CHAPTER-3

KAZAKHSTAN: THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The territory of Kazakhstan had been inhabited as early as the age of lower Palaeolith. The ancient man settled down on the Karatau lands. There is evidence of ancient settlement in the Stone Age. In the centuries of the middle and upper Palaeolith, the man came to master the Central and Eastern Kazakhstan and the Mangyshlak area.\(^1\) Finds of the Mounterian and even earlier periods have been discovered from the Talas and Jambul area of Kazakhstan and from Tashik Tash in southern Uzbekistan. Many Central Asian tribes for example, those of the Jeitun settlement in southern Turkmenia, were cultivators and herdsmen in the Neolithic period. Cultivators of land were known to the Anau culture in southern, Turkmenia in the fourth millennium B.C.\(^2\)

The Early Period

The Saks (also known as the Scythians) were the first historically significant regional cultural group to occupy the area in the 1st millennium B.C. Originating in Iran, the Saks developed an empire that encompassed much of Central Asia and southern Russia, including the territory around the Black and Caspian seas. They were a nomadic people who were known as skillful equestrians and warriors.\(^3\) One of Kazakhstan’s most celebrated artefacts is the gold, ceremonial coat of armor of a Sak warrior, popularly known as the “Golden Man.” The warrior’s remains were found in a treasure-laden tomb in southeastern Kazakhstan.\(^4\)

In the 2nd century B.C, control of eastern Kazakhstan fell to the Usun (Wusun), a group of Turkic-speaking Mongol tribes from the east. They were a mixture of nomads and sedentary farmers.\(^5\) The Usun were likely related to the Huns, a tribal confederation of nomadic pastoralists and warriors who migrated throughout Central Asia during this time.\(^6\) After expanding westward from the Central Asian steppes, the Huns’ empire collapsed following the death of their leader, the notorious warrior, Attila, in 453 B.C.\(^7\) Kazakhstan became an area favoured by nomads. Archeologists revealed dwellings,
numerous hand-made articles of stone and ivory, which were present in the ancient history and archeology of Kazakhstan. Since then, it has been continuously involved in the rise and fall of the so-called ‘empires of the steppes’ and with the proto-Turkic and proto Mongol population.

The Kazakh people used to travel from place to place following warm weather. Each kin group had its own routes, which other kin groups were not permitted to follow. There was also a relatively strict system of land-utilization and land ownership which was seasonally determined. Winter months were considered to be the most difficult. Livestock was fed on pastusage, and the starvation happening due to scarcity of grass in the harsh winter climate which is known as ‘Jut’ in Kazakhstan. Catastrophic Juts usually occurred once every 10-12 years and thoroughly devastated the nomadic economy of the Kazakhs. Some Kazakhs also engaged in agriculture, especially on the rich lands of Syr Darya, Tala, Chu river valley on the edge of the Allai mountains, in the Irtysk valley, and in the Zaisan depression. However even in these areas, nomadic livestock breeding remained dominant.

At that time the inhabitants were also might warriors and used handled combat chariots. They also used bronze to manufacture axes, knives, draggers and various decoration thereof. Among them were Zhezkazgan and Sayok copper quarries. Ancient people lived in large settlements and ancient towns surrounded with wall and fosses. Other contemporary cultures which had reached high level of farming and urban life were those of Bactria and Sogdiana. The people of steppe region were aware of irrigation in the Bronze Age 11 thousand years before the Christian era.

The ancient gave the name of Bactria to the track lying between the Oxus and the mountains of the Paropamism. The earliest mention of Bactria is preserved in the inscription of Bahistun, dating back to the sixth century B.C., in which it is included in the list of the satrapies belonging to the Persian empire of Darius II. Cyrus I subdued this country, and Bactria was the first of his conquests in Eastern Asia. The founder of the Persian Empire carried his arms as far as the Jaxartes on the other side of which roamed the Massagetal (B.C.550), and near it he built a city called Cyropolis. From Greek sources we learn that under the rule of Darius Hystaspes (BC. 521-492) these districts were reckoned among the Persian satrapies. It is not unlikely that all eastern
countries mentioned in the oldest Darius inscriptions as “subdued” or “rebellion” belonged to Cyrus I and he ruled over Khorazmia and Soghdiana. The Sogdiana were the oldest known to us in Central Asia. They lived in Zeravshan Valley. They and the Khorazmians belonged to the same stock. The territory of Sogdiana formed part of the first world monarchy known to history as the Achamenid state. The Sogdiana and Khorazmians are mentioned by King Darius as his inscription. They took part in his expedition to Greece.

The empire of Darius Hystaspes was divided into 20 satrapier, of which the fifteenth comprised the Sacae and the Caspians, whose joint tribute amounted to 250 talents per annum, while to the sixteenth belonged the Parthians, the Chorasmians, the Sogdiana and the Heart Arians, whose annual tribute was 300 talents. The army of Xerxes - the Isfendiar of Firdousi – was largely recruited from the warlike peoples of Central Asia. The Bactrians went to the war wearing a head - dress very like the median, but armed with bows of cane, and with short spears. The Saceo, or Scythians were clad in trousers, and had on their heads tall still caps rising to a point. They bore the bow of their country and the dragger, besides which they carried the battle - axe, or Sagaris. They were, in truth, Amyrgian Scythians but the Persians call them Sacae since that is the name they give to all the Scythians. The Bactrians and the Sacae had for leader Hystaspes, the son of Darius and of Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus. The Arians of Herat carried Median bows but in other respects were equipped like the Bactrians. The Parthians and Chorasmians, with the Sogdiana, the Gandorians, and the Dadicae, had the Bactrian equipment in all respects. The Caspians were clad in cloak of skin and carried the cane bow of their country, and the scimitar. The Bactrians and the Caspians furnished also horsemen, armed like the foot soldiers.

Khorezm had ceased to be a Persian province at the time of Alexander’s invasion. But the Sogdians were still under Persian rule and fought against Alexander. The Achaemenid state was destroyed by Alexander and its territory integrated into the Graceo – Macedonian empire. In the space of four years (B.C. 334-331) Alexander carried his victorious arm from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean to Persopolis, overthrowing Darius II as Issus in B.C. 333 and again at Gangamela in B.C. 331. The later defeat was deathblow to the Persian monarchy. Darius fled in an easterly direction,
accompanied by a still considerable army, determined if possible to enter Bactria. Alexander took and plundered Persepolis and Pasargad, the cradle of the Persian dynasty, and then set out in pursuit of Darius, who had reached Ecbatana, the capital of Media.¹⁶

After the collapse of Gracceo – Macedonian Empire by Alexander, a considerable part of Central Asia was included in the Seleucid State. The period of Alexander was the start of increased contact and trade between Europe and this part of Asia. The exact data when silk reached the west from China remains unknown, but the caravan routes through these territories between the two main civilization centres of the world at that moment became the main routes for trade of this fabric and are now known as the ‘Silk Road’.¹⁷ It is through this great Silk Road that dancing arts, painting, architecture and music made their way from one people to another.¹⁸ Incidentally, it was the way along which various religions advanced like Macheism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam with the later becoming predominant and subsequently become the only faith of Kazakhs.

On the death of Alexander, B.C. 321, Parthia and Hyrcania fell to Phratophernes, Bactria and Sogdiana to Phillip but by the year B.C. 305, Seleucus had brought beneath his sway, Media, Assyria, Persia, Hyrecanin, Bactria and all the country eastward as far as the Indus. Some sixty years later or 256 B.C., Graeco-Bactrian kingdom was established which flourished for nearly one hundred years.¹⁹

The Gracco-Bactrians were succeeded by the Kushans. The Kushan period was one of the cultural and economic expansions for Central Asia. The prosperity of the region was due to its location on the Great Silk Road. The Romans designed to treat with them as an established empire. Kushan power began to decline at the end of the third century.²⁰ The last Kushan King of whom we find a trace in history was named Kikolo the conquered Gandhara, but was forced to return to his own dominion by an eruption of White Hun.²¹ White Huns or Eptithalites conquered Bactria and put an end to Kushan rule in Central Asia. The Huns exerted profound influence on the geopolitical map of contemporary world fabric. The Huns were succeeded in Central Asia by Turkic-speaking tribe. These groups founded several large state formations, known as Kaganats (empires) which covered the region from Yellow Sea in the east to the Black Sea in the west. These states were distinguished by a culture that was progressive for its time and
based not only on a nomadic economy but also on an urban oasis culture that had rich trade handicraft traditions. For instance in the oasis of Central Asia (the present day territory of northern Kazakhstan and Central Asia), cities and caravansaries were founded which helped to facilitate the Great silk route. In addition a road running along the banks of the Syr Darya river leading to the Aral Sea and the South Ural as well as the so called “Stable Road” which connected Central Kazakhstan and the Altai with South Western region of Siberia. A number of major cities and trade centers such as Otrar (Farab), Taraz, Rulan, Yarsi, Sauran, Balasagun and others were founded on their routes. The Great Silk Road not only accelerated the development of trade, but also became a channel of processing progressive, scientific and cultural ideas. For example the life and creative activity of the great philosopher Al-farabi (870-959) dates back to this time. Born in the district of Farab, Al-farabi’s fame was such that he was known in the east as the second teacher after Aristotle. He is known for his detailed research into philosophy, astronomy, theory of music and mathematics. The well known 11th century scholar of Turkic philology, Mahmud Kashgari also lived in the area. His three-volume Dictionary of Turki Dialects even to this day serves as an important source of the history of Turkic Folklore and literature. Kutadgu Bilig (Blessed Knowledge) which was written by the famous poet-philosopher Jusup Balasaguni, is recognized as having played an important role in the development of modern socio-political and ethnical thought. The rich cultural mosaic of the region influenced by centuries of trading contacts resulted in religious multiplicity and peaceful co-existence evident in the present day state of Kazakhstan.

The greatest cultural legacy of this period is found in its architectural monuments which have been maintained and restored during the modern period. Architectural memorial such as the mausoleums of Arystan Baba, the great Sufi Khoja Ahmet Yassawi (Turkstan) and Aisha Bibi (Taraz) are among the best preserved and most beautiful historical monuments in Kazakhstan.

