within Kazakh society.

Another notable composition examined in this study is the monument dedicated jointly to Monument to the Hero of the Soviet Union A. Moldagulova [15], installed in 1997 on the square opposite the former government building in Almaty, which had previously been occupied by a monument to V. Lenin. Consequently, the Lenin monument was replaced by a commemorative composition honoring the heroes of the Soviet Union [16]. This substitution may be understood dialectically as the sequential layering of historical periods. Comparable rotations of commemorative monuments have been observed in multiple urban contexts across Kazakhstan.

The monument depicts Aliya Moldagulova and Manshuk Mametova in military uniform, advancing in a dynamic marching posture. A monumental obelisk rises behind the figures, crowned with a depiction of children releasing birds into the sky. From a semiotic standpoint, these images symbolically signify hope, generational continuity, and eschatological faith.

During the Soviet era, Moldagulova was celebrated as a Hero of the Soviet Union and commemorated throughout the allied states. Presently, the monument near Aktobe functions as a distinctive emotional and cultural landmark [17]. From a phenomenological perspective, this site can be conceptualized as a "topos of national memory".

In 2005, a memorial complex dedicated to Moldagulova was inaugurated in Aktobe. The sculpture, executed in bronze, rests upon a unique granite pedestal, signifying ontological stability and the enduring nature of the heroic image. Notably, a bust of Moldagulova had been installed in Aktobe in the 1960s; in 2008, a replica of the memorial complex was installed in Astana as a commemorative gift, situated adjacent to the S. Seifullin Agrarian University at the intersection of Aliya Moldagulova Street and Zhenis Avenue [18].

The composition conveys the intensity of battlefield experience, existentially embodying resilience and courage. Bas-reliefs flank the monument on both sides: the left panel depicts the expansive steppe and the nomadic spirit, featuring figures such as Kurmangali and Abylai Khan, while the right panel portrays historical adversities ranging from the 1916 anti-colonial uprising to the tribulations of the Second World War, reflecting the collective suffering endured by the Kazakh people. Hermeneutically, these episodes can be interpreted as a narrative restructuring of collective memory. The bas-relief was created by sculptor [19].



Figure 5.
Bas-relief of the Aliya Moldagulova monument in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].

Although the bas-reliefs serve as a medium for recalling wartime experiences, they simultaneously express the perspective of the individual through a visual formulation. From a hermeneutic standpoint, such representations can be interpreted as a semiotic manifestation of collective memory. Acts of self-sacrifice in defense of one's homeland demand the utmost capacities of a human being. Moreover, the possibility of returning to one's native land—encountering loved ones, honoring the soil of the homeland—is complex and precarious, particularly for the Kazakh people, for whom reverence for *Atameken* (ancestral land) is a cultural imperative. From an axiological perspective, this phenomenon can be understood as the boundless value of defending one's homeland within the national system of values.

Consequently, for the Kazakh hero, the endurance displayed in defense of Atameken and the resolute spirit shaped by national worldview are reflected in monuments, which can be interpreted as posing an existential question centered on the human condition. This embodies a phenomenon that reveals the ontological significance of being. Any war disrupts the ordinary, peaceful routines of life, forcing individuals into existentially precarious situations. In such circumstances, a person is confronted with a “liminal situation”, compelled to reconsider the meaning of existence from a metaphysical perspective.

On the battlefield, regardless of the individual hero, the overarching purpose is clear: to defend one’s homeland from the enemy. Decisions taken in an instant, often under extreme pressure, demonstrate that a person’s capacities may be realized in a moment through internal reflection. Existential philosophy asserts that “liminal situations,” wherein a hero is situated between conflicting choices and transformative circumstances, naturally accumulate existential experience as a participant in war. This process represents a path to self-knowledge in a gnoseological sense and enables understanding of the nature of war at an epistemological level.

Amid the tremendous forces present on the battlefield, the decisive role of human existence is undeniable. The ability of an individual to confront destructive powers and various weapons underscores the unique potential of human agency. From a phenomenological perspective, this exemplifies the ultimate meaning of human existence. While both technology and humans are participants in war, human history repeatedly demonstrates that “man is the measure of all things.” In this context, Protagoras’ anthropocentric principle acquires a renewed, dialectical significance.

To elucidate this issue, it is instructive to refer to the recollection of Baurzhan Momyshuly: “Destroyed equipment (machine guns, artillery, tanks, etc.) can be repaired or replaced—these are material losses; but a gravely wounded soldier cannot be restored, and the dead cannot be revived. In war, the human being is the primary object; all weaponry is directed against him. Preserving human life, safeguarding soldiers—this is a sacred imperative, particularly in contemporary warfare” [17]. From an axiological perspective, this statement highlights the irreplaceable value of human life; ontologically, it represents the foundational core that determines the meaning of being.

It is worth noting that the monument dedicated to Aliya Moldagulova was erected not only within Kazakhstan but also in the Russian Federation. In 2019, a monument honoring the hero was installed in Saint Petersburg. The monument is located in the Krasnogvardeysky District in the western part of Saint Petersburg, on a street bearing Aliya Moldagulova’s name. From a hermeneutic perspective, this can be interpreted as a spatial representation of collective memory.

