Chapter I

Central Asian Khanates: A Profile

(A). Central Asia: General Features:

Central Asia or what was historically called Turkestan, was a huge landmass comprising the territories between the Amu and Syr Rivers (Mawaranahr in Arabic), Xinjiang or Chinese Central Asia, Khwarizm, Afghanistan, North West Frontiers of India including Sind, Multan and Kashmir, Mongolia and Tibet.\(^1\) However, the name Central Asia was used by Alexander Von Humboldt in 1843 A.D. to define a geographical space housing only what constitutes the modern five Central Asian Republics (CARs) of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan. Any way, the region had several fascinations: the home to diverse ethnic groups and rich arts, cultures, learning, philosophy, faiths and ideologies.

The region had a varying political history under the Greeks (4th c. B.C.), Parthians and Persians (2nd c. B. C - 226 A.D.), Kushans (3rd-5th c. A.D.), Huns (425 A.D.-557 A.D.), Arabs (8th c. -10th c. A.D.), Samanids (819-1005 A.D.), Turks (12th-13th c. A.D.), Mongols (13th c.-15th c. A.D.), Uzbeks (1600-1860 A.D.), Tsars

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(1860-1917 A.D.) and the Soviets (1917-1991 A.D.): 2 each dynasty transmitted its influence on the region which together transformed the region into a mixed brand of nomadic and sedentary cultures. 3 Significantly, it saw the rule of the three important independent Uzbek Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand, all situated in the basins of Amu, Syr and Zarafshan Rivers respectively. 4 [Map 1.1]

(B). Khanates: Geo-Physical Frame:

The Khanate of Bukhara, founded by the Manghits towards late 18th c., 5 was surrounded by the Taklamakan Desert in the north, Badakshan in the south of Afghanistan, the Khanate of Khokand in the east and River Oxus in the west. 6 The Khanate of Khokand, established by Alim Khan of Ming Dynasty in 1798-99 A.D., 7

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4 Khanate defines a kingdom controlled by the king called Khan, who like the Sultans of Baghdad and Hindustan (India) was the administrative, judicial and civil chief. Moreover, he considered himself the representatives of God on the Earth: Devendra Kaushik, Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from Early 19th Century, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970, p.29; “The Political Geography of Soviet Central Asia: Integrating the Central Asian Frontiers,” Geographical Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia, pp. 40-41.

5 The Manghits were the Turkic nomadic tribes who traced their origin to the Mongol tribe of the Mangkits. In the 13th century, they moved westwards out of Mongolia and settled in Dash-i-Qipckak located on the western side of the Caspian Sea. Subsequently, they dispersed in different directions and settled in Volga, Ural, Bukhara, Khiva, Zarafshan River valley and other towns of Jizak and Karshi and thereby merged with theUzbeks, Karakal-paks and the Kazakhs. Influenced by the sedentary culture, they adopted agriculture and crafts though some of them did not abandon their semi-nomadic way of life: Chahryar Adle and Irfan Habib, History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. V, Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2003, pp 53-54; Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from Early 19th century, p.29.


7 Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from Early 19th century, p.29.
was encircled by the Great Horde (Southern Russia) in the north, Karategin and Badakshan on the south, Bukhara in the west and China (Xinjiang) in the east.\(^8\)

Lastly, the Khanate of Khiva, also known also as Khwarizm,\(^9\) was situated towards the deserted cities of Fitnek in the south-east, Kungrat and Kohne Urjendj in the north-west\(^10\) and Medinen Koktceg in the south.\(^11\) Together with their distinct location, all of them constituted three separate territorial and administrative divisions of Central Asia before October Revolution of 1917 in Russia.

The Khanates sprawled over deserts, steppes, rivers, forests, oases, and mountains: 3/5th was under deserts, steppes and semi-arid terrain, and 1/5th under mountains and foot hills.\(^12\) With such a complex geographical texture and the distinct location from the seas,\(^13\) their climate was dry and continental,\(^14\) which caused lack of precipitation and conditions of extreme aridity in the region.\(^15\) However, the climate varied from place to place leading to regionalization of the physical geography in different ecological/physical zones in terms of climate, soil, precipitation, and vegetation.\(^16\) These macro-vegetation zones had again their specific deserts, steppes, forests and mountains.