By the end of the 6th century A.D., the Khaganate separated into two parts, the western part of which was conquered by the Muslim Arabs. The Arabs entered into Central Asia after their rapid conquest of Persia, whose last Sasanian ruler Yazdgrid III fled before the advancing of Muslims to Khurasan and was killed in 651. Khurasan then
became for several decades the north easternmost segment of the Islamic empire, with Merv as the governor’s residence.\textsuperscript{24} Under Ibn-Muslim, governor, of Khorasan, they carried sword and fire all over the region and destroyed wonderful cultural treasure such as Penjikent temples and the Mug castle as well as other magnificent monuments. The acts of vandalism of the Arabs have been described with great indignation by Albiruni. According to him, the Arab commander Ibn-Muslim killed all scholars who knew the history and language of Khorezm, making it almost impossible to learn the history of pre-Islamic times. The Arab met stiff resistance from the local people who were supported by the Turk tribes. This popular resistance continued for about half a century in contrast to the Arab conquest of Sassanid Iran in only 15 years. Arab rule was marked by great oppression. The peasants groaned under high taxes while the landed aristocracy enjoyed great privileges. The Arabs spread Islam in Central Asia at the point of sword. In this conversion process they found a great force for forging the union of indigenous people with a common outlook. Along with Islam, Arabic language, too, became the language of administration. The people, however continued to speak the local Iranian and Turk dialects. The Arabs did not exercise any appreciable influence on the ethnic composition of the people. The groups of Arabs, now living in Central Asia, are the descendants of those who came considerably later in the times of Timur.\textsuperscript{25}

The Islamic conquest affected only the southern part of Kazakhstan whereas the Turk tribes in the steppe region still remained independent. The middle of the first millennium A.D. was an important era in the history of all Turks in general and the Kazakh in particular. That period marked with manifest changes in ethnic composition of the area. From that time Turkic tribes became predominant. The population was concentrated in and around the Altai region.

The Turks first formed an alliance with the Tiurgehis in the \textit{8th} century in Semirechye and later (\textit{8th} to \textit{10th} centuries) with the Karluks. Towards the west, on lower Syr-Darya, a powerful union of Turk tribes and \textit{Oguzs} was the Yangi kent town. They were the decedents of Eptithalits, who had been exposed to Turk influence in the \textit{6th} and \textit{7th} centuries. Besides the main Epthalite – Turk ethnic element, at the time of \textit{8th} to \textit{10th} centuries, these entered in the composition of the \textit{Oguzs} a considerable element of Indo-European tribes such as Turkors and Yasov Alans.\textsuperscript{26} The ethnic base of Pecheneg triber
stemmed from the old Sako-Massaget tribes who had also been exposed to Turk influence.

In the 9th and 10th centuries, there arose the state of the Samanids (874-999 A.D.) uniting Iran with Central Asia. The Samanids were of Iranian stock. This underscored the fact that henceforth not Arabs governors but native, at first Iranian and later Turkic but always Muslims dynasty would rule Islamic Central Asia. It was under the able and felicitous region of the Samanids that Islamic Central Asia came of age, acquiring the major features of a mature Islamic Civilization. One of these was its firm adherence to the new religion. This manifested itself not only through overall loyalty to Islam, but also through the activities of its religious scholars such as Bukhari (810-869) born in the vicinity of Samarkand but active chiefly in Bukhara. The Samanids incorporated Maverannahr, Khorezm, Syr-Darya region, part of Turkmenia, Iran and Afghanistan. They played a great role in the ethnic and cultural history of the area. During this period of Samanid rule, the Tajik-Persian language became widespread, and it was at this point that the great poet Rudoki and Firdausi wrote their monumental works. The Arabic language, however, continued to be language of state.

The Samanid dynasty’s power and glory peaked under the reign of three great Amirs, Ismail (892-907), Ahmad (907-913), and Najr (913-943). In war during their rule that Transoxnia emancipated itself from the role of being Khurasan’s subordinate province and moved to the forefront of Islamic Central Asia. They are also remembered, for the Jihad, that they waged on the north-eastern frontier of their territories, in the Bilad-al-Turk, the Turkestan of that period. One significant date is 893, when Ismail crossed the Syr Darya and turned the local Nestarian Chruch into mosque. This incident reminds us of the relationship that had existed between the Turks and the Christian, Buddhist and other sedentaries whether Sogdian or Turkic – in these fringes of the Inner Asian steppe belt. Most Turkic nomads were still Pagan despite the inroads made by Christianity and Buddhism among them, and it was the Samanid campaigns that set in motion their massive conversion to Islam.

In the late 8th and early 9th century, great literacy upsurge occurred in Central Asia. The work of Mohammed Ibn-Musa Al-Khorezms, the founder of Arab Mathematics is related to this period. It is from the title of his work Al- Djabr that the
term algebra is derived. He was not only a mathematician but also an astronomer, geographer and historian. His works represent a synthesis of Indian algebra and Greek geometry which form the basis of modern mathematical sciences. Al-Khorezmi made use of centuries old Khorezmian tradition of mathematics, largely influenced by Indian and Greek culture, which had arised on the basis of such practical needs as irrigation, travel, trade and construction. It is through his works that the Arabs learnt the sciences of mathematics.

The end of the 10th century witnessed the last phase of the Samanid empire’s existence. Provincial governors refused to obey the authority of the centre giving rise to divisive tendencies. Deep social crisis also enveloped the empire as a result of peasant unrest sparked off by heavy taxation. Sebuktegin laid the foundation of the Ghazni dynasty and Bogra Khan founded the powerful Turk dynasty of Korakhanids on the territory of Kashgar and Semirechye. The period of Korakhanid rule in Central Asia and Kazakhstan was of great significance for the ethnological and cultural history of this region. At this time, a union of ethnic groups of eastern Turkestan and Central Asia took place resulting in natural cultural interaction.

While the Samanids were harassed by the powerful Daylamites in the west, by the growing power of Sabuktagin in the South, a force still more formidable had arisen on their northern frontier, where a Turkish state had founded which extended from Kashghar to the sea of Aral. The relation of this state with its southern neighbors were at first of a peaceful and even friendly character, but when the nomads perceived that Iranian authority was on the wane they began to cast longing eyes across the Jaxartes. They belonged to the tribe of Uighur, which had been the first to separate from the main body of the Tien-shan. The Uighur Kingdom of Qocho lasted for four centuries (850-1250). It became an amalgam of an indigenous people and civilization, originally Indo-European, practicing agricultural of the irrigated oasis type and professing one or other of the three religion (Budhism, Manichaeism and Christianity) and cultures brought along the silk road, with a ruling layer of organically nomadic Ughurs who Turkicized it linguistically but merged with it culturally. Their Budhist rulers no longer called themselves Khan or Qaghan, the most common title of Turkic monarchs, but rather professed idiqut, a word composed of two elements iduq plus qut, both with a
connotation of spiritual auspiciousness. The relative stability and longevity of this peaceful kingdom was remarkable for it even survived the first decades of Mongal expansion under Genghiz Khan and his immediate successors.32

The turn of the millennium coincided with the collapse of the Samanids and their replacement by the Qarakhanids. To their contemporaries this change was probably less revealing than to a historian pondering its impact. The Qarakhanids were by then Muslims like the Samanids, and the fervor of some Khans seemed to have surpassed that of their predecessors. Religion continued to be based on the Holy Book in Arabic, and the linguistic and cultural physiognomy of Samarkand, Bukhara, and other cities and towns as well as of the agricultural population of the countryside remained Iranian, though with the increasing shift from the Sogdian and Khwarazmian variants to Persian.33

The Qarakhanids were Turks, however their arrival signalled a definitive shift from Iranian to Turkic predominance in Central Asia. The rule of the Turks over Transoxania was not unprecedented. The steppe empire of the Kok Turks claimed suzerainty over the pretty rulers of Central Asia. That relationship was, however, marginal and intermittent, for those Turks were nomads whose life style and psychological orientation had remained immersed in the steppes of Inner Asia. The Islamization of main descendants or Kinsmen changed this orientation. The Qarakhanids, who replaced the Samanid looked up to the Caliph in Baghdad and the holy cities of Macca and Madina as their ultimate spiritual authority and Transoxania became pat of their permanent home.

The Qarakhanids, once became Muslim, turned their attention towards Samarid dynasty still ruled and by 1005. From then on and until well into the 12th century, the new Turkic dynasty ruled Transoxania, in addition to the original domain further north and east following the time-honored custom of Turkic and Mongal nomads, the Qarakhanids practiced family or clan rule rather than that of a single monarch. The territory was divided up into two, four or more appanges, and individual members sometimes moved up according to an order of seniority and corresponding status of area.34
In the 12th century, the nomadic Kara-kitais migrated from the Far East formed a state in Semirechye and conquered Maverannahr. Their arrival had a distinct effect on the ethnic structure of Central Asia. Obviously, a part of them settled amidst the Turkic tribes and adopted their language. The tribal name Kitai became widespread among the Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, Kazakhs and Kirghizs. The rule of the Kara-Kitais in Central Asia did not last long and at the beginning of the 13th century was succeeded by the Khorezm states that destroyed the Seljuk power and created a feudal monarchy uniting Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran and Azerbaijan. The rule of the Khorozm states marked the highest development of feudalism reflected in the growth of towns, trade, crafts and culture.

The Mongol invader Genghiz Khan destroyed the state of Kharezm state in 1219-1221 A.D. The Mongols wrought great devastation and destruction causing the economic and cultural backwardness from which Central Asia for a long time could not recover. A great part of the Mongol troops that conquered Central Asia consisted of Kypchak and other Turk tribes who had adopted the Mongol tribal names of Kungrad, Kiyat and Manghait. The survival of these names among the Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Karakalpaks thus does not necessarily represent their Mongol origin. The Mongol conquerors were easily annihilated by the local people and adopted Islam as well as the Turk language. The Kipchaks, group of peoples who united and separated depending on the alliances and enmities of the time, along with an element of the Orghaz population, became integrated into the vastest Steppe empire of Genghiz Khan.

In 1360 and 1361, Tughluq Timur, campaigned in Transoxania. One of his followers was the future ‘conqueror of the world’, the ‘second Alexander’, as the authors of eulogistic histories dubbed their hero, Timur of the Barlas tribe. This Mongol tribe had settled as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century in the valley of the Kashka Darya, intermingling with the Turkish population, adopting their religion (Islam) and gradually giving up its own nomadic ways, like a number of other Mongol tribes in Transoxania.

The official histories of Timur were written at his command by Nizam al-Din Sham, by Ghiyath al-Din Ali, the author of the Journal of Timur’s Campaign in India, and by the historian Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi, who lived at the court of Timur’s son and
successor Shah Rukh – say nothing about his early years, although it is known that he was born in 1336. According to Ruy González de Clavijo, ambassador of the king of Castile, who visited Samarkand, Timur’s capital, in 1404, the father of the ‘Emperor of Samarkand’ (el Emperador de Samarcante) was a notable personage (home fidalgo), but not wealthy, and had no more than 2 or 3 horsemen in his service. Timur had approximately the same number (‘4 or 5’) of hired horsemen. With their help he seized from his neighbours ‘one day a sheep, the next day a cow, and when he was able, he feasted with his followers’. Gradually, thanks to Timur’s bravery and ‘magnanimity’, a force of as many as 300 grew up around him, and with them ‘he began to scour the countryside, robbing and stealing all he could, for himself and his followers; he also travelled the roads robbing merchants’. The historian Ibn c Arabshah, who is extremely hostile to Timur, writes that his father was a shepherd.

After the attack on Transoxania, Tughluq Timur heaped ‘all manner of attentions and kindnesses’ on Timur. The Kashka Darya Tümen of the fugitive Hajj-ı Barlas was bestowed on him in 1361. But Timur soon broke off relations with the Khan of Moghulistan and his son Ilyas Khoja, who had been left as ruler in Transoxania.