On the pedestal of the monument, the hero’s name and a star emblem are engraved. From an axiological standpoint, this signifies the symbolic meaning of heroism and valor, while on an ontological level, it reflects the transformation of historical existence into a cultural code. Additionally, the outer surface of the pedestal features an inscribed text detailing Moldagulova’s heroic deeds. Epistemologically, this serves as a means of transmitting historical knowledge to future generations and consolidating it as part of collective memory.

Thus, the monument in Saint Petersburg should be understood not merely as an aesthetic object, but as a commemorative phenomenon that revitalizes collective historical memory and integrates national and transnational values.



Figure 6.
Monumental composition in Oral city.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].



Figure 7.
Manshuk Mametova Monument in Astana.
Source: Figure by Tasbulatova, et al. [8].

In 2017, the sculptural composition “Kazakh Heroic Women” was installed in the city of Oral. The monument features Manshuk Mametova in the center, flanked by Aliya Moldagulova and Khuiaz Dospanova (Figure 5) [20]. This work represents the first collective symbolic image dedicated to heroic women who demonstrated bravery during the Second World War. The monument was originally placed in the square where a previous monument to Manshuk Mametova once stood in Oral. After restoration, its new location was moved to the village of Saikyn in the Bokeyorda district. This monument was dedicated to the 95th anniversary of Manshuk Mametova [21].

One of the first monuments was erected during the Soviet era, based on the decree of March 1, 1944, in the village of Zhanibek, Orda district, West Kazakhstan region. The bronze sculpture was mounted on a granite pedestal with the inscription: “Hero of the Soviet Union Manshuk Mametova, 1922–1943”. In 1982, this monument was officially placed under state protection and included in the national registry. Additionally, in 1988, another monument was installed at Peace Square in Oral. Beyond her birthplace, a monument was also established in the yard of a secondary school in Zhetisay district, Turkistan region, a school named after Manshuk Mametova. Near the monument, an obelisk plate lists the names of 65 individuals from the village who went to war. One of the key initiators of such projects was the philanthropist Zh. Darmenov, who contributed to the collective memory of the region by installing monuments to Manshuk Mametova and Aliya Moldagulova in southern regions and engraving the names of local residents on commemorative plaques.

In 2018, a new monument dedicated to Manshuk Mametova was erected in Akzhayik Park in Astana (Figure 7). The sculpture depicts the heroic woman clasping her flowing military coat with both hands, stepping forward, and appearing deeply contemplative. This artistic portrayal conveys not only her military valor but also her spiritual and psychological state. As researchers note, in contemporary global practice, incorporating weapons into monument design is often perceived as promoting war or aggression [22]. Therefore, the use of the Latin alphabet for Mametova’s name on the monument’s pedestal serves as a cultural sign, symbolizing the intersection of tradition and innovation.

According to Christopher Rees, in the national narrative revisiting Kazakhstan’s World War II experience, both Aliya Moldagulova and Manshuk Mametova occupy prominent roles. While Aliya Moldagulova holds a significant place in both Soviet and post-Soviet memory discourse, Manshuk Mametova serves as a symbolic anchor in transmitting the war legacy to future generations [14]. As described above, monuments dedicated to World War II heroic women across Kazakhstan are not merely architectural objects; they are phenomena with cultural and philosophical significance. They serve as material embodiments of collective memory. As Maurice Halbwachs notes, collective memory is continuously “reexamined” to remain relevant to present realities [23]. Thus, these monuments are not only acts of remembrance but also expressions of society’s spiritual orientation toward the future.

4. Conclusion

War appears as a nihilistic process, initiating a “border situation” (following K. Jaspers) that not only reveals human nature but also compels reflection on fundamental questions of existence in both ontological and axiological dimensions. It is precisely for this reason that the phenomenon of war has had a significant influence on the development of existentialist philosophy, shaping new meanings in cultural memory and collective identity. Death, as an existential category, represents the inevitable conclusion of human existence, predetermined by the very nature of being. However, war functions as an act of socio-cultural aggression, in which one of the opposing sides seeks to advance its own interests through the subjugation

of others' destinies and the assertion of symbolic dominance. In this context, contemporary global terrorist acts can be seen as representations of war in new historical forms.

Systematizing the results of the study, the following points can be highlighted:

- The objects of analysis were monuments dedicated to World War II heroes in various regions of Kazakhstan, which were interpreted from a cultural perspective based on the concepts of cultural memory and memorialization;
- In the context of patriotic and civic education, a philosophical analysis of their symbolic significance was proposed, revealing the ontological and axiological dimensions of the memorial discourse;
- The experience of commemorating the feats of Kazakh heroes allowed for an exploration of the deeper meanings of their courage and resilience, interpreting them as integral to the heroic narrative and national identity.