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8 Travels in Central Asia, p.380.
9 Khwarizm is a Persian word meaning ‘war like’ or ‘rejoicing in war’. So the people residing in the land came to be called Khurasm in history.
10 Kohne Urjendj means the Old Urjendj, and was opposed to Yenji Urjendj, which means New Urjendj. The latter was the capital of the Khanate.
13 This geographical isolation from the oceans limited the scope of the region to play any role in the maritime trade: Travels in Central Asia, p. 1.
Deserts (low deserts) constituted the maximum area in the geo-physical frame of the Khanates. Karakum Desert, between the mountains of south ranges and the Amu River alone stretched over 3, 50,000 sq. kms. Another desert located towards the east of the Amu River, was Qazilkum followed by the Chuli Bukhara, Ha Darvesh, Chuand, Aqqum, and Golodnaya deserts. Most of the deserts were hot and lacked precipitation; hence lifeless. Whatever little water was there to the depth of pits and wells, it was brackish and salty. The number of rainfall days was

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18 Literally Karakum means ‘Black Desert’ in Turkic language. The area under the desert was divided broadly into two regions – Central Karakurum and the Zaunguz Pleatue. The vegetation was primarily ephemeral drought resistant plants like psammophyte seibroshwood, the saksaul trees which were the sources of excellent wood for their high calorific value: “The Physical Geography of Soviet Central Asia and the Aral Sea Problem,” *Geographic Perspective on Soviet Central Asia*, pp. 81; *Mission to Tashkant*, pp. 261, 169; *Physical Geography of Asiatic Russia*, p.439.

19 Kazilkum, literally meaning ‘Red Sand’, stretched from Amu Darya to the foot hills of the Tianshan Mountains. The landscape throughout offered complex relief than the Karakum Desert. “The Physical Geography of Soviet Central Asia and the Aral Sea Problem,” *Geographic Perspective on Soviet Central Asia*, p. 82; *History of Inner Asia*, pp. 2-3.

20 Called as the Chuli Namaksar in the vicinity of Bukhara, the desert was wide enough and took fourteen days to cross it on the camel back. It deadness was such that the Mongols, known for their bravery, avoided passage through it. However, Shabani Khan is reported to have crossed it five times, and Abdullah Khan tried to populate it in 1585 AD by constructing mosques, ribats (frontier stations), and sardabhas (grottoes) and by assigning waste land as waqf: Hafiz Tanish, *Abdullahnama*, MS, Indian Office Library, Etde 574, ff. 103-104: Cf. *Central Asia in Sixteenth Century*, 15.

21 The desert was between Khojand and Kandi Badam and was known for its violent and whirlwinds. *Baburnama*, Eng. tr A.S. Beveridge, New Delhi, 1989, p. 9.

22 *Central Asia in Sixteenth Century*, pp. 15-16.

23 The maximum annual precipitation was six inches (146 millimeters) and the minimum was 1.8 inches. This lack of precipitation produced extreme aridity, highest amount of salinity, alkalinity which affected agriculture in the region.


less than forty days. Steppes were almost similarly situated for they had no trees but shrubs. These steppes extended across Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and reached up to the Altai, Koppet Dag and Tian Shan ranges. They had simultaneously two types of rich black soil - dark chestnut soils and light chestnut soils. Former type existed in Ukraine and Kazak steppes and the latter in the present Central Asia. The climate was continental and maximum temperature in summer reached up to 40°C and below freezing point in winter. These steppes were moisture-deficient as the annual average precipitation was between 10 inches to 20 inches and the precipitation-evaporation ratio was 30%-59% which suited to pastoralism if not agriculture. However, few steppes were bestowed with water resources. On the other hand, oases of the Khanates were situated between the deserts and the steppes, generally on the foot of the mountains and the banks of the river valleys: Amu, Zarafshan, Murgab etc. Some of the oases occupied narrow belts, while others stretched over miles and miles together.

