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NARRATIVE STRATEGIES OF REPRESENTING HISTORICAL PERSONALITIES IN TEXTBOOKS ON THE MODERN HISTORY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract

In the context of the Republic of Kazakhstan's current educational policy, school textbooks serve not only as a source of knowledge but also as a key tool for constructing national identity. The relevance of this article stems from the need to analyze how images of historical figures are shaped in educational literature, influencing the historical memory and value orientations of young people in accordance with modern state educational development strategies.

The aim of this study is to identify and comparatively analyze narrative strategies for representing historical figures in Soviet and contemporary textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan. To achieve this goal, we quantified references to these figures, conducted a qualitative content analysis of texts and visuals, and compared textbook models from the Soviet and present periods.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in the application of an integrated approach combining a comparative historical method with digital data analysis technologies in the MAXQDA program.

The study's results demonstrate a shift in the representation of historical figures, moving from a previously dominant heroic approach to a more analytical one, focused on revealing the historical context and understanding the individual's contribution to the country's development. Modern textbooks offer a more pluralistic approach and include diverse sources of information, which facilitates a deeper understanding of historical processes and the role of great figures within them.

Keywords: narrative strategies, visual representation, historical figures, school textbook, modern history of Kazakhstan, content analysis

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ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ ЖАҢА ЗАМАН ТАРИХЫ ОҚУЛЫҚТАРДАҒЫ ТАРИХИ ТҮЛҒАЛАР БЕЙНЕЛЕУДІҢ НАРРАТИВТІК СТРАТЕГИЯЛАРЫ

Аңдатпа

Қазақстан Республикасының қазіргі білім беру саясаты аясында мектеп оқулықтары тек білім көзі ғана емес, сонымен қатар ұлттық бірегейлік қалыптастырудың негізгі құралы ретінде де қызмет етеді. Мақаланың өзектілігі оқу әдебиетінде тарихи тұлғалардың бейнелері қалай қалыптасатынын, жастардың тарихи жадысы мен құндылық бағдарларына әсер ету тектерін қазіргі мемлекеттік білім беруді дамыту стратегияларына сәйкес әсер ететінін талдау қажеттілігімен айқындалады.

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты - Қазақстанның жаңа заман тарихы бойынша кеңестік және қазіргі заманғы оқулықтарда тарихи тұлғаларды бейнелеудің нарративтік стратегияларын анықтау және салыстырмалы түрде талдау. Осы мақсатқа жету үшін аталымдардың сандық есебі, мәтіндер мен көрнекі материалдардың сапалық мазмұндық талдауы жүргізілді, кеңестік және қазіргі кезеңдегі оқулық модельдерін салыстыруы жасалынды.

Бұл зерттеудің ғылыми жаңалығы салыстырмалы тарихи әдіс пен деректерді цифрлық талдау технологиясындағы MAXQDA бағдарламасын біріктіретін интеграцияланған тәсілді қолдануда жатыр.

Зерттеу нәтижелері тарихи тұлғаларды бейнелеудегі өзгерісті көрсетеді. Бұрын басым болған батырлық тәсілден тарихи контексті ашуға және жеке тұлғаның елдің дамуына қосқан үлесін түсінуге бағытталған аналитикалық тәсілге ауысу байқалады. Қазіргі заман оқулықтары плюралистік тәсілді ұсынады және әртүрлі ақпарат дереккөздерін қамтиды, бұл тарихи процестерді және олардағы ұлы тұлғалардың рөлін тереңірек түсінуге көмектеседі.

Кілт сөздер: нарративтік стратегиялар, визуалды репрезентация, тарихи тұлғалар, мектеп оқулығы, Қазақстанның жаңа заман тарихы, контент-анализ.

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НАРРАТИВНЫЕ СТРАТЕГИИ РЕПРЕЗЕНТАЦИИ ИСТОРИЧЕСКИХ ПЕРСОНАЛИЙ В УЧЕБНИКАХ ПО НОВОЙ ИСТОРИИ КАЗАХСТАНА

Аннотация

В условиях современной образовательной политики Республики Казахстан школьный учебник выступает не только как источник знаний, но и как ключевой инструмент конструирования национальной идентичности. Актуальность статьи обусловлена необходимостью анализа того, как в учебной литературе формируются образы исторических деятелей, влияющие на историческую память и ценностные ориентиры молодежи в соответствии с современными государственными стратегиями развития образования.

Целью работы является выявление и сравнительный анализ нарративных стратегий репрезентации исторических личностей в советских и современных учебниках по новой истории Казахстана. Для достижения цели решены задачи по количественному подсчету упоминаний персоналий, проведению качественного контент-анализа текстов и визуального ряда, а также сопоставлению моделей учебников советского и современного периодов.

Научная новизна исследования заключается в применении комплексного подхода, сочетающего сравнительно-исторический метод с цифровыми технологиями анализа данных в программе MAXQDA.

Результаты исследования показывают изменение репрезентации образа исторических деятелей с ранее доминирующего героического подхода на более аналитический, ориентированный на раскрытие исторического контекста и осмысление вклада личностей в развитие страны. Современные учебники предлагают более плюралистический подход и включают разнообразные источники информации, что способствует более глубокому пониманию исторических процессов и роли великих людей в них.