The phenomenon of war necessitates consideration through the lens of philosophical anthropology and existential hermeneutics: awareness of threats to human existence, adaptation to new conditions, and the symbolic sacralization of memorial objects. Monuments to heroes serve not only as cultural artifacts but also as mediators between the past and the present, shaping collective consciousness. Such an interpretation, in our view, most fully reveals the semantic content of memorial practices. Based on field research conducted in the western regions of Kazakhstan and the capital, a registry of monuments dedicated to World War II heroes was compiled, allowing them to be considered as elements of the cultural landscape and loci memoriae ("places of memory").

The erection of monuments in honor of valiant individuals who "with the strength of the hand and the sharpness of the spear" defended the homeland constitutes an act of spatial sacralization and a symbolic expression of generational continuity. Thus, memorial practices ensure not only the preservation of historical memory but also the philosophical and cultural comprehension of the heroic legacy within the framework of national identity.

References

- [1] N. E. Masanov, *The nomadic civilization of the Kazakhs = The nomadic civilization of the Kazakhs: Fundamentals of life of a nomadic society*. Almaty & Moscow: Gorizont; Socinvest, 1995.
- [2] I. V. Erofeeva, *Symbols of Kazakh statehood: Late middle ages and modern times*. Almaty: ID "Arkaim, 2001.
- [3] I. V. Erofeeva, *Khan Abulkhair: Commander, ruler, politician*. Almaty: Daik-Press, 2007.
- [4] M. A. Alpysbes, *Kazakh genealogy: Historiographical-documentary research*. Astana: BG-Print, 2013.
- [5] K. S. Yermagambetova and D. E. Orazbayeva, "The process of memorialization of heroes in the East Kazakhstan region: cultural anthropological analysis," *Keruen*, vol. 1, no. 74, p. 25, 2022.
- [6] B. Momysuly, "The psychology of war (transcript)," Electronic Resource, 2025.
- [7] K. Jaspers, *The meaning and purpose of history: Translated from German, ed. T.I. Oizerman*. Moscow: Polit Thinkers of the 20th Century, 1991.
- [8] Z. Tasbulatova, A. Davletova, O. Aigunova, and K. Orazbayeva, "Measuring the professional competencies of future teachers," *Pedagogy and Psychology*, vol. 64, no. 3, pp. 90-101, 2025.
- [9] Ä. Syghaï, *Kazakh culture: An encyclopedic reference*. Almaty: Aruna Ltd, 2005.
- [10] K. Kazibayev, "Shining like a spear... electronic resource," 2005. <https://on.kz/proza/kakimzan-qazybaev-naizagaidai-zarqyldap-51993>
- [11] F. Dostoevsky, *The idiot. Part II. Leningrad*. Nauka: Leningrad Branch, 1989.
- [12] E. Marat, *The military and the state in central Asia: From red army to independence*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- [13] K. A. Medeuova, "Prolonged sovietness" and transformations of collective memory: Soviet and post-soviet memorial complexes in Kazakhstan," 2025. https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/novoe_literaturnoe_obozrenie/161_nlo_1_2020/article/21982
- [14] K. M. Rees, "Recasting the nation: Transforming heroes of the Soviet Union into symbols of Kazakhstani patriotism," *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 39, no. 4, p. 445-462, 2020.
- [15] Monument to the Hero of the Soviet Union A. Moldagulova, "Monument to the hero of the Soviet Union A. Moldagulova," Electronic Resource, 2025. <https://aktobenasledie.kz/kk/kenges-odaghynyng-batryr-ae-moldaghulovagha-eskertkish/>
- [16] M. B. Kasymbekov, "Chronicle of activities 1996–1997", Electronic Resource, 2010. <https://e-history.kz/media/upload/55/2013/09/26/4a98aa1e2d77abf1adfa29680ad4c77e.pdf>
- [17] K. A. Medeuova et al., *Practices and places of memory in Kazakhstan*. Astana: L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University, 2017.
- [18] Azattyq, "Contribution of regions to the anniversary of Astana," Electronic Resource, 2018. <https://www.azattyq.org/a/astana-podarki-ot-oblastey/29250046.html>
- [19] E-history.kz, "Cultural and historical monuments of Nur-Sultan city," Electronic Resource, 2017. <https://e-history.kz/kz/news/show/32849>
- [20] K. Kuttymuratuly, "Monument to the Batyr-Arulargha was opened in the Urals electronic resource," Egemen Kazakhstan, 2017. <https://egemen.kz/article/154385-oralda-batyr-arulargha-eskertkish-ashyldy>
- [21] G. Kadyrova, "A monument to Manshuk Mametova was erected in Saikynda electronic resource," Zhaik Press, 2017. <https://zhaikpress.kz/kk/regionnews/saikynda-manshuk-mametovanyh-eskertkishi-ashyldy/>
- [22] Egemen Qazaqstan, "West Kazakhstan region presented a monument to Manshuk Mametova on the anniversary of Astana," Electronic Resource, 2018. <https://egemen.kz/article/167735-bqo-astananyh-mereytoynna-manshuk-mametovanyh-eskertkishin-sygyha-tartady>
- [23] M. Halbwachs, *On collective memory*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press., 1992.