Now that he was a ruler and Amir of a rich Tümen, Timur in 1361 made contact with one of the pretenders to power in Transoxania, the chieftain of Balkh, Amir Husayn, sealing the relationship by marrying his sister Ulday Turkan-aga. At the head of their troops, the Amirs carried out predatory raids on the territories of their neighbours. During one of these they were taken prisoner by the Javuni-Qurbani Turkmens and escaped by chance. In a later battle in Sistan – where the local prince had invited the Amirs to help fight his enemies – Timur received arrow wounds in the arm and leg. Lamed for life, he was given the nickname Timur-Leng (literally ‘Iron Cripple’), rendered by European writers as Tamerlane.

The increase in power of Amirs Husayn and Timur threatened Ilyas Khoja. Expelled from Transoxania after the death of Tughluq Timur, he was proclaimed his successor in Moghulistan and in 1365 reappeared in Transoxania with a large army. On the banks of the River Chirchik near Tashkent, a battle was fought that has gone down in history as ‘the battle in the mud’. Heavy rains had turned the ground into a bog, in which
the horses of the allied forces stuck fast.\textsuperscript{39} The Amirs fell back towards Samarkand and then retreated across the Oxus (Amu Darya).

The Mogolian invasion created considerable influence upon the history of Kazakh people. Over time, the Mongols influenced regional culture as the local people, mostly Turkic tribes adopted aspects of their language, legal code, and social and administrative structure. One of the measures taken by Genghiz Khan regarding the Kazakhs was an attempt to replace the gender tribal division with territorial administration and to unite nomads under the supreme power of Genghiz Khan himself and two successors.\textsuperscript{40} Although the center of his empire was in cities like Samarqand and Bukhara, his power reached well into the area that we now know as Kazakhstan and one of his most famous building the Mausoleum of Hodja Ahmed Yasavi can still be visited in the city Turkestan.

After the death of great Mongol conqueror in 1227, the empire was divided amongst his four sublings. The territories west to the Irtys River, present day Kazakhstan and western Siberia were given to Jochi (Or Djochi) the elders son. Dying in the same years as his father Jochi left his lands to his five children, the start of the Jochid Dynasty.\textsuperscript{41}

The empire created by Genghiz Khan and Tamerlane were short-lived and were soon divided up after the death of their founder. Moreover, the Turko-Mongal dynasties rapidly came under the influence of the region’s Irano-Islamic civilization. The decedents of Genghiz Khan were Islamized and applied the rule of Shari's rather than those of “\textit{Yasa}”, the Mongol legal system. They emulated an Islamized version of the Iranian Sassanid tradition, which had been developed during the Abbasid Khalifat and expanded throughout the eastern part of the Islamic Empires.

One of the most extensive military empires in the medieval Islamic East was that of Timur, the fruit of his long years of campaigning and the resultant destruction of many towns and regions. Into this empire were incorporated, in addition to Transoxania and Khwarazm, the regions around the Caspian Sea, Iran, Iraq, part of the southern Caucasus, and the territory of present-day Afghanistan and northern India. The heart of the empire was Transoxania, incorporated after the death of Genghiz Khan and under the terms of the arrangements made by him, into the appendage of Chaghatay.
The Mongol Interlude (1220-1370) was a traumatic experience in the history of Central Asia, the Timurid period (1370-1507) can be viewed as most glorious one. It is true that the founder of this dynasty Timur (ruled 1370-1405), was a ruthless conqueror and spent much of his life engaged in military campaigns that wrought massacre and destruction. There, however befell other areas (Iran, the Golden Horde) while sparing Central Asia itself. Timur’s successors showed less aptitude for large scale conquest than for enjoying good life at home and despite frequent infighting for the possession of this or that portion of inheritance, many of them also encouraged culture and the art. Timur himself had endeavored to embellish his capital, Samarkand, with grandiose architectural monuments some of which still constitute the pride of modern Uzbekistan. Secular science came to be taught in the madrasas of Samarkand. Subsequently Herat and Samarkand became great centers of science and learning.

Immediately after Timur’s death (1405), his empire was engulfed in a war of succession in which most of his thirty six sons and grandson participated. Therefore, there was no going back to the old glory, and in the absence of any law of succession, the struggle for the throne among the Timurid princes became a continuous process during the fifteenth century. Timur’s son Shahrukh’s death was followed by a war of succession, first between Ulugh Beg and Abdul Lalif. Likewise, Sultan Husain traded his sword against Abu Said and Yadgar Mirza and the former’s son continued the tradition of civil war. The most energetic leader was Abul Khair (1412-1468), who succeeded in unifying the tribe of the territories over which he governed (called the Uzbek Khanate at the time), and attempted to conquer the southern region. Two princes, Karai and Jani Bek were unwilling to submit to his rule. After defeat, they sought refuge eastwards, taking with them a number of clans, migrating part the Balkhash and the steppe between Orenburg and Balkhash and the steppe between Orenburg and Semi Palantinsk. The clan of so-called ‘dissidents’ was referred to as ‘Kazakhs’.

Abul Khair, weakened by the raiding of the Oyrats was defeated in a great battle north of the Syr-Darya by the Kazakh clans led by Karai and Jani Bek. In 1468, he was assassinated on their orders. The Uzbek clans fled south, past the Syr Darya, leaving an open territory that was rapidly claimed by the Kazak clans, who then redeployed themselves in the territory. From that point onwards, the term ‘Uzbeks’ was used to
refer to the tribe south of the Syr Darya, while the Kazakhs’ identified the population to the north. Following the decline of the Chagatai Khanate and the Golden Horde, a smaller state, the Uzbek Khanate, emerged in south-central Kazakhstan in the early 15th century. Around 1465, two Uzbeks, Jānībek and Kīrāi, led an estimated 200,000 followers into the region between the Chu and Talas rivers in southeastern Kazakhstan, where they staked territorial claims in defiance of the then Uzbek leadership. The followers of Jānībek and Kīrāi became known as Kazakhs, a term that likely referred to their independent, nomadic ways, in contrast to those of the Uzbeks, who practiced a more settled, agricultural lifestyle. They were essentially the descendents of the Mongol, Turkic, and various other peoples who had occupied the region over the centuries.

An important step in the acceptance of local cultural tradition by some of the Mongols was the adoption of Islam by Tarmashirin (1328–34), brother and successor of Kebek Khan. This gave rise to a new wave of dissatisfaction on the part of the nomadic Mongols. Tarmashirin was killed and the headquarters of the Khanate was transferred to Semirechye. The upholder of the ‘settler tradition’, and the last Chinggisid of the Chaghatayulus (domains in Mongolia), Kazan Khan, brought the seat of the Khanate back to Transoxania, to be killed in a battle in 1346 against one of the Mongol leaders, the Amir Kazagan. Kazagan, not being a Chinggisid, did not assume the title of Khan, and ruled on behalf of the titular Khan of Chinggis’s line. Kazagan’s power did not extend beyond Transoxania. The remainder of the disintegrating ulus of Chaghatay (Semirechye and East Turkistan) came to be called Moghulistan; where the military-nomadic aristocracy of the Mongol tribes held undisputed sway, under the leadership of Khans of the Dughlat clan. In 1358 Kazagan was killed by one of the Khan of Moghulistan, Kutlug Timur. Transoxania was now divided into a few mutually hostile parts, belonging to the leaders of the Mongol and local nobility. Kazagan’s grandson Amir Husayn ruled part of the wilayat (region) of Balkh, together with the town of Balkh. The remainder of this region belonged to the head of the Sulduz tribe. Kish and its region were under the sway of Hajj-i-Barlas. In Shiburghan, Badakhshan and Khuttalan, similar independent leaders established themselves. Their dissension and strife sowed confusion in the affairs of Transoxania.
Kazakhs later flooded into parts of Abul Khair’s Kingdom. They were ruled by Karai’s son Burunduk Khan (1488-1509) and Kasym Khan (1509-1518), son of Jani Bek (considered by historians as the founder of the Kazak nation). For about a century they enjoyed relative peace.\(^{49}\) The Kazakh Khanate formally organized under Qasim Kahn, who ruled from around 1511 to 1523.\(^{50}\) During this time, Qasim expanded the Khanate’s domain, consolidated its political power, and incorporated additional regional tribes into the Kazakh fold. In the mid-to-late 16th century, three administrative divisions within the Kazakh Khanate emerged. Commonly known as hordes but more accurately described as *juz* (zhuz), or tribal unions, these divisions corresponded with specific geographic regions of the country. The Great Horde seasonally migrated throughout the southeast, the Middle Horde controlled the central, northern, and northeastern areas, and the Lesser Horde roamed throughout the west.\(^{51}\)

After expanding their nomadic pastoral empire to include most of modern-day Kazakhstan, the Kazakhs faced encroaching powers in the 17th and 18th centuries. The *Kalmyks* (also known as the Jungars/Dzungars), a subgroup of the Mongol Oyrats, came from the east, staging attacks on settlements and disrupting trade. After overtaking much of the Kazakhs’ eastern territory, the *Kalmyks* advanced upon the economically important *Syr* Darya basin in 1723, forcing the Kazakhs to flee the region in what is known today as the Great Retreat.

Thus many of the dilemmas that Kazakhstan currently faces have their roots in Kazakh history. The present day Kazakhstan was formed in the mid-fifteenth century when clan leaders Janibek and Girei broke away from Abul Khair to seek their own territory in the lands of Semirechie, between *Chu* and *Talas* rivers. Infact Khan Kasym (1511-1523) was the first Kazak leader who united the Kazak tribes into one people.\(^{52}\) From this time onwards it is possible to speak of a Kazakh nation, despite the fact that after Kasym’s death the region was again torned by local wars.