Ключевые слова: нарративные стратегии, визуальная репрезентация, исторические персоналии, школьный учебник, новая история Казахстана, контент-анализ

Introduction. The study of narrative strategies used to represent historical figures has become increasingly important in the context of global sociocultural transformations and ongoing reconfiguration of historical consciousness. In Kazakhstan's modern educational environment, school textbooks are no longer merely conveyors of facts but are becoming a key tool for constructing national identity and historical memory. According to the "Concept for the Development of Preschool, Secondary, Technical, and Vocational Education in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2023–2029" [1], one of the priority tasks is to instill in students the values of patriotism and critical thinking through the updating of the content of humanities disciplines. Historian and writer Mark Ferro also noted that “history as it is told to children... allows us to simultaneously learn both what a society thinks of itself and how its situation changes over time” [2, p.5].

Visualization and the narrative structure of educational materials play a special role in this process. Modern schoolchildren, as members of the "digital generation" tend to be especially receptive to visual materials and structured narrative formats. The development of a lasting historical memory directly depends on how convincingly and emotionally the images of outstanding figures are presented in educational literature, which resonates with the ideas of the national project "Birth of the Fatherland" [3], aimed at fostering civic and critical thinking through the interpretation of historical figures.

This article presents a comparative analysis of the ways in which images of historical figures are constructed and communicated in Soviet and post-Soviet textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan.

The subject of the study is the content of school textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan as the primary means of developing students' historical consciousness and national identity. The study focuses on the content of school textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan, with particular attention to the narrative strategies and representational mechanisms – such as textual framing, interpretive models and visual imagery – used to depict historical figures.

The study aims to examine how the textual and extra-textual components of a textbook interact to form a holistic understanding of the "personality of the Great Steppe". The significance of the study lies in examining the relationship between state educational standards and actual practices of representing historical figures in educational literature. Ultimately, an analysis of these strategies will allow for the development of recommendations for improving the visual and semantic content of textbooks in line with the current objectives of the educational policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Materials and Methods. The research materials comprise from 27 textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan, spanning the Soviet and post-Soviet periods 1959 to 2025. The choice of chronological framework is determined by the beginning of the mass teaching of the history of Kazakhstan in schools (1959) and the publication of the latest generation of textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan (2025), approved by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Reprints of school textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan during these years, which did not

contain changes, were collected into a single analytical unit to maintain the representativeness of the sample. Across the 27 analyzed textbooks, a total of 777 illustrations were identified, 246 of which portraits of historical figures. The textbook texts were processed to identify information on historical figures.

The study utilizes a comparative historical method to identify the dynamics of transformation in narrative strategies for representing historical figures during the transition from the Soviet to the modern Kazakhstani education model. This method is used to compare the ways in which individuals are represented in textbooks across different chronological periods, allowing us to trace the evolution of ideological assessments and emphases.

The main tool for collecting empirical data is quantitative and qualitative content analysis of the text component of textbooks, implemented using specialized software MAXQDA. The criterion for developing the coding systems (code list) was the frequency of references to specific historical figures in textbook paragraphs. Numerical values were assigned to these textual elements for analysis. This research article analyzed all types of text components in the textbooks under review: primary, secondary, and explanatory. The use of quantitative analysis in MAXQDA allows for an objective assessment of the "information density coefficient" and the frequency of mentions of specific individuals, which minimizes the researcher's subjectivity [4, p. 14]. Qualitative analysis aims to study discursive models, such as political, social, and everyday history, through which the biographies of figures are revealed. In conducting the analysis, researchers may want to consider "the balance of content, visual design, and assessment strategies to better support the development of students' historical thinking skills and a comprehensive historical worldview" [5, p. 231].

Attention is given to the method of visual semiotic analysis, integrated into the overall strategy of content analysis. Visual images are considered not simply as illustrations but as independent narratives capable of "making human experience less abstract" and conveying hidden social messages [6].

The content analysis of the text component was carried out selectively and covered the textbooks "History of the Kazakh SSR - The selected textbooks are: "A Textbook for Grades 7-8" by E.B. Bekmakhanov (1963) [7], "History of Kazakhstan (18th-19th Centuries) - a Textbook for Grades 8(7)" by Z.E. Kabuldinov et al. (2018) [8]. This approach is due to the significant volume of text material and the need for an in-depth analysis of narrative structures. The selected textbooks are representative examples of two fundamentally different stages in the development of school history education: Soviet and modern. The 1963 textbook reflects the established Soviet canon of interpreting the history of Kazakhstan, while the 2018 edition demonstrates a stable model of post-Soviet historical narrative. A comparative analysis of these textbooks allows us to identify systemic changes in the textual representation of historical figures.

A comprehensive approach to studying the visual and textual materials of school textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan ensures the verifiability of results and allows for a deeper interpretation of the mechanisms of historical memory formation [9]. Thus, the synthesis of quantitative calculations and qualitative interpretation of text and visual materials provides a multidimensional study of the representation of individuals in educational literature.

Discussion. The study of school textbooks is an independent direction in historiography. Research can be divided into several key areas focused on the analysis of content, visual images and the role of individuals in the formation of identity.

The first group of studies is devoted to the development of tools for assessing the content of textbooks. A.A. Sotnikov pays attention to the degree of development of the methodology for quantitative content analysis of textbooks on the history of the USSR in modern historiography [4]. The author proposes a variant of quantitative analysis of the extra-textual component of a school textbook and its classification, based on the implemented practices of application. The concept of the "Information Load Coefficient" is introduced, which in turn is an inverse correlation indicator: "the higher the Information Load Coefficient, the more illustrations are used in the textbook, the less information redundancy, the less textual overload of the textbook" [4, pp. 13-14]. One of the most recent studies in the field of applying new quantitative approaches to the analysis of school textbooks

is a publication by Mashhad Nasr Esfahani. Instead of the traditional method of content analysis, the author proposes an approach based on natural language processing (NLP) [10].

