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978-1-107-12968-9 - The Social Process of Globalization: Return Migration and Cultural Change in Kazakhstan

Douglas W. Blum

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## The Social Process of Globalization

It is often argued that globalization fosters “hybridity,” as some cultural imports are accepted, while others are “localized,” and others still are rejected outright. Yet we know relatively little about the social processes and mechanisms involved in cultural globalization. This book offers an empirically rich and theoretically compelling analysis of how cultural globalization occurs, including the structural conditions, personal meanings, and social interactions associated with various outcomes. Providing a detailed analysis of the experiences of young people from Kazakhstan who lived in the United States temporarily, the author asks, how do return migrants react to cultural differences in America, and what changes do they try to incorporate into their lives back in Kazakhstan? What kinds of negotiations ensue, and what explains their success or failure? In answering these questions, Douglas W. Blum combines insights from sociology and anthropology along with specialized research on globalization, migration, and post-Soviet studies.

DOUGLAS W. BLUM is Professor of Political Science at Providence College. His current research focuses on the connections between globalization and identity in the former USSR, and his publications include *National Identity and Globalization: Youth, State, and Society in Post-Soviet Eurasia* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

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## Return Migration and Cultural Change in Kazakhstan

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This book emerged over many years, as I tried to grasp the enormity of cultural globalization on a theoretical as well as a personal level.

Traveling around the former Soviet space always made my mind reel with wonder at the changes unfolding in every sphere of life, and how various individuals struggled to come to terms with them. And Kazakhstan became a place where I felt inspired to dig deeper, both because of the rapidity of cultural change and because of the welcoming, good-natured, and intelligent people I kept meeting wherever I went, who were so endlessly accessible and encouraging. I grew to feel comfortable in Kazakhstan, in a way that seemed indispensable for the sort of ethnographic fieldwork I needed to do in order to answer the questions I had.

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