Thus by the 15\(^{th}\) to 16\(^{th}\) centuries, under condition of developed feudalism and as a result of long historical evolution, all the principal national groups of Central Asia and Kazakhstan had been formed. The transition of Central Asia from empire to feudalism and tribalism has left important political tradition still prevalent in the country. For example, even now when elections are held, candidates are selected on the basis of tribal
affiliation. Within tribal and feudal system, the focus of identity and loyalty is often confined to a particular tribe or region. Beyond tribal and territorial loyalty, the person of the Amir or the Khan is the subject of popular loyalty. Even within the tribe, family or clan has the first claim on individual’s loyalty. This type of system is managed through mechanism built on regional family and clan affiliation. Such a system makes it difficult to develop notion of identity and loyalty that could transcend such ties. Moreover, imperial feudal and tribal system strongly emphasize personal rule. Such system are also inherently unstable because they are based on a single individual abilities and personal attributes for smooth functioning.53

Since the mid 16th century, the Kazakh steppe was inhabited by Khanates or Horder. The foundation of the Kazakh was part of a struggle between two branches of the Zhuchids (Zhuchi Khan was a son of Genghiz Khan) in the period of the dissolution of the Golden Horde. In the fifteenth century there were several uluses the largest of which was that of Abulkhayr Khan. The Struggle between Abul Khayr and the decadents of the rival branches of the Zhuchids continued without interruption throughout his rule, and his state was weakened significantly by this interneline strife.54

Finally Girey Khan and Zhanibek Khan overcame the fragmentation and political division among the Kazaks. According to historian Mirza Muhammad Khaydar (1499-1551), the author of Tarikh-I-Rashidi, these two Sultans, both descendants of Urus Khan, united around themselves in the second half of the 1450’s a large number of Zhuchids of dependent clans and led them to western Zhetism, today South-eastern Kazakhstan. Migration was a typical expression of dissent or opposition in medieval nomadic society, and this migration comprised an important link in the chain of political development connected with the formation of the Kazakh Khanate in 1465-66.55 The leading figure in the power hierarchy was the Khan. Only a Sultan could be proclaimed Khan. According to steppe custom, the Khan’s brother proceeded his son in the hierarchy of succession. However, this practice was not consistently observed and power was sometimes transferred from father to son. Such exceptions were not deemed violation of tradition, since they were ratified by the aristocracy. Also Abul Khayr (1748) nominated his son Nuralay as his successor in his life time. In the absence of rigorous rules of succession to the throne, a struggle between Sultans frequently
occurred. Indeed, a Khan death was almost invariably followed by internal strife in the steppe. The Kazakh Khanate, while remaining in that form until the arrival of the Russian had always been very weak. The Khan’s rule was hereditary, but political authority gradually became vested in the hands of the more important tribal leaders, who were theoretically the Khan’s vassals but always remained autonomous in practice. In turn the clans and tribes were led by the lower nobility, beys and batyrs. Society in the period of the Khanate – the later part of the 15th century to the early part of the 19th century war based on two principles. The first was the inclusion of all Kazakh tribes and clans into one of the three hordes. The second was the subdivision into two basic social categories, known as White and Black Bone (aksuyek and kara-suyek), differing not so much in economic status as in political and legal attributes. The former embraced the Sultan, the male-line descendents of the Genghiz dynasty, and the religious elites, the saynids, as well on Krojas (decendents of the Arabs who conquered and Islamized Central Asia in the 8th century). All other states made up the Black Bone. The division between White and Black bone was observed rigorously throughout Kazakh history.

**The Nomadic Population**

Kazakh nomads were aware of their military–tribal structure and kinship which included three major divisions among tribes. Membership in the Kazakh Little or Younger, Middle and Great or Elder Hordes (Zhuzs) identified the possibilities and limitations for each affiliate. Kazakh hereditary aristocrats claimed lineage from Genghiz Khan. The Kazakhs elected their Khans only from tores (descendants of Khan). The nomadic population nobles claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad, and any person in command would lay claim to the title Sultan. The Kazakhs elected their Khans by raising them on a White felt rug, which symbolized the inaugural ceremony and indicated that ‘Khan’ was not always a hereditary title. In order to centralize power, the tsarist administration significantly weakened the domination of the hereditary nobility, the Kazakh Sultans who traditionally had power over a dependent population. Other categories among the upper class were composed of judges (among the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and Turkmens, they were known as biis) and military commanders (known as batyrs among the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz and serdars among the Turkmens). With the
development of market relations, the newly rich nomads started speculating in livestock prices, thus forcing the hereditary noblemen into the background. Their newfound wealth opened up opportunities for them to buy low-level positions in the Tsarist administration.60

The largest lower class of commoners (bukaras) among the Turkic-speaking tribes consisted of nomads and farmers, whose economic and social status varied widely. For example, 66–90 per cent of low-income Kazakhs had no minimum level of subsistence (up to 40–50 sheep) and worked for richer kinfolk. The poor-stratum ‘neighbours’, such as the kongshus, moved with upper-class families and to farms, according to the demand for labour. The most common form of exploitation, known as saan (‘milking’), made a significant number of commoners dependent on manaps and bays (rich men). With their large flocks, rich families could temporarily offer impoverished breeders part of their livestock in exchange for dairy products and everyday jobs. Besides, numerous customs obliged dependent tribesmen to pay rent-in-kind and to cover a nobleman’s expenses when inviting guests, for hosting celebrations and when giving gifts at races and other entertainments. Wealthy households used the labour of mardikers and chairikers during the busy season, especially during the sowing and cultivation of fields, irrigation and the harvest. Pastoral nomads existing at the mercy of a continental climate frequently suffered from murrain when livestock starved to death during snowstorms. After losing their livestock, the poor had to settle in lowland areas and become work-hands.61 Stockbreeding was the principal activity of the nomadic peoples, who valued sheep and their by-products as the main assets in the barter trade. According to the Russian census of 1897, the pastoral economy was the main means of subsistence for about 80 per cent of the Kazakhs. Only 18 per cent of them subsisted owing to a combination of stockbreeding and farming the land. The Kazakhs also engaged in fishing, hunting, gathering and craftwork. For the majority of the Kazakhs, farming was an auxiliary livelihood.62 Among the nomadic tribes of the Kazakhs, the most mobile households seized the best summer pastures and water sources. The size and speed of flock determined claims to the better ground. In order to lay claim to the best grazing lands and water resources, well-off households possessed livestock with a greater proportion of animals (horses and camels) that moved faster.
than the animals of their country-men. Their flocks were the first to graze the grassland, whereas the animals of late-arriving households had to be content with what remained. According to Kazakh scholars, the right of 'the first taking’ did not cover winter camps and adjoining territories, being applied to private (about 15–18 per cent) and communal use. Poorer nomads owned more cattle and fewer horses, camels and sheep, which meant that they always arrived last. Thus, over time, the rich monopolized pastures and water sources.  

**Tsarist Russian Conquest of Kazakhstan**

As part of its vast expansion throughout northern Eurasia, Russia’s gradual encroachment into Kazakh territory began in the 17th century, when trading and military outposts were established along the Ural River, north of the Caspian Sea. In the 18th century, Russian forts were constructed along the northern edge of the steppes in present-day Kazakhstan, including those at Semei (Semipalatinsk) and Öskemen (Ust-Kamenogorsk). By 1730, the Kazakhs had asserted themselves as a distinct group of nomadic tribes living in the eastern part of the Dasht-I-Kipchok, speaking a distinctive Kipchak language, but lacking overall political unity. In fact Russian trader and soldiers began to appear on the north western edge of the Kazakh territory in the 17th century. Russian were able to seize Kazakh territory because the Khanates were preoccupied by Kalmyk invaders of Mongol origin, who in the late 16th century undertook raids into Kazakh territory from the east. Forced westward in what they call their Great Retreat, the Kazakhs were finally caught between the Kalmyks and the Russians. In 1730 Abul Khayr sought Russian assistance. Although his intention was to form a temporary alliance against the stronger Kalmyks, the Russian gained permanent control of the Lesser Hord as a result of the decision.

Russian first began to advance towards Asia in the middle of the 16th century. The armies of Tsar Vassilevich Ivan IV of Moskva, took the Tatar Muslim Khanates (domain) of Khans (Lords), the Khanate of Kazan (founder 1439) of Khan Edyger (Yadigar) on the bend of the Itil Darya at the confluence of the Kama river on 2 October 1552, and Astrakhan of the Nogay Khan Yagurchay (Yamgurchay) in the estuary of the
Volga river, the waterway from Central Russia to the Caspian Sea in 1556. The Russian eliminated the aristocracy of the Khanate of Kozan and drew the Tatars beyond the limit of the Town. Tatars fled into Siberia and Central Asia. Tsar Ivan IV absorbed Astrakhan in his Tsardom. The Khans of the Nogay clan of the Tatar tribe, who had ruled Astrakhan, along with the Khanate of Krimya had been the successors of Jochi Khan, the eldest son of Genghiz Khan.66

Peter sent several missions into the steppe region and to the Central Asian Khanates between 1714 and 1725, however, they achieved little except to verify the instabilities and difficulties inherent in trade. The most successful was the Bukhaletz mission, undertaken in 1714, which followed established trade routes along the Irtish River and the northern steppe region. The mission resulted in the construction of a line of forts along with the river that firmly established Russia’s presence in the Kazakh steppe. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Russian advance eventually produced a line of forts manned by Siberian Cossacks. From west to east, the Irtish line included the towns of Omsk (established in 1716), Semipalatinsk (1718), Pavloder (1720), Ilek (1731), Orsk (1735), Orenburg (1743), to seven miles wide along the northern frontier of the Kazakh steppe, extended more than 2,500 miles and included almost forty forts and over a hundred smaller fortifications.67 As Russia continued to fortify its position at the expense of native inhabitants, the land issue quickly became a key source of tension in Kazak-Russian relation for example from 1775 to 1782 the Russian governor generalships of Simbirst and Ufa barred the Kazakhs from using Russian-controlled land, west of the Ural River.68 This was prime grazing land, as well as land utilized by Kazaks for generation. Kazaks who did breach the line were often arrested and condemned to imprisonment.

Despite the severe punishment, many Kazaks continued and even increased the number of disputed crossing of the Ural river, further antagonizing the Russian authorities and preempting clashes with the Ural Cossacks who had been awarded this land as compensation for their military service. To encourage support for Russian suzerainty, Catherine II had given large quantities of land to native leaders who had entered the empire’s service. This served two purposes, first, settlement and agricultural work was regarded as the more civilized way of life and thus its promotion and
expansion were seen as part of Russia’ civilizing mission in Asia. Secondly, the authorities believed that if the natives were producing their own agricultural products it was a good way to starve off the periodic famines that swept through the steppe due to some calamity. Therefore, the government promoted settlement among the Kazakhs. Though farming was not unknown to Kazakhs, it was not as profitable as their traditional livestock raising. In addition, the cultural attachment to nomadism proved to have a stronger allure.\textsuperscript{69} Many who did settle were the poorest among the Kazak population.

In the last quarter of the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, the Kazaks participated in two violent revolts against Russia. Kazaks joined forces with Emelian Pugachev and in 1773-1774 seized control of parts of the Irtish line and besieged Orenburg, the provincial headquarter. As the revolt concluded, Russian troops brutally meted out punishment. Access to the pasture, particularly on the western side of the Ural River, commonly regressed to as the Inner side, was further restricted.