Another group of scholars analyzes textbooks as an element of state historical memory policy. E.O. Petrenko notes that since Kazakhstan's independence, the interpretation of events in textbooks of different generations has changed, becoming an indicator of changes in state policy on the formation of national and state identity [11, p. 21]. V. V. Klyuchareva examines modern Kazakhstan history textbooks through the prism of "memory studies" technologies, comparing the Soviet and modern periods. She identifies changes in the terminology that shape the perception of the country's "tragic past" [12, p. 100].

Central to historiography is the analysis of images of specific figures and the methods of their teaching. Several works are devoted to the use of a biographical approach in the teaching of history. Thus, R.Zh. Kilash, in his dissertation research (2025), develops a model for the formation of knowledge about a historical figure using the example of figures of the 19th and 20th centuries. The author examines the theoretical and methodological foundations of knowledge formation, the levels and elements of this process. His work also includes an analysis of domestic historiography and emphasizes the importance of using biographies to develop a competitive personality [13]. G. Batyrbekkyzy examines the problems of researching national figures, emphasizing that the study of the Kazakh intelligentsia of the Soviet period is important for the popularization of "personalities of the Great Steppe" and the formation of Kazakhstani patriotism [14].

An important part of contemporary research on the visual narrative of textbooks is devoted to the topic of gender. A. Chiponda and J. Wassermann analyze Malawi textbooks using feminist theory. They argue that women are often underrepresented or shown in a subordinate position, which conveys certain social messages [6]. C. Woyschner and J.B. Schocker examine the representation of black women in American history textbooks using the method of content analysis to identify hidden narrative strategies and stereotypes [9]. C. Diaz-Lara et al. conclude that images of women were predominantly associated with additional information blocks, while images of men were noticeably linked to the main text [15]. In Kazakhstani research, the issue of women's biographies is also highlighted as a specific area of research within the framework of the general process of forming knowledge about historical figures.

Results. The first stage of the study involved a quantitative content analysis of illustrative material in textbooks on the Modern History of Kazakhstan across various generations (1959–2025). The analysis covered the total number of illustrations and the number of portraits as indicators of the visual personalization of the historical narrative (Fig. 1). The analysis reveals that the visual component is limited in textbooks from the Soviet period (1959–1981). The total number of illustrations in most publications does not exceed 10–20, indicating the predominance of a text-centric approach to presenting historical material.

Post-Soviet textbooks have seen a steady increase in the use of visuals. For example, in textbooks published in the early 2000s, the total number of illustrations increased to 32–43, while in editions published between 2012 and 2025, it reached 70–158. The results show an increase in using visual materials in two generations of textbooks. As we see on the bar graph, in Soviet textbooks their number fluctuates from 2 to 10 and doesn't have influence on the explanation of the topics while the number of illustrations in the post-Soviet era jump exponentially. As we see, the portraits of historical figures enhance the personalization of historical processes in the schools textbooks.