Such was the severity of the desert that the travellers had to often, if not always, kill their own camels and horses for food: Purchas and His Pilgrims, pp.13, 21.

The highest temperature in these steppes was recorded at 79°C though in January, it dipped to below the freezing point (-12°C in the lower Syr River in Kazakhstan): Lawrence Krader, The Peoples of Central Asia, London: Indiana University Publications, 1963, p. 15.

The maximum rainfall occurred in spring. Summers were dry and long as there were 204-288 working days of the season. Similarly, in Surkhan Darya oasis, had 202 clear days and only 37 cloudy days: Physical Geography of Soviet Central Asia, p. 78.

The moisture problem was not that serious as steppes contained major river systems and tributaries like that of Ob Irytsh, which drained the Kazak steppes. The Amu drained the tributaroes of Liao and Sungari in the northern parts of Central Asia: Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia, p. 36.

For example, the middle Amu Darya oasis, in contrast to other oases, unceasingly stretched over hundreds of miles. It was endowed with water and fertile soil (alluvial soil) sufficing cultivation as a major feed to the humans since antiquity: A.M. Khazanov, “Nomads and Oases in Central Asia,” in Transition to Modernity: Essays on Power, Wealth and Belief, John A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, (ed.), London: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 69-70; Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia, pp. 37-38.
The oases had river support systems and the important were the Amu and the Syr Rivers. The former was the largest river stretching over some 2,540 kms. in length. It originated from the Hindu Kush (Vrevshi Glacier) and was fed by the snowy water.\textsuperscript{34} The river deposits were the alluvium, phosphorus, lime and potassium especially in Bukhara and Samarkand which sufficed agriculture.\textsuperscript{35} Another largest river, Syr Darya, originated from central Tien Shan, also called Naryn. On merging with the Kashkadarya, it assumed the name of Syr Darya which flowed through Farghana, Bukhara and Khiva and finally terminated into Aral Sea.\textsuperscript{36} Generally, three-quarter of the water surface was used for cotton cultivation during the Soviet period.\textsuperscript{37}

Mountains-forests formed yet another geographical zone. They constituted just 10\% of the whole topography of the Khanates.\textsuperscript{38} The southern Bukhara and south-eastern part of Khokand were fully located in the Pamir-Altai and Tien Shan mountains. These mountains abounded with species of flora and fauna,\textsuperscript{39} water resources, timber and fuel wood.

\textsuperscript{34} Peter Sinnot, “The Physical Geography of Soviet Central Asia and the Aral Sea Problem,” \textit{Geographical Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia (ed.)}, p. 83.


\hspace{1cm} In 1959, the total inflow into the Aral Sea by the two rivers was estimated at 58.3 cubic kilometers, which by 1989 declined to 4.3 cubic kilometers due to extensive monoculture as the most strategic crop under the Soviets.


\textsuperscript{39} The flora consisted of 8094 species of plants belonging to the aster family (Asteraceae) including wild plants with 1,352 species, the legumes (Fabaceae) with 927 species, mint family (plants which include plants with flavour) with 455 species, parsley family (ornament flowers) with 415 species, brassicaceae family (it includes vegetables like sag, turnip, bringel, mustard, reddish, carrot, etc.) with 264 species and Rosaceae (flowers) with 264 species: A. R.
(C). Ethnic Composition/Occupation:

The population of the Khanates was composed of different ethnic groups, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Karakalpaks, Qipchaqs, Persians, Hindus, Mukhamejanov, “Natural life and the Manmade Habitat in Central Asia,” History of Civilizations of Central Asia, C.E. Bosworth, M. S. Asimov (ed.), Part V, pp. 275-276.

40 Uzbeks, professionally nomads belonged to mixed Turkic, Mongol and Iranian stock. By 1500 AD, they moved from Dasht-i-Qipchaq to the south and southeastern sides and settled in different parts of Turkestan, Zarafshan, Kashkadarya and Bukhara: Symour Becker, Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924, London: Harvard University Press, 1968, p. 7; A History of Inner Asia, p. 42.