In 1783 again there was a revolt, led by Srym Datov a \textit{batyr} (a member of lower nobility) of the little Horde. It was a guerrilla campaign against forts near the Ural Mountains, and was defeated and disbanded only in 1797. In 1825, the suppression of the Khanate of the Middle Horde gave rise to a vast movement led by deposed sovereigns like Sarzhan Kasymov and Ubaidullah Valikhanov (grandson of Ablai Khan). Defeated a few months later, they were pushed by the Cassacks right into the heart of the steppes. Between 1831 and 1834, Kasymov and Valikhanov attempted a new foray southwards, but were finally defeated.\textsuperscript{70} The battle was resumed in 1837, by Kenesary (another grandson of Ablai Khan), who in approximately a decade of wars punctuated by brief truces (1838-46), managed to reassert control over the Middle Horde and part of the Great Horde by means of various raids to the north of Kazakhstan. In order to put an end to his incursion, the Russian constructed forts in Turgay and Irgiz (completed in 1845). He was finally defeated in 1846 when he was driven south along the Tian Shan Mountains, and eventually killed by the Kyrgyz.\textsuperscript{71}

Meanwhile in the Little Horde, clans of the Adaev Horde were breaking away from those of the Bukey Horde. The latter who grazed their herds between the Volga and Ural rivers, formed an anti-Russian movement led by Bey Isatai Taimanov, and by
the popular bard Mahambet Idtemisov. Both were defeated and killed, the former in 1837, the latter in 1846. Other revolts occurred in 1855 among the Shekli population east of the Aral Sea, led by Batyr Gjankhodja Nurmuhammedov who opposed the Russian colonies settled along the bank of the Syr Darya with relentless persistence. This revolt was crushed three years later. The final insurrection occurred between 1877 and 1878 in the region of the Uralsk and Turgay. Towards the end of nineteenth century, the country finally seemed ‘pacified’.  

In 1863, Russia promulgated a policy in the Gorchakov Circular, which asserted the right to annex “troublesome” border areas. This policy led to the creation of two administrative districts, the Guberniya (Governorate General) of Turkestan and the Steppe District. Most of the present day Kazakhstan was in the Steppe District, and the parts of present day Southern Kazakhstan were in the Governorate General.  

The major revolt occurred in 1916 in response to the efforts by a desperate Russian Tsarist government to mobilize men for military and labour services in the First World War Many fled abroad. Months later the Tsar abdicated and in November 1917 Bolsheviks took over.  

Russian Control over Kazakhstan brought some changes in Kazakh society. Kazakh traditional form of authority, the biis, sultans, aqsakals, and Khans were either eliminated by Russian rule or made accountable to a Tsarist administrator and not to the clan or aul. The increased pace of colonization disrupted traditional migratory route. But many Kazakhs were unable to adapt to the new economic conditions. The concept of individual ownerships of land further eroded the socio-political structure that had been the foundation of Kazakh society for generations as Russian authorities often designated where the Kazaks would live and who would manage the sedentary aul. This new structure, based in part on the traditional Russian obstiehina, instilled a new power, both social and economic, on those most willing to cooperate while example of astonishingly wealth Kazakhs were not unusual, the vast majority of Kazakhs were poor. Agriculture was quickly replacing livestock, as the principal economic function in the steppe, but Kazakhs were, with few exceptions, unable to benefit economically. For many educated Kazakhs, this situation was untenable. Thus in the last decades of Tsarist rule, an indigenous intelligentsia, trained to serve the state, emerged politically and with various
social and economic agenda. They understood the discontent among their fellow Kazakhs and committed themselves to improving the social and economic status of the Kazakh community through education, literacy, publishing, and political activism. It required a unity of action and effort from a segment of the Kazakh population trained and educated to serve the state, but whose policies were regarded detrimental to the survival not of nomadism but of the nation.

The historical significance of the Russian conquest and the annexation of Central Asia is a subject on which Soviet and Western historians have widely divergent opinions. The annexation by Tsarist Russia extended Tsarist’s colonial oppression to Central Asia. However, the incorporation of these people into the Russian empire had another aspect. It joined their fate with the progressive forces of Russia, with the Russian revolutionary movement. Consequently the merger of Central Asia into Russia had an objectively progressive character. The objectively progressive historical character of the Russian annexation is sometimes exaggerated by some Soviet writers, a few of whom have gone to the absurd length of describing the merger with Russia as an “age old dream” of the people of Central Asia. But Soviet historians have, by and large, taken a sensible approach towards this question.

Under the Russian rule, formal elections replaced the choosing of leader by consensus and elected kazis (Judges), each with exclusive jurisdiction over a given district, replaced those appointed by the Khan for their knowledge of the written law and available to any litigant who sought their services. Thus the imposition of a Russian order violated traditional conception and practices. Among the nomads clan and tribal elders had always served as leaders and interpreted the unwritten customary law, but now headmen and judges were elected by Valost assemblies that normally and deliberately, included representatives of at least two different kinship groups – so as to weaken traditional loyalties and diminish potential resistance to Russian rule. The native population adjusted to the unfamiliar ways of their conquerors in an understandable if not always admirable manner. The buying election and bribing of the Russian officials who supervised the working of the self-government institutions became regular feature of the system.
Russia took little responsibility for the development of the region, or even the basic human needs of its population. In 1867 the Governor Generalship of Turkestan was established and General K.P. Kaufman was appointed as the first Governor General. He set the tone with the belief that the obvious superiority of Russia over Islamic culture would in time, and without any particular effort on Russia’s part, convince the natives to abandon their barbarous customs. In the meantime Russia’s civilizing mission was confined to the suppression of slaves and the slave trade, of torture, and of corporal and capital punishment. But the colonial administration was hardly an effective advertisement for the superiority of Russian culture. Russian officials were too far in number, overworked, poorly paid and often of low quality. They were prone to accept bribes and extorted money from the native population and sometimes even from the rulers of the vassal Khanate.

The policy of neglect initiated by Kaufman and followed by his successor applied to religion and education in particular. Reunification was not to be pressed upon the natives lest they be provoked into the rebellion but at the same time their culture had to be deprived of external sources of support. Kaufman prevented both the Russian Orthodox Church from establishing a new diocese in Tashkent and from carrying on missionary activity in Turkestan and the Muslim Religious Administration in Ufa from extending its jurisdiction to the governor-general. Few Russian schools were established for the native population. Before the conquest there had been no schools among the nomads, but the sedentary population had an extensive system of traditional maktabs (grammar schools) and Madrases (Seminaries). Even so, literary rates in the early twentieth century were only 2 to 3 percent for the adult sedentary Muslim population and 1 percent for the nomads. In the entire empire only natives of Siberia had lower rate.

Under the impact of Russia’s neglect and less than shining example, the Muslim community underwent minimal cultural change down to 1917 and showed little sign of recognizing the superiority of Russian ways. The rule of infidel conquerors did, however, serve to undermine the authority of the Kazis and mullahs (learned man) and the traditional values they represented. Among the positive achievement of Tsarist rule in Central Asia must be counted the establishment of a greater degree of peace and order
than had been known for generations, the abolition of slavery and inhuman punishment, modest measures of economic development and a skeletal infrastructure of modern transportation communication, and irrigation networks.

The failure of Tsarist rule can be attributed to two factors that shaped the fate of the metropole as well as that of Central Asia. The regime’s tradition of focusing on the needs of the state and the ruling elite to the virtual exclusion of any concern socially and the limited material means at the disposal of the rulers of a land as economically underdeveloped as Russian was in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Russian superior attitude towards the native population only strengthened the operation of these factors in Central Asia. Government was neither honest nor efficient, natives were excluded from administrative and managerial roles, illiteracy remained the norm, the introduction of Russian rule and Russian customs inevitably undermined the integrity of the traditional culture while offering no satisfactory substitute, and the material condition of the great majority of the native population did not benefit from the economy’s integration with that of the metropole.

The social structure of the Kazakh nomads was unique. The survival of patriarchal – tribal social institution among these nomadic peoples was quite strong. The existence of a complex tribal – clan system among them gave some writers ground to speak about the tribal system preserving itself up to the beginning of the 20th century. Infact the tribal system among these people had already been destroyed many centuries before and in the 18th and 19th centuries they only preserved its tradition in their social structure. In this respect their nomadic and semi-nomadic cattle breeding economy was a great factor which allowed for survival of patriarchal tradition for a longtime. The exploiting clans like the Khans and beks among the Turkmens were vitally interested in preserving the patriarchal tribal tradition to be used as a cover for their exploitation of the poor. In a society where economic disparity was great, common ownership of pasture, land and water could have little meaning. The exploitation of poor nomads, though patriarchal in form was nonetheless feudal in essence.
Impact of Tsarist-Russian rule

By the mid-nineteenth century, Kazakhstan’s annexation to Russia, which began officially in the 1730s and ultimately transformed the region into a colony of Tsarist Russia, was virtually complete. This process was complex and contradictory, for it lasted more than 130 years and took place under a variety of foreign-policy and domestic political conditions.

It should be pointed out that a large part of the territory of the Little or Younger Zhuz (Horde) and certain areas of the Middle Zhuz (the western, central and north-eastern regions of Kazakhstan) were annexed to Russia by peaceful means between the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the southern and south-eastern regions (primarily the territory of the Great or Elder Zhuz) were seized by Tsarist Russia in the 1850s and 1860s by military force.

Over the many years while Kazakhstan was being annexed to Russia, the Kazakh people’s traditional statehood, which took the form of the Khanate, was wiped out. The completion of Kazakhstan’s annexation to Russia coincided with the emancipation of the serfs in Russia (1861) and the implementation of several reforms aimed at developing capitalistic social relations. All this could not help but affect Kazakhstan. The quickly developing industry of the mother country had an increasing need for cheap sources of raw materials and for markets. Fabulously wealthy in natural and agricultural (primarily livestock) resources, Kazakhstan had long attracted Russian business interests.

In order to finalize Kazakhstan’s status as a colony and make its further development purposeful and systematic, Tsarist Russia decided to create a new system of administrative-political and judicial administration. To prepare this reform, a Steppe Commission drawn from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of War was created in 1865. Included in the Commission’s work were officials of the local colonial administration and individual representatives of the Kazakh people who were on the whole loyal and inclined towards the government transformations. The Commission spent two years working on a plan for the administration of Kazakhstan, a plan which took the form of two ‘temporary provisions’: ‘On the Administration of Syr Darya and Semirechye Oblast (provinces) and ‘On the Administration of Ural, Torghay, Akmola
and Semipalatinsk Oblast’s’. On 11 July 1867 Tsar Alexander II (1855–81) signed the first, and on 21 October of the same year he approved the second provision. In the administrative-territorial reform carried out under these provisions, nearly the entire ethnic territory of the Kazakhs was divided into three Governor-Generalships: Turkistan, Orenburg and Western Siberia (later, Steppe Governor-Generalship). Full military and civil power was concentrated in the Governor General’s hands, and the system of administration was military in nature. The Governor-Generalship consisted in turn of oblast. Turkistan Governor-Generalship included Semirechye and Syr Darya oblast; Orenburg Governor-Generalship consisted of Ural and Torghay oblast; and Western Siberia (Steppe) Governor-Generalship of Akmola and Semi-palatinsk oblast. The oblast’s consisted of uezds (districts), the uezds of volost’s (jurisdictions of several parishes), and the volost of auls (villages). Governors-General were appointed by the Tsar, and oblast administrations were subordinated to military Governors.82

The uezds were headed by chief uezd officers, who had two aides, one senior and one junior. In this entire hierarchy, representatives of the local clan and sultan elite could occupy only the post of junior aide to the uezd chief (not counting the post of local volost administrator or aul elder). Undivided military and civil power was the fundamental principle of Kazakhstan’s administrative organization under the new system. The new system of administration shattered the nomads’ customary way of life and restricted the power of the sultans, beys (dignitaries) and elders.