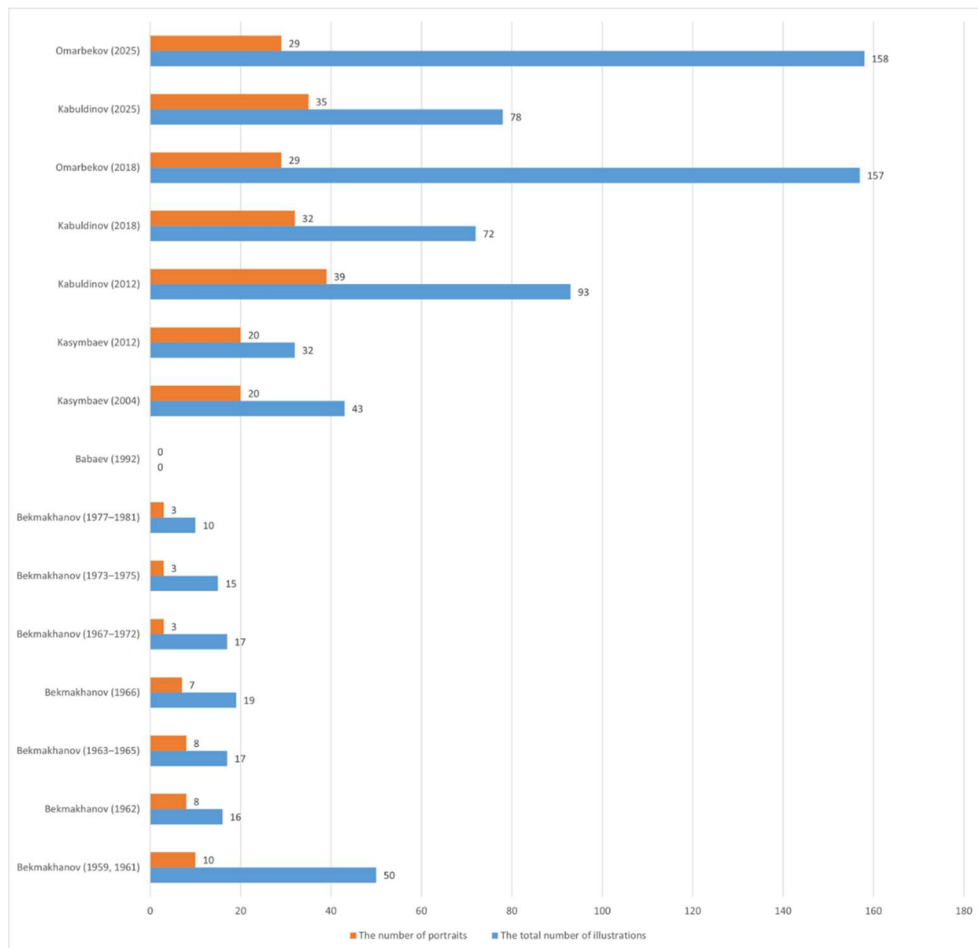


Fig. 1. Number of illustrations in textbooks on the history of Kazakhstan (1959-2025)

The chart (Fig.2) below gives information about frequency of portrait images in the Kazakhstan modern history textbooks printed between 1959-2025. The result of analysis shows us that some portraits used consistently while others used rarely. The first level are the portraits are: Abay Kunanbaev (20 illustrations), Ybyrai Altynsarin (17 illustrations), Shokan Ualikhanov (15 illustrations). These historical figures used plenty times in all textbooks analyzed in this research which means canonization and increasing of their role as key visual marker in textbooks of the modern history of Kazakhstan. The portraits of these figures serve not only as an illustrative but also as a normative function, forming in students a stable understanding of the "essential" figures of national history.

The second level of the visual hierarchy consists of figures with a medium frequency of representation (five to seven illustrations). This group includes Taras Shevchenko, Abulhair Khan, Zhangir Khan, Kenessary Khan, Bukhar Zhyrau, Makhambet Utemisov, Kurmangazy, Mashkhur-Zhusup Kopeyuly. These figures are regularly included in the visual series of textbooks, but they are inferior to the canonical core in terms of frequency of repetition. Their portraits typically accompany specific thematic blocks and reflect the priorities of the nationally oriented historical narrative, which has become stronger in the post-Soviet period.

A significant number of individuals are represented by a limited number of portraits (two to four illustrations). This group includes political and cultural figures of the 19th and early 20th centuries, including Asan bi, Otkel bi, Isatay Taimanov, Agybai batyr, Zhankozha batyr, Zhayau Musa, and Akhan-sere, as well as representatives of the intelligentsia — A. Baitursynov, M. Dulatov, A.Bokeikhanov, and I. Gasprinsky. In these cases, the portrait serves primarily as a supporting function, illustrating a specific plot or section without creating a stable visual image of the individual.

On the periphery of the visual narrative are individuals depicted singularly or twice, including individual figures from the Soviet period and regional representatives of the administrative elite.

Their visual presence is localized and typically conditioned by the author's conception of a specific textbook or the historical context of its publication.

Particularly noteworthy are the collective and family images presented in the textbooks as a distinct type of visual material. Group portraits and family scenes (for example, images of Abay with his sons, the Shormanov family, and Duisenbai kazhy) do not reinforce the individual canonization of the individual, but rather serve to socialize and contextualize the image, shifting the emphasis from the individual hero to their surroundings and social environment.

Thus, an analysis of the frequency of portrait images demonstrates that the visuals in school textbooks on the Modern History of Kazakhstan are formed according to a hierarchical principle, within which a limited number of individuals form a stable visual canon, while many historical figures are represented fragmentarily. Portraits in textbooks serve not as neutral illustrations but as an important tool of narrative representation, enabling the selection, emphasis, and symbolic reinforcement of specific images of the historical past.

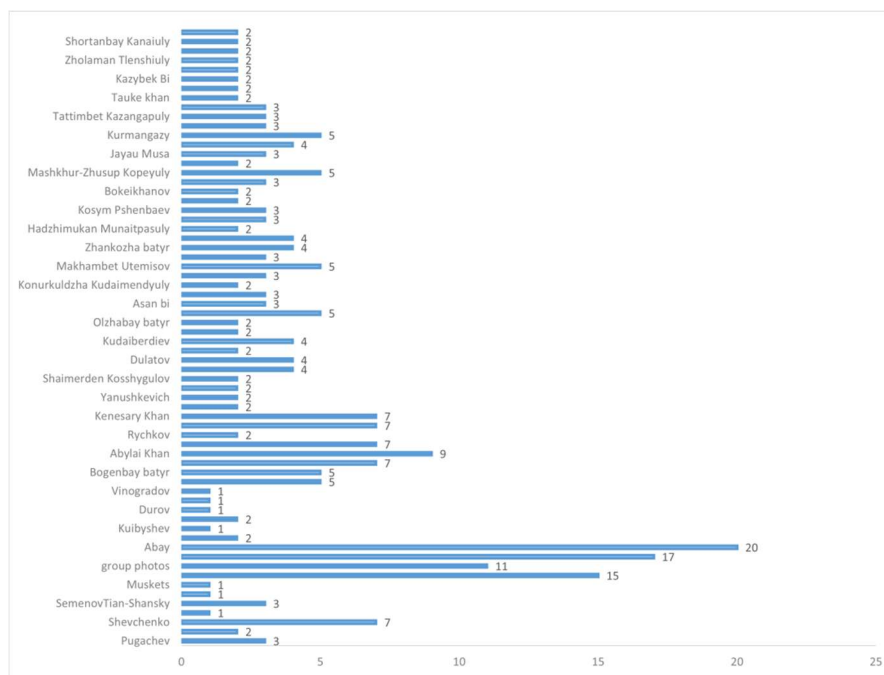


Fig. 2. Frequency of use of portraits of historical figures in textbooks on the history of Kazakhstan (1959-2025)

The next stage of the study involves moving from a statistical review of visual materials to a qualitative analysis of textual representational strategies. The most representative examples of educational literature from the Soviet and modern eras were selected as the empirical base: textbooks by Bekmakhanov (1963) and Kabuldinov (2018), which reflect stable models of the Soviet and modern stages of development of school history education.

