



RECOVERING VOICES

Seminar Series in
Endangered Languages and
Indigenous Knowledge

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NMNH, Kerby Room

Recovering and preserving the richness of Central Asian Nomads: The Challenges for Public Memory

A major characteristic of Kazakh nomadic civilization is that in difficult climactic conditions, people kept in harmony with nature, and created economic symbiosis between urban and rural environments. However, extinction of this culture occurred due to conquest by the Russian Empire, the proletarian revolution, the Soviet agricultural policy and orders that brought about the Great Famine of the 1930s, World War II and development of virgin lands. It is important to preserve and understand all components of past nomadic life, as its spiritual values are an integral part of worldwide history. Most of the archival documents held at the Central State Archive of Cinema and Photography relate to pre-Independence and the Soviet period. Though American travelers made a significant contribution in preserving Kazakh history, the Archive have none of these materials. Through the study of archival documents in the U.S., Kazakh nomadic heritage can be preserved.



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