In addition to administrative-territorial reforms, tsarist Russia carried out social, economic and judicial reforms. The essence of social reform was that henceforth the entire Kazakh population was to be considered peasants, and a Kazakh could acquire a title of nobility only by entering the Tsar’s service. The essence of the economic reform was defined by the fact that all Kazakh lands acquired the status of state lands, and the Per kibitka (nomadic household) levy and other taxes increased in favour of the state. Under the judicial reform, uezd and military courts in Kazakhstan henceforth functioned under empire-wide laws and tried cases such as state treason, opposition to the authorities, assassination of officials and damage to state property. The traditional courts of the beys and qazis (Islamic judges) that followed the customary law of the Kazakhs and the sharia (Islamic law) were preserved only at aul level.83
As a result of measures carried out in the years 1867–8, Kazakhstan became a full-fledged colony of Russia. The ethnic territory that had served as the foundation for the Kazakh nation-state was divided up, the judicial system was transformed in accordance with Russian laws, and all Kazakh lands were declared to be state property. All this was an expression of the fundamental principle of Russia’s colonizing policy: divide and rule.

The gravest consequence of the changes was the declaration that all the land of Kazakhstan was the state property of the Russian empire, a declaration which served as the basis for the wide-scale resettlement of hundreds of thousands of peasants from the central provinces of the mother country. These innovations led to protests among the masses and were the reason behind the uprisings by the Kazakhs of Torghay and Ural oblast in the years 1868–69, the uprisings in 1870 on the Mangystau (ex-Mangishlaq) peninsula, and other forms of popular resistance, which were all quashed by the punitive forces of Tsarist Russia.

On 2 June 1886 the ‘Provision on the Administration of the Territory of Turkistan’ was approved. Under this provision, there were to be two Governor-Generalships on the territory of Kazakhstan: Turkistan Governor-Generalship, with its center in Tashkent and consisting of Ferghana, Samarkand and Syr Darya oblast’s; and Steppe Governor-Generalship, with its centre in Omsk and consisting of Akmola, Semipalatinsk, Ural, Torghay and Semirechye oblast. In 1897 Semirechye oblast was transferred to Turkistan.

Under the new provisions, the power of the Governors-General increased significantly. Police administrations were created in the oblast centers in the towns of Verny (later renamed Alma-Ata, then Almaty), Uralsk, Petropavlovsk and Semipalatinsk) and police officer positions were instituted in uezd towns (Akmolinsk [later Akmola, now Astana], Kokshetau, Zaysan, Pavlodar, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kapala, Leninsk and Kostanay). All the basic principles of the ‘temporary provisions’ of the 1860s for Kazakhstan’s administration were retained virtually unchanged. All that changed was that the Per kibitka assessment of other taxes and obligations increased, the power of judicial and police organs increased significantly and the lowest judicial link – the courts of the beys and qazis lost all independence. More and more, the land, which
the reforms of the 1860s had declared to be state property, became the object of plunder for the mother country’s state structures.85

Once Kazakhstan was transformed completely into a colony, Russia put its resettlement policy in motion. Stepping up the resettlement of peasants from Russia’s central provinces to Kazakhstan helped achieve two aims: first, it eased somewhat the social tension in the mother country over the shortage of land and, second, it facilitated the territory’s further colonization, which was part and parcel of its economic development. Peasant colonization took the place of the military-Cossack colonizing that had gone on at the very beginning and later on when Kazakhstan was being transformed into a colony of Russia.

Tsarism made the process of resettling Russian and Ukrainian peasants increasingly purposeful and organized. The systematic resettlement of peasants in Kazakhstan began in the 1870s and reached massive proportions in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and especially in the early twentieth century. Under the agrarian reforms, peasants were permitted to secede from their community with their allotment and create private farms.

In the period from 1893 to 1905, the Kazakhs had 4 million desiatinas (4.4 million ha) (1 desiatina = 1.09 ha) of their best lands confiscated. During 1906 to 1911, more than 17 million desiatinas (18.5 million ha) were confiscated. By 1917, a total of about 45 million desiatinas (49 million ha) of Kazakh lands had been confiscated for Cossack colonization, for the resettlement fund, and for building forts, towns, railroads and so on.86

During the colonial period of Kazakhstan’s history, the ‘civilizing initiative’ belonged in general to the Russian state and representatives of the Russian people. This affected nearly every aspect of the territory’s public-political, socio-economic and cultural life. On the whole, it was a harsh, and in some cases cruel, kind of ‘civilizing’. Nonetheless, it brought some positive changes in Kazakhstan’s public-political and cultural life. The Russian authorities united the native inhabitants of western Turkistan into one estate group, who had access only to low-rank positions in the administration. The number of educated indigenous people was unclear because Russian statistics only
took account of natives able to read Cyrillic, totally disregarding Muslims educated in madrasas and maktabs (elementary schools) and able to write in the vernacular.\textsuperscript{87}

New indigenous officials loyal to the colonial authorities and devoted to change emerged. Supported by the Tsarist administration, they gradually displaced the traditional power-holding elite. For instance, the Russian establishment minimized the role of the \textit{ak suyek} (‘white bone’) aristocracy and elevated the status of loyal underprivileged groups known as the \textit{kara suyek} (‘black bone’) among the Kazakhs by including them in the administration. The large bureaucratic apparatus involved a great number of educated natives regardless of their origins. From the mid-nineteenth century, more \textit{kara suyek} commoners, \textit{biis}, \textit{batyrs} and well-to-do nomads among the Kazakhs had access to positions as senior sultans and rulers than representatives of the \textit{tores}.\textsuperscript{88} These changes followed the repression of the anti-colonial movement led by the \textit{ak suyek Khan} Kenesary Kasymov, who mobilized over 25,000 Kazakhs against the Russian authorities in the 1830s–40s.

The rapidly developing cotton industry created a new class of middlemen between native producers and consumers.\textsuperscript{89} In 1913 the Fergana Valley supplied more than 62 per cent of the cotton imported by Russia (Bukhara – more than 13 per cent, Syr Darya –8 per cent and Samarkand – about 7 per cent). The rise of the cotton-processing industry resulted in accelerated commodity–money relations. This led to the stratification of population and the pauperization of many of them, and simultaneously a greater than ever number of entrepreneurs, money-lenders and usurers (sütkors), brokers (daldals/dalals), resellers (alyp satars) and traders (soodalers/soodagers).

In order to enlarge the cotton-growing area, the Tsarist administration conducted reforms designed to eliminate the feudal landowning class in Turkistan and distributed small plots to local peasants. This transformed farming and led to the development of a processing industry and the emergence of a native proletariat. The introduction of small land tenure gradually destroyed the nomadic households and reduced the area of pastoral pastures. For instance, the fodder supplies of the nomadic Kyrgyz in the Fergana Valley were undermined by cotton expansion and the sowing of wheat on their pastures. In addition, new small food processing and mining enterprises, with a number of wage-workers emerged across Turkistan. But on the whole, it remained a region with mainly
agrarian population. In 1885, even in the largest city Tashkent, only 27 enterprises were in operation, each with an average of more than 10 workers.\textsuperscript{90}

Taxation in cash introduced by the Russian authorities accelerated the stratification between poor and well-off. The commodity-exchange economy and rising taxes contributed to an increase in the number of landless peasants (chairikers), who were forced to offer their labour to wealthy locals (bays) and Russian well-off farmers (kulaks). Cotton monoculture and the hardships of the nomadic and settled populations in the Fergana Valley resulted in the Andijan uprisings in 1898, which involved the inhabitants of Andijan, Osh, Namangan and the surrounding areas. The leader, a Naqshbandi called Ishan Madali, mobilized thousands of impoverished peasants and urban wage-workers under the banner of gazavat, or holy war against non-Muslims. After the defeat of the revolt, the colonial authorities exiled 208 activists to Siberia; among them were 136 Kyrgyzs, 52 Uzbeks, 13 Kashgharís, 4 Turks and 3 Tajiks. Tsar Nicolas II invented a cruel punishment for villages that stood in the way of the anti-colonial movement: all of them were destroyed and levelled to the ground and new Russian settlements were established in their place.\textsuperscript{91}

New economic relations, the rapid stratification of population and the increased pace of rural–urban migration led to urbanization at the beginning of the twentieth century. Slav migrants from Russia consisted of bourgeois, merchants, Cossacks, middle and poor peasants, and a small number of hereditary noblemen (dvoriane). The colonial authorities mostly encouraged the migration of Russian subjects – Christians from among the rural population. The dramatic increase in cotton production led to the construction of railroads, with a consequent influx of Russians to build and service the railways. In Fergana oblast, the number of urban inhabitants doubled between 1880 and 1897. Some settlements and cities established by the Tsarist administration had mainly Russian populations. Russian towns sprang up around railway stations.\textsuperscript{92} For instance, Novy Marghilan (later renamed Skobelev and today Fergana city in Uzbekistan) was planned exclusively as a Russian city. In all cities, the Russian minority enjoyed more privileges than the native population. In addition, the new railroad communications across Russian Turkistan and the Bukhara emirate gradually decreased the importance of the caravan routes linking up with the southern neighbours.
In a hazardous climate, stockbreeding remained the most prestigious employment among the Kazakhs, who lived better than their sedentary counterparts and considered landowners to be second-class citizens. But from the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian administration and peasants started confiscating lands used by the nomadic population. Moreover, the Tsarist authorities forced thousands of impoverished nomadic and semi-nomadic households to settle. The confiscation of lands and economic restructuring led to a mass pauperization of the nomadic peoples and forced them to settle and adopt a sedentary lifestyle. Nomads as a proportion of the population of Turkistan dropped from 84 per cent in 1867 to 57 per cent in 1875. After the incorporation of the Fergana Valley, this figure fell to 47 per cent and on the eve of the socialist revolution in 1917 only a third of the population was engaged in stockbreeding. Sedentarization greatly affected the Kazakhs, the Kyrgyzs and part of the nomadic and semi-nomadic Uzbeks who were unwilling to change a long-established lifestyle and saw the colonial period as the end of era of national prosperity. Despite all the social and economic changes, tribal affiliations were preserved in everyday life.

The influx of Russians and Ukrainians who moved to cities and fertile valleys, thus evicting indigenous pastoral and oasis dwellers, greatly aggravated the inter-religious and inter-ethnic tensions. Russian migrants seized the lands of Kazakhs, expelling them from their traditional territories. For instance, Slavs living in Kazakhstan totalled 1.5 million (28.5 per cent of the total population) by 1911. The process of sedentarization among the Kazakhs provided more opportunities for the Tsarist administration to take possession of lands for the Russian population.