Comparing these narratives will demonstrate the evolution of interpretive models used to describe historical figures. A quantitative text analysis identified key historical figures in the history of Kazakhstan in the two textbooks, represented as codes in the diagram. The analysis is presented as a "document portrait" demonstrating the number of references to each historical figure (Figures 3-6). A textual analysis of school textbooks on the Modern History of Kazakhstan was conducted using content analysis methods and MaxQDA software. Key historical figures were coded as separate analytical categories, allowing for the frequency of their mentions to be determined and the dominant narrative strategies in the texts to be identified.

An analysis of E. B. Bekmakhanov's 1963 textbook reveals the dominance of cultural, scientific, and educational figures in the text's narrative. The largest proportion of references goes to Sh. Ualikhanov (14%), Abay Kunanbayev (13%), and M. Utemisov (13%). These figures form the core

of the text and are used primarily to illustrate processes of cultural development, the dissemination of progressive ideas, and the formation of public consciousness. Moreover, the references are distributed relatively evenly, indicating the absence of a rigid hierarchy of personalities.

A characteristic feature of the 1963 textbook is its limited attention to political leaders and representatives of the khan's authority. Historical figures are included in the narrative primarily as elements of broader socioeconomic and cultural processes, rather than as independent actors in historical action. This narrative structure reflects a focus on the depersonalization of power and is consistent with the ideological and methodological principles of Soviet historiography.

A different narrative model is evident in Z. E. Kabuldinov's 2018 textbook. According to content analysis, the text is characterized by a high degree of personalization and a pronounced hierarchy of historical figures. The most frequently mentioned characters are Ablai Khan (19%) and Kenessary Kassymuly (16%), who occupy a central place in the narrative and are presented as key actors in the political and national liberation processes. Sh. Ualikhanov ranks third in frequency of mentions (12%), indicating a partial retention of elements of the cultural and educational canon while simultaneously shifting the semantic emphasis.

The concentration of references to a limited circle of political leaders indicates a shift toward a personalized and nationally oriented narrative, in which historical figures serve not only as bearers of cultural values but also as symbols of statehood, struggle, and historical continuity. Unlike the Soviet textbook, the 2018 edition emphasizes the role of the individual subject as the driving force behind the historical process.

A comparative analysis of the two textbooks reveals fundamental changes in the textual representation of historical figures. While the 1963 textbook is dominated by a model focused on describing collective processes and cultural development, the 2018 textbook demonstrates a stronger personalistic approach and a clear hierarchization of historical figures. This shift reflects a transformation in historiographical and educational priorities associated with a rethinking of national history and the role of the individual in the historical narrative.

Thus, the textual component of school textbooks on the Modern History of Kazakhstan acts not as a neutral source of information, but as an active tool for the narrative construction of the past. The frequency of references to historical figures allows us to identify hidden semantic emphases and shifting document strategies for interpreting history depending on the socio-political and ideological context.

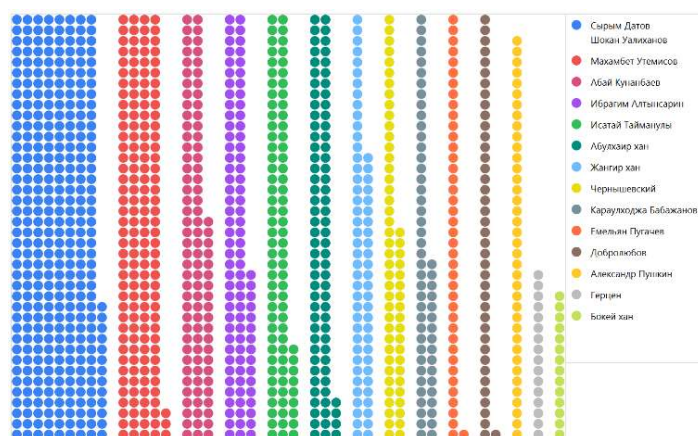


Fig. 3. Portrait of the document "Educational manual for grades 7-8 "History of the Kazakh SSR" by E.B. Bekmakhanov, 1963." Data visualization MaxQDA, 2025.

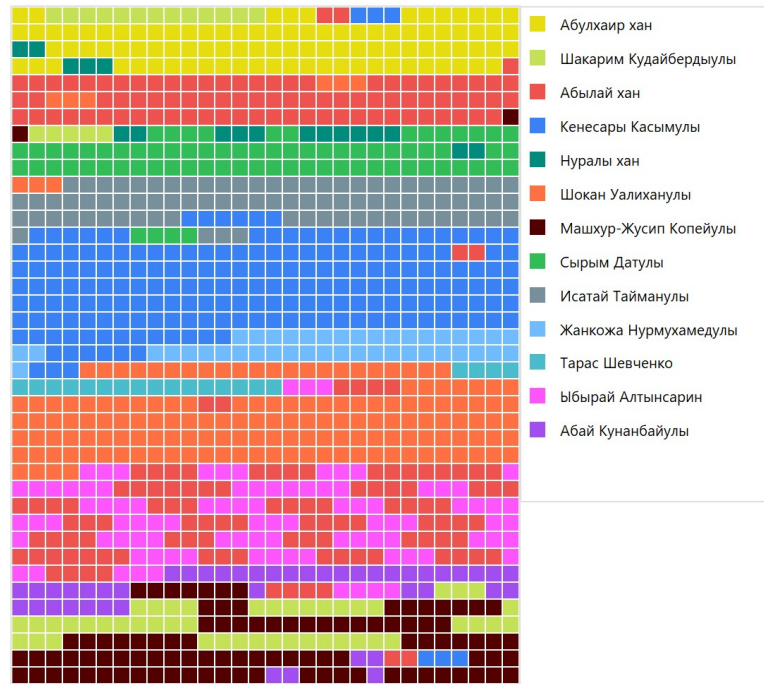


Fig. 4. Portrait of the document "Kabuldinov Z. E. History of Kazakhstan (XVIII-XIX centuries). Textbook for grades 8(7) of comprehensive schools. " 2018. Data visualization MaxQDA, 2025.



Fig. 5. Coded segments document "Educational manual for grades 7-8 "History of the Kazakh SSR" 1963 by E.B. Bekmakhanov" in percentage terms. Data visualization MaxQDA, 2025.

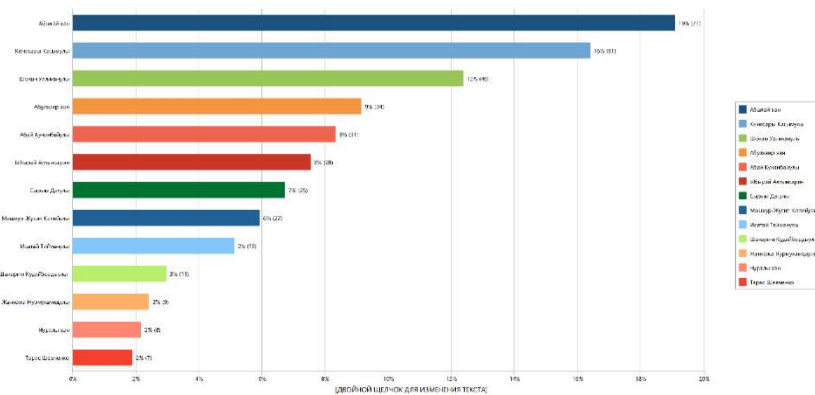


Fig. 6. Visualization of MaxQDA data, 2025. Coded segments document "Kabuldinov Z. E. History of Kazakhstan (18th–19th centuries). Textbook for grades 8(7) of comprehensive schools. 2018"

Let's examine the interpretation of Sh. Ualikhanov's image in Bekmakhanov's textbook and Kabuldinov's textbook. In E. B. Bekmakhanov's 1963 textbook, Ualikhanov's textual representation

is structured within the logic of a cultural and educational narrative. In the relevant sections, he is presented primarily as a scholar, researcher, and representative of the progressive intelligentsia, whose activities fit within the context of the scientific exploration and description of Kazakhstan in the second half of the 19th century. The frequency of Ualikhanov's references in the text testifies to his significance; however, he is not singled out as a political actor or an independent subject of historical transformations but is included in a broader process of cultural and scientific development. In Bekmakhanov's textbook, Ualikhanov is presented to Soviet schoolchildren in Kazakhstan as a fighter for the freedom of his people and an opponent of religion, a supporter of friendship between the Kazakh and Russian peoples. Biographical information is considered only in the context of his adoption of advanced Russian education: he graduated from the Omsk Cadet Corps and interacted with Russian scientists and writers such as Dostoevsky, Mendeleev, and Semyonov-Tyanshansky. Sh. Ualikhanov's personal qualities are not presented, but his image is generally mythologized to convey the idea of class struggle and friendship among peoples, which should be emulated by Kazakh Soviet schoolchildren.

This narrative is visually reinforced by a portrait of Sh. Ualikhanov in a cadet uniform. (Chapter 10) [7, p. 49], executed in a documentary-photographic manner. The composition of the image is distinguished by its staticity and neutrality: the figure is depicted frontally, without dynamics or pronounced attributes of action. The cadet uniform marks institutional affiliation and emphasizes Ualikhanov's inclusion in the imperial educational space. The visual image does not emphasize individual charisma or political subjectivity, but, on the contrary, promotes depersonalization and the "embedding" of the personality within the framework of official and scientific contexts. Thus, the portrait serves as a visual confirmation of the textual narrative, reinforcing the image of Ualikhanov as a bearer of scientific knowledge and a representative of the enlightened elite.

In Z. E. Kabuldinov's 2018 textbook, the textual representation of Sh. Ualikhanov retains an emphasis on his scholarly and educational work, but at the same time strengthens the personalized component of the narrative. Ualikhanov is presented not only as a researcher but also as a significant figure in national history, possessing independent historical value. His name is included in the hierarchy of key figures, reflecting the general trend toward personalizing historical narratives in modern textbooks. In Kabuldinov's textbook, a paired paragraph (47-48) is dedicated specifically to Ualikhanov. Here, the scholar's childhood and youth are described in detail. It is noted that Ualikhanov belonged to a sultan's family, which contributed to his high-quality education, as Russian artists, topographers, and surveyors often stayed in their home, from whom he learned the basics of drawing, a skill that later played a role in his scientific research. He was allowed to attend the biys' conversations and listen to the songs of akyns. The exiled Decembrists contributed to the formation of young Shokan's worldview, as did progressively minded members of the Russian intelligentsia during his years in Omsk. Among his personal qualities, emphasis is placed on his hard work, discipline, and desire to acquire in-depth knowledge. His patriotism and interest in Kazakh folklore are emphasized, which laid the foundations for his scientific work and led to the high esteem in which he was held by the tsarist authorities. The historical role of Sh. Ualikhanov in the 2018 Kazakhstan modern history textbook is highlighted through his contribution to the development of science and his recognition in the global scientific community. His major scientific works, participation in expeditions, lectures, and other activities are listed. Thus, we see a focus on his positive traits and achievements, with the goal of creating an image symbolic of national and cultural identity.

This transformation is also reflected in visual representation. The 2018 textbook uses the canonized portrait of Sh. Ualikhanov [8, p.73], executed as a formal image with a high degree of individualization. The clear facial delineation, expressive gaze, and carefully constructed composition imbue the image with features of personal completeness and symbolic significance. Unlike the 1963 documentary portrait, this image does not capture social status so much as construct a stable visual image of the national intellectual.

A comparative analysis reveals that in both textbooks, the portrait of Sh. Ualikhanov is consistent with the textual narrative but serves different functions. In the 1963 textbook, the visual

image contributes to the depoliticization and institutionalization of the individual, whereas in the 2018 edition, the portrait becomes a tool for canonization and symbolic anchoring of the image in national historical discourse. Thus, the visual representation of Sh. Ualikhanov evolves from a documentary, official image to a personalized and canonical one, reflecting a broader shift in the narrative strategies of school textbooks on the modern history of Kazakhstan.

In E. B. Bekmakhanov's 1963 textbook, Abay Kunanbayev is presented within the subsection "Poet-educator Abay Kunanbayev" [7, p. 52], which sets a clear interpretative framework for his image. In Bekmakhanov's textbook, he also appears as a fighter for the people's freedom and the initiator of the dissemination of official Russian culture. There is no information about his works, only about the translation of Russian classical works into Kazakh.

The visual representation of Abay in the 1963 textbook is a photograph depicting him with his son, Turagul. The composition of the photograph is static: the figures are positioned frontally; their poses are calm and balanced. Abay's body, with a characteristic hand gesture, creates a stable visual image that emphasizes his status as the eldest and central figure in the composition. The presence of his son does not shift the focus from the main figure, but rather reinforces the image's hierarchy, in which Abay is the dominant element.

In Z. E. Kabuldinov's 2018 textbook, the textual representation of Abay unfolds in paragraphs 51–52 and is characterized by a more pronounced evaluative vocabulary, in particular the definition "great poet and thinker." In Kabuldinov's textbook, a paired paragraph (51–52) is devoted to Abay, which, like Sh. Ualikhanov's paragraph, details his childhood and youth, including his interactions with representatives of the progressive Russian intelligentsia. Abay's work is assessed not only as a translator, but also as a poet and writer, educator, and public figure.

The 2018 textbook's visuals include both a portrait of Abay [8, p.185] and a photograph of him with his sons Akylbay and Turagul [8, p. 189]. Crucially, all images retain a similar compositional scheme. Abay's body position, posture, and gestures are reproduced almost identically: a seated figure, a calm frontal orientation, and the characteristic position of his hands. Even with the different image formats, Abay's visual image remains consistent and easily recognizable.

Thus, the analysis shows that the visual representation of Abay Kunanbayev is characterized by a high degree of compositional stability. Regardless of the textbook's publication period and the context in which the image is used, a single, canonical visual template is maintained, in which Abay is presented as a central, balanced, and dominant figure. The presence of family images in both textbooks does not alter this template but rather expands the context of its interpretation without disrupting the image's stability.

A comparison of the textual and visual levels suggests coherence between the narrative strategies. In the Soviet textbook, image is anchored within the framework of educational discourse, while in the modern textbook, they are anchored within the national-cultural canon. However, the visual representation demonstrates continuity and stability. The repetition of pose, composition, and overall visual design indicates the development of a stable image of Abay, which functions as a recognizable and normative element of the school historical narrative.

In Kabuldinov's 2018 textbook, the key historical figures presented quantitatively are the political figures Ablai Khan and Kenessary Kasymov. Kenessary Kasymov's name was taboo during the Soviet era. Kenessary Kassymuly (1802–1847), the grandson of Khan Abylai, was the leader of the national liberation movement in 1837–1847, which was interpreted in Soviet historiography as "feudal-monarchical" uprising and Kenessary Khan was described as "a cruel ruler who does not care about the interests of the common people" [7, p. 78]. In 1948, a work entitled "Kazakhstan in the 1820s–1840s" was published by E.B. Bekmakhanov, which examined the liberation movement led by Kenessary Kassymuly. At the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Kazakhstan on August 28, 1951, the Minister of Education of the Kazakh SSR, Comrade A.I. Sembayev, in his report "New Tasks in the New Year", considered the article of the newspaper "Pravda" "For Marxist-Leninist Coverage of the Issues of the History of Kazakhstan" to be correct, because it exposes the bourgeois-nationalist error of Bekmakhanov in the anti-Marxist coverage of the feudal-monarchist movement of Kenessary Kasymov, who declared the reactionary

feudal-monarchist movement of the strangler of the Kazakh people, Khan Kenessary Kasymov, a national liberation and popular uprising of the 19th century, which allegedly had a "progressive character". "Already in December 1952, after discussions of this study, E.B. Bekmakhanov was accused of "bourgeois nationalism" [16, p. 49]. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Thanks to the intervention of colleagues (in particular, M.A. Pankratova), E.B. Bekmakhanov was released in February 1954."