41 By the 18th century, they were the most dominant ethnic group in three Khanates and had ninety-seven tribes (taifs) out of which thirty-six tribes (taifs) lived in Bukhara. However, they differed from each other in complexion, living pattern, manners, and social etiquettes. For example, the Uzbek of Bukhara was fair in complexion and the Uzbeks of Khokand in their loose clumsy dress looked like a helpless person: Travels in Central Asia, p. 380. Khivan Uzbek although honest than Bukharans had savageous character of the nomads: Travels in Central Asia, p. 346. Even in music and national poetry, Khivan Uzbeks were distinct from their Khokand counterparts although he was more coward than the Bukharans and Khivans: The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times, p. 365; Lawrence Krader, The Peoples of Central Asia, Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, 1963, pp. 60-63.

42 Meant in Turkic as ‘men who wandered about the fields,’ the Kyrgyz were pure nomads. They were at times called as the Kazakhs for their similar ethnic character and lived mostly in Khokand in the southern parts between Khokand and Sarikkul. In Bukhara, they lived in eastern parts of Karategin: Travels in Central Asia, p. 382; K.R. Kuehnast and D. Strouthes, “Kyrgyz : Muslim Community of Kyrgyzstan,” Encyclopedic Ethnography of Middle East and Central Asia, (ed.), R. Khanam, Vol. II, New Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2005, pp. 506-507; Russian Protectorates of Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924, p. 7.

43 The Tajiks were very brave and beautiful and the tradition goes that “God made them with bones like those of horses and animals in their eyes - the crowning work of creation:” Travels in Central Asia, pp. 349, 369, 382, The Peoples of Central Asia, pp. 63-66.

44 Turkmens, descendents of the Turkic nomads, came to Central Asia in the 10th century from the Eurasian Steppes and settled in the south of Caspian Sea to the Amu Darya i.e., mostly in the Khanate of Khiva: Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924, p.7. In Bukhara, they were in minority as they simply constituted 5-10% of the total population: Mary Hordsworth, Turkestan in Nineteenth Century, London, 1959, p. 3. Rawlinson opines that they belonged to the Uzbek ethnic group and their chief tribes were: (i) Chadur who lived between Caspian and Aral Sea with 12,000 tents; (ii) Ersaris along the Amu Darya with 50,000 tents; (iii) Salov and Saruk on the Murgab and the Khojand territories with 20,000 tents; (iv) Tekke on the skirts of the hills from Merv to the Caspian Sea with 60,000 tents; (v) Youmut and Goklans along the shore of Caspian and boarders of Persia with 50,000 tents: George
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Jews, Arabs, Uighurs, Kashmiries, etc. Each one of them had sub-ethnic groups based on different language, physiogamy and culture. For example, Khivans having

Rawlinson, *A Memoir of Maj. General Sir Henry Crewickle Rawlinson*, London, 1898, p. 333. But Vembry divides them chiefly into two tribes namely - Youmuts and Tchandor (Rawlinson’s Chadur tribe). Former were settled and the latter were the wanderers: *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 348.

44 The name Karakalpak was the constituent of two words - "Kara" meaning ‘black’, and ‘Kalpak’ meaning ‘hat’. They mostly lived in Khiva along the shores of Amu Darya up to Kungrat which forms the present Karalpakistan Autonomous Republic of Uzbekistan. They had ten tribes-Baymakali, Khandekli, Terstamgali, Atchamayli, Kaytchili Khitai, Ingakli, Kenegoz, Tomboyun, Shakoo and Ontonturuk: *Travels in Central Asia*, pp.348-349. As per the estimates of 1990, their number in the entire world was 6,50,000, out of which about 3, 50,000 lived in the Autonomous Republic of Karalpakistan (Uzbekistan): V.L.Mote, “Karakalpaks” in *Encyclopedic Ethnography of Middle – East and Central Asia*, R. Khanam (ed