The last straw was when the Tsarists requisitioned the entire male population to serve as the rearguard in 1916, which ignited a mass rebellion across western Turkistan against all Russians and other non-Muslims. Thousands of rebels demanded an end to this male conscription and the return of their territories. After the revolt had been suppressed, the Tsarist administration acknowledged that the main reason for the rebellion was the withdrawal of about 2 million desiatinas (2,179,999 ha) (1 desiatina = 1.09 ha) of land for the state fund and consequently a shortage of land and pastures among the Kazakhs. First World War, the Russian authorities had expropriated almost 20 per cent of the Kazakh nomads’ common lands.
The Russian administration did not consider the major part of these lands as the private property of the native populations. For instance, a revision conducted in Turkistan in 1909 by Senator Palen determined that in three oblasts (Fergana, Syr Darya and Samarkand), the right to private land extended over less than 1 per cent of the sown areas.

The Tatar commercial bourgeoisie played a distinct role in the social and cultural transformation of the Turkistan colony. Speaking Turkic and Russian, they enthusiastically moved to Turkistan, bringing their own economic resources and skills. By 1926 the number of Tatars in Central Asia had reached 119,000. In Kazakhstan they became the largest minority after Russians and Ukrainians. Volga Tatars, who are linguistically close to all Turkic-speaking peoples, successfully served as intermediaries between the Russian administration and local merchants and as educators and religious men in promoting Islam among the nomads. For instance, Kazakh and Kyrgyz neighbourhoods gave a good reception to peripatetic Tatar mullahs and traders. As Edward J. Lazzerini has indicated:

By the turn of the nineteenth century the Tatar diaspora, with its modernist mentality and economic resources to support a range of reformist activities involving publishing, education, religion, economics, language, and social relations, would shape a developmental model attractive for many Turkic brethren faced with the challenge of preserving known ways while evolving a modern society.

Families remained large, but high child mortality led to few surviving children in the family. Polygamy was common among the well-off Muslim families and marked high social and economic status among the men. Inter-ethnic marriages between Muslims were considered customary, whereas both sides condemned interreligious marriages between Muslims and Christians. Property, knowledge and privileges were transferred. As a rule, among the Muslim nomadic population, the youngest son inherited the largest part of his father’s rights over pastures and property. On the other
hand, market relations in the colonial period promoted a breakdown of the large patriarchal family and helped to weaken kinship relations

**Soviet Kazakhstan**

During the first few years of the 20th century, tensions provoked by agricultural reforms and economic difficulties experienced by the population led to a large scale uprising. The immediate cause was the promulgation of a degree of 25 June 1916 under which Kazakhs and other Asian population were mobilised to form ‘labour battalions’ employed for military purpose in zones behind the front.

Riots initially broke out in Uzbek region, but quickly spread to Kazakhstan, taking the form of national insurrection. Thousands of Russian colonists were massacred and tens of thousands of Kazaks died while more than 3,00,000 nomads (mostly Kazakhs) sought refuge in China to escape the repression. The revolt was shifted everywhere except in the black lands regions of Turgay, where the rebels and their leaders Amangeldy Imanov and Alibiy Gjanghildin were based, it persisted until February, 1917.96

In 1917, Russia’s weakened imperial government collapsed under pressure from Marxist revolutionaries. Civil war between the provisional Soviet government—led by the Bolsheviks—and royalist, anti-Bolshevik forces waged from 1918–1920. After the Soviets emerged victorious, they reestablished control over the Kazakh region, where an indigenous Kazakh political party, known as *Alash Orda*, had made efforts to form a provisional government.97 The Soviets named the greater area the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic on 20 August 1920. In 1925, three years after the official establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), the region was reconfigured and renamed the Kazakh Autonomous Republic. It later became a full Soviet Republic in 1936 under the leadership of Joseph Stalin.98

Upon the overthrow of Tsarism in Russia, all strata of the Kazakh society came to be actively evolved in politics in setting up all sorts of political, professional and youth organizations.99 The surviving Kazakh leaders joined the *Alash Orda* nationalist movement. It had been formed in 1905, and after October Revolution allied itself with the anti-Bolshevik Cossacks of Orenburg and the Urals. The *Alash Orda*, formed a short
lived government over a vast region, which was declared autonomous in December 1917, with Semipalatinsk as its capital. The systematic opposition of the 'whites' to Kazakh aspiration for independence drove the Alash Orda to unite with Bolsheviks with whom an accord was signed to safeguard the interests of the ‘Kazakh nation’.

The Bolsheviks could not afford to antagonize the Kazakh nationalists at the time when its power was not fully consolidated in Central Asia. Alash leader were called to participate in Communist party Congress at Orenburg in March 1920. Alash had little choice but to join victors of the civil war, if it was to survive.

As a result of the Congress, Alash set up a government of the Eastern Alash Orda in Semipalatinsk and elected Ali Khan Bukey Khanov as president. They also formed western Alash Orda government in Zhambietu, Alash government refused to join either Reds or whites, resisting them both till January 1918, when Bolsheviks captured Orenburg and disbanded Alash Orda government. Many Alash leaders began to negotiate with the white armies. By the Summer of 1918, the white armies under Admiral Kolchak had cut off Central Asia from Russia after defeating the Bolsheviks. After joining Admiral Kolchak, Alash leaders became horrified at the cruelty of the white Armies, and Kolchak refused to allow any of the Kazakh demand of autonomy. By 1919, Alash had joined the Bolsheviks who by late 1920 defeated Kolchak, although sporadic fighting was continuing until 1923.

On 10 July 1919, a decree was signed creating a “Kazakh-Kirghiz” Revolutionary Committee and with the help of Red Army, liquidated all nationalists. On 26 August 1920 the Kazakh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was created and in October, the first constituent Congress of Soviets of the new Republic was held with the participation of many Alash leaders. Unlike Turkestan ASSR, the Kazakh ASSR was based on the ethno-linguistic factor of a native nationality, the Kazakhs. Later, the Republic became Kazakh ASSR in 1925 and on 5 Dec 1936, it became a full Soviet Socialist Republic within the USSR. However all the expectation of seeking larger autonomy for Turkestan and Kazakhstan by the Alash leader under the new Bolshevik regime were belied and all these nationalists were destined to die by 1934 as victims of Stalinist purges.
Since the national delimitation of 1924, Soviet officials worked hard to increase the distinctiveness of Central Asian nationalities. The end result of this linguistic-cultural revolution was the creation of six new literary languages (Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkmen and Tajik) in a society that had previously used Chaghatay Turkic, or Persian. Education system was restructured, expanded and modernized along uniform Soviet lines. The Cyrillic alphabet was adopted in 1940. During Stalin's time, Kazakhstan was heavily industrialized and communications and infrastructure were improved. However, Kazakhstan was one of the worst affected regions during Stalin's campaigns in the early 1930s, to collectivize agriculture and settle nomadic population. The introduction of a planned economy and the collectivization of agriculture aggravated the dislocation of the traditional economy of Kazakhstan. It increased the dominant role of cotton in the irrigated areas. One million people were estimated to have died as a result of starvation and the percentage of the Kazakhs in their own Republic fell to 29 per cent. Livestock losses were enormous as people killed their animals rather than had them over to collectives. The number of cattle was shrunk from 7.4 million heads in 1929 to 1.6 million in 1933 and of sheep from 21.9 million heads to 1.7 million.

Throughout Stalin’s rule, the local communist parties were Russian dominated although the cadres in the countryside were drawn heavily from the indigenous population. The 1930s was the period of establishment of totalitarianism in Kazakhstan which entailed massive political repressions. All the leaders of Alash were executed during Stalin's purges of which Ahmed Baythrsun was first to be executed in 1925. The total power enjoyed by the communist elite created a new bureaucratic aristocracy in the supposedly classless society of the Kazakhs. The policy of cotton monoculture became pronounced in 1930s but from 1960s it reached monstrous proportions. The Kazakhs ever since the civil war turned minority in their own homeland. The official versions of the Republic's history portrayed the Russian conquest not as a conquest but as "voluntary unification" of Kazakhs.

In the pre-World War-II period, mass deportation of many nationalities like Germans, Chechens, Bashkirs, and others had begun. In the World War II, Kazakhstan lost nearly 425,000 people. During the Second World War, Kazakhstan was the front’s
arsenal. About 1.2 million Kazakhs took direct part in military action against Nazi Germany. On the eve of and during the war, 102,000 Poles from the western regions of the USSR, more than 360,000 Germans from the Volga regions, hundreds of thousands of Koreans from the Far East, Chechens, Ingush, Karachays and Balkaretses from the Caucasus, Crimean Tatars and Meskhetian Turks were all deported to Kazakhstan. The Republic played host to hundreds of thousands of evacuated people. In the post-war period, under Khrushchev (1953-64), Kazakhstan entered the era of intensive economic development. Inauguration of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR took place in 1946. Huge industrial complexes were built in north and east of Kazakhstan. Baikonur Space Centre was started at Leninsk. The province of Semipalatinsk, in eastern Kazakhstan was chosen as the area for Soviet nuclear experiments.

In order to boost agricultural production in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev announced his Virgin Lands Scheme in February 1954. The Kazakh steppes were declared virgin territory. The authorities allocated land to hundreds of volunteers from Russia and Ukraine for agricultural use. Some 62 million acres out of the 104 million acres ploughed between 1954 and 1960 were in Kazakhstan. But due to widespread storms and wind erosion between 1960 and 1964, four million hectares of farmland were ruined and 12 million hectares were damaged. However, this campaign resulted in the increase of the ethnic Russian population in the total population of Kazakhstan from 19.7 per cent in 1926 to 42.7 per cent in 1959.

In the political arena, Khrushchev dismissed all Stalin era party leadership. However, the pattern established in the late Stalin years continued to dominate: first secretaries came from the indigenous nationality and second secretaries, generally charged with supervising personnel were Russians. The failure of Virgin Land campaign led Khrushchev to replace Ponomarenko by Brezhnev in July 1955 as Secretary in Kazakhstan. He initiated a programme of transforming collective farms into state run enterprises, thus putting Kazakh farmers, unfamiliar with modern agricultural and livestock breeding practices, under the supervision of highly trained Slav cadres and improving output as well as economic integration of the new agricultural lands of Kazakhstan. Brezhnev was able to present Virgin Lands Scheme as a modern economic miracle.
With the accession of Brezhnev as Supreme leader (1964-82), the party elites of the local nationalists came to dominate the political life of Kazakhstan. The Brezhnev years were a period of remarkable political stability throughout Central Asia. The tenures of the Republican First Secretaries were marked by unprecedented longevity. In 1964, Dinmuhamad Kunayev, a Kazakh and Brezhnev loyalist was party chief in Kazakhstan. He now controlled a Republic of about eleven million, which had during the past decade absorbed sizeable Slav work force. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of young politically conscious Russian and Ukrainian volunteers to participate in Grow More Food Campaign of 1954-63 led to a substantial increase in the membership of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan and strengthened the Slav hold over the party. Dinmuhamad Kunayev tried to redress the imbalance by reactivating the Kazakhs to join the party and play an active role. Gradually, Kunayev who stayed in Kazakhstan until December 1986 started building his own power base by putting members of his clan Great Orda into powerful bureaucratic positions. During his tenure, a new Kazakh political mafia developed, owing complete allegiance to Moscow but at the same time consolidating Kazakh nationalism. During the final years of Brezhnev, the party hierarchy arrogated greater powers to itself and was losing touch with the Kazakh people. There was widespread pilferage, bribery and nepotism, giving impetus to a parallel economy. Under "scientific atheism" and communism, which was withering, Islam started revivalist tendency among Kazakhs because they felt a need to fill the moral-ethical vacuum left by the erosion of morality among the party cadres.

These developments occurred against the background of the diminishing power of Kunayev. The first sign came during the rule of Andropov. He wanted to diverge from the Brezhnevite line whereas Kunayev was for continuing the old policies. The brief tenure of Cherenenko, as the First Secretary of the CPSU failed to reverse the trend. This downslide was sought to be addressed by Mikhail Gorbachev, who after assuming the position of General Secretary in 1985 initiated his perestroika and glasnost to refurbish the entire politico-administrative system of the Soviet Union.

By mid-1980s, radical changes in the Soviet policy became obvious and undeniable as ever before. One problem was corruption among high officials. Soviet government was fully aware of the surge of native power in Kazakhstan but could not do
anything to remedy the situation. The Kazakh leaders of the final Soviet era were Kazakh nationalists. Family, clan, tribe, Horde were determining factors by which power and positions of comfort were distributed and by the time Kunayev rose to be top leader, these considerations came to the fore. Though Moscow appeared satisfied with the state of affairs, doubts remained about the nepotism. The doubts burst into the open after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev sought to rectify the situation by bringing openness in the system. This, however, brought about the collapse of the whole system. After Gorbachev assumed the position of General Secretary in 1985, he made effort to clean up the Central Asian party and state organs. The corruption and inefficient management of the Central Asian Communist parties was discussed at length at the 27th Party Congress of the CPSU. The rampant corruption of the Kunayev regime and his mafia style politics led Gorbachev to dismiss him in December 1986. He was replaced by Gennadi Kolbin, an ethnic Russian outsider to clean up the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (CPK). His elevation to the highest party job in the second largest republic of USSR sent shock waves throughout Kazakhstan. The appointment of Zakash Kamalidenov - a Kazakh as Second Secretary failed to pacify the popular mood since it reversed the order of giving primacy to Kazakhs that had prevailed for the past 22 years. Replacing Kunayev with Kolbin only deepened the divide that had existed between the centre and the periphery, strengthening Kazakh nationalism even within the Kazakh ranks of the CPK. On 17 December 1986, a few days after Kolbin took over, anti-Russian riots against Kolbin's appointment broke out in Alma Ata, the then capital of Kazakhstan.¹¹⁴

On 17 December 1986, some 10,000 people took to the streets in Almaty. A number of protesters mainly young people and students gathered on the main square of Almaty and staged demonstrations against Kolbin - what they viewed as an assault on their nationality. They carried placards saying, "We are for Kazakhstan", "Kazakhstan for Kazakhs." The Communist Party leadership organized a counter-demonstration by workers and they attacked the demonstrators. In the subsequent confrontation, which involved police opening fire, between two and twenty people lost their lives and between 763 and 1,137 received injuries; between 2,212 to 2,336 demonstrators were arrested.¹¹⁵ Within two days, the riots spread to twelve other cities
in the Republic. Chimkent and Zambyl were the other worst hit towns. The event was a watershed in the history of Kazakhstan, giving birth to a party called Zeltoksan (literally meaning December), the Decembrists. It was often portrayed as the first spontaneous democratic uprising of the Kazakhs.

Kolbin showed sensitivity towards the Kazakhs throughout his nearly five year tenure in the republic. He was responsible for legislation mandating Kazakh to become one of the two official languages of the Republic and he himself earned fluency in speaking Kazakh. However, Kolbin carried out purging of Communist Youth League Members. He also took action against those who were found participating in religious ceremonies. Said Aga Ziyayev, the head of the party in Zambyl province was sacked for a public show of respect for religious rites. Both these cases were highly publicized, thus further inflaming Kazakh susceptibilities. In the spring of 1989, word went around in the cities of western Kazakhstan that the refugees from Armenia, which had suffered a devastating earthquake in December, were being offered scarce housing in Kazakhstan. This triggered riots which were quickly suppressed. The event which was symptomatic of rising resentment, especially among youth, provided Gorbachev with a rationale to return the top Republican Party job to a Kazakh.

In June 1989, when Nursultan Nazarbayev was elected as first Secretary of the CPK's Central Committee replacing Kolbin, a step which cooled Kazakh sentiments, but did not guarantee peace. Nazarbayev emerged as the most important leader because of his skillful handling of the crisis that was to follow in the Soviet Union and in Kazakhstan itself. He played local politics skillfully balancing Kazakh clan interests with Moscow's directives. Nazarbayev found ways of asserting Kazakh autonomy in order to satisfy the local discontent. In September 1989, Kazakh Supreme Soviet passed a law making Kazakh the official language and limiting certain civil service posts to Kazakh speakers. To meet the rising demand for autonomy, Kazakh Supreme Soviet declared the primacy of Kazakh legislation over Soviet laws. This provided the framework within which parliament could translate Kazakh nationalism into specific legislation. He protested to Moscow at the continued use of Kazakh territory for nuclear testing which resulted in pollution and created environmental hazards.
Sensing the rising mood in favour of devolution, Haji Radbek Nisanbayev mounted a coup against the Spiritual Directorate of Central Asia based in Tashkent and established an Independent Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Kazakhstan in December 1989. It soon made plans to open new mosques and an Institute of Islamic Studies in Alma Ata. Since the bloody episode of December 1986, Kazakhstan's governance under Nazarbayev underwent a sea change from being a mouthpiece of Moscow's will to mirroring the genuine feelings of the people, thus shifting the balance in favour of the ethnic Kazakhs.

Meanwhile, perestroika and glasnost had gained their own momentum at the centre of the USSR and all over the nation. Spearheaded by the three Baltic Republics, the drive for independence burst forth along the non-Russian members of the Union. As the crisis grew in the Soviet Union, Nazarbayev remained loyal to Gorbachev's dream of political and economic changes to be carried out without redrawing the map of the Soviet Union. He was Gorbachev's chief ally during negotiations over the new Union Treaty in 1991 and argued with Gorbachev fiercely against the break-up of the Soviet Union. As stated in his political autobiography Bez Pravykh Levykh (without Rights or Lefts), he wanted a careful balance between centre's respect for sovereignty of individual republic and the republic's recognition of the strategic inter-dependence built into the Soviet state structure. Nazarbayev stressed the need for a "single economic space" and "single, strategic space" within a new Union. He knew very well that if the Soviet state broke up, Kazakhstan's Russian population in the north would be irrevocably antagonized and peace in the region could be jeopardized.

Apparently, the hardline centralists in Kremlin felt that too much power was being conceded to the republics by the new Union Treaty to be signed on 20 August 1991 and that spurred them under Yeltsin to mount a coup against Gorbachev. Unlike most Central Asian leaders, Nazarbayev came out against the coup and its failure was enthusiastically received in Alma Ata. Once the coup was crushed, Nazarbayev moved fast. On 26 August 1991, he resigned as First Secretary of the CPK, saying the party had discredited itself in the eyes of the people. At a special Congress of People's Deputies on 7 September 1991, the CPKZ was renamed as the Socialist Party
despite protests by many communists. Encouraged by the upsurge in his popularity after the coup, Russian President Yelstin declared that he was prepared to question the borders between Russia and Kazakhstan - arguing that these had been delineated, in disregard of the ethnic complexities during a period when a single party Soviet state seemed destined to last indefinitely. It unnerved Nazarbayev and fuelled Kazakh nationalism represented by the Azat movement and Alash Orda. Nazabayev protested against new Russian chauvinism.

This led Nazarbayev to renegotiate the Union Treaty advocating a strong centre in order to maintain control over military and economic infrastructure of the USSR and also to restrain Russian democrats under Yeltsin. He wanted to preserve the present Union, although in a modified form. In October 1991, Kazakhstan signed with seven other Republics, a treaty to establish an economic community with Presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine abstaining. The new agreement was meant to provide a guideline for a similar set up in the political arena, the two together producing the Union of Sovereign States to replace USSR. In order to implement more effectively the forthcoming reforms in Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev decided to hold a popular ballot for the presidency. On 1st December 1991, Nazarbayev was elected President in the first direct Presidential election in Kazakhstan, but on the same day Ukraine voted for independence, thus upsetting Gorbachev's plan of putting Russia and Ukraine as the axis around which a multinational union of sovereign states was to be formed.

When the Presidents of three Slavic Republics of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus announced the creation of Commonwealth of Independent States by adopting the Belovezhskoye Agreement on December 8, 1991, they terminated Gorbachev's attempts to form a new Confederation replacing USSR. After initial reluctance, Kazakhstan agreed to join the new Commonwealth. On 16 December 1991, the Kazakh Supreme Soviet declared its Republic as an independent sovereign state. Finally, the agreement that was to break up the Soviet Union and change the map of the world was agreed by all the Republican leaders at Almaty on 21 December 1991 with Nazarbayev presiding. The Republic of Kazakhstan emerged on the political map of the world with a bitter noting by its Vice-President Yerlik Asanbayev, "We became
independent by a process of elimination. We were the only ones left. They left us independent.”

**Independent Kazakhstan**

By October 1991, the August 1991 putsch in Moscow, which hastened the collapse of the USSR, had encouraged the majority of the former Union Republics to declare independence. The final stage in the transformation of Kazakh statehood in the twentieth century was connected with the collapse of the Soviet empire and the formation of post-Soviet states on the former territory of the USSR. On 16 December 1991 the Constitutional Law on the Independent Statehood of the Republic of Kazakhstan was passed, and on that basis state independence was declared. Independent Kazakhstan was founded as a democratic, secular state and rule-of-law. Political parties and public associations could now be formed. The media were freed from ideological control and censorship. ‘Gaps in history’ were filled in, victims of political repression were rehabilitated, and the scientific and artistic heritage of cultural figures who had perished for no reason was restored to the people. For the Kazakh people and for all citizens of Kazakhstan, the twentieth century was an important historical period of hopes and doubts, full of struggle at various levels and with very diverse Consequences.

Looking at history of Kazakhstan it emerges that Kazakhs had never experienced democracy before its independence in 1991. Political hierarchies with Khans, Tsars and Communist Party Secretaries at the top of power and clan elders, imperial governors and obkom functionaries towards the bottom left little room for mass political participation. That is why independence does not entail Kazakhs returning to native democratic values. There were no established political institutions which reflected the will of the people. The rulers did not foster democratic values, free functioning of media, social organisations and political parties. Kazakhstan has seen fragmented clan based nomadism through two centuries of foreign domination. It never existed as a consolidated independent state and therefore Kazakh national identity could not develop. Even during Gorbachev years Kazakhstan had not witness the powerful national movements agitating for independence, and Nursultan Nazarbaev had only reluctantly
welcomed the collapse of the USSR and accepted independence. This has hindered the evolution of democracy in post 1991 Kazakhstan.
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