In Kabuldinov's textbook, as in other textbooks of the independence period, Bekmakhanov's point of view was accepted; a paired paragraph 25-26 is devoted to the national liberation movement led by Kenessary Kassymuly. Here, Kenessary Kassymuly is presented not as a cruel ruler, but as "an outstanding person in all respects, who stood far above his comrades" [8, p. 91]. "K. Kassymuly remained in the people's memory as an outstanding military leader, a major organizer, and a prominent statesman. Under the conditions of the abolition of the khan's authority, he practically succeeded in uniting all three zhuzes and restoring Kazakh statehood. Representatives of the tsarist administration and Russian researchers also treated him with respect, calling him the "rebellious sultan" and "Mithridates of the Kyrgyz steppe" [8, p. 97].

This study devotes special attention to the example of Khan Tauke. An analysis of the representation of this outstanding statesman allows us to uncover specific narrative strategies: from the emphasis on legislative activity in Soviet historiography to the construction of the image of a "wise ruler-consolidator" in modern textbooks.

Soviet textbooks tended to interpret the policies of the khans primarily through the lens of sharua exploitation by feudal lords. Thus, "Khan Tauke (1680-1780) compiled a set of laws known as the "Laws of Tauke Khan". These laws further worsened the peasants' situation. They protected the interests of the feudal lords and contributed to the strengthening of the khan's power. Tauke's laws encouraged the ruinous exploitation of the peasants" [7, p. 19].

A modern textbook (2018 edition) states: "During the reign of Khan Tauke, Kazakhstan was a centralized state characterized by political stability, law enforcement, and less frequent interclan and intertribal conflicts. Major conflicts were resolved through the mediation of authoritative biys. Disagreements over the distribution of pasture lands and water sources were resolved" [8, p. 5].

A comparative analysis of the descriptions of Khan Tauke's policies in Soviet and modern textbooks demonstrates differences in the interpretation of his reign and political decisions.

The textbook (1963 edition) characterizes the khans' policies as aimed at increasing the exploitation of the people. The primary focus is on the negative consequences for the workers-the sharua. The exploitative nature of Tauke Khan's rule and his laws is emphasized. It is claimed that the "Zhety Zhargy" worsened the situation of ordinary Kazakhs by supporting the interests of feudal lords and strengthening the khan's power.

The textbook (2018 edition) characterizes the reign of Khan Tauke as a period of political stability and centralized governance. The text emphasizes law enforcement and the reduction of interclan and intertribal conflicts. The presence of authoritative biys (governors) who facilitated the resolution of major conflicts is emphasized. The primary focus is on the positive aspects of governance, such as stabilization and centralized governance.

The Soviet approach emphasizes the social and economic problems faced by peasants (as the Kazakhs, or Sharua, were called in the textbook, while the modern approach focuses on the political and social stability that prevailed under the reign of Tauke Khan. The Soviet textbook focuses on criticizing the feudal system, reflecting the ideology of the time. A modern textbook may strive for a more objective and neutral description of historical facts.

Thus, differences in the interpretation of the history of Khan Tauke reflect changes in historical approaches and ideological views on his reign.

Conclusion. The conducted study of narrative strategies for representing historical figures in textbooks on modern history of Kazakhstan allows us to draw several fundamental conclusions. The application of quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods in the MaxQDA program confirmed the hypothesis of a significant transformation in approaches to describing historical

figures: the class-oriented models of the Soviet period have been replaced by strategies aimed at shaping national and state identity and a "personally oriented" history.

The portrayal of historical figures in textbooks varies significantly depending on the political situation and educational goals of the time. The content analysis of textbooks makes clear the difference of interpretation images of historical figures because of political situation and ideology.

The image of main historical figures in the Bekmakhanov's textbooks are supporting the ideology of the Soviet Union as we can see in the representation of Abay Kunanbayev's and Sh. Ualikhanov's ideas and achievements. Here we can see the glorification and idealization of historical figures as key persons in educational and cultural upsurge, their struggle against feudalism.

In Kabuldinov's textbook the image of personalities is more difficult. The focus made on their biographies and inner qualities. As an example, Sh. Ualikhanov's image is built as patriotic, hardworking man with his contribution in science.

Thus, changes in the portrayal of historical figures in modern Kazakhstan history textbooks published and used in teaching from the mid- 20th to the early 21st centuries reflect not only political and ideological changes but also the evolution of educational approaches. The importance of continually analyzing and revising educational materials to ensure their relevance and objectivity is clear. The methodology for presenting famous people in textbooks has changed. The previously dominant heroic approach is now being replaced by an analytical one, emphasizing the historical context and the influence of these individuals on the country's development. Modern textbooks offer diverse perspectives and include a variety of sources of information, facilitating a deeper understanding of historical processes and the role of historical figures within them.

To conclude, a comparative analysis of history textbooks showed us different strategies on construction images of historical figures. It is important to examine the impact of new educational standards and technologies on the representation of historical figures in the future. It is also necessary to update the methods of presenting educational material to better align them with contemporary educational policy requirements and public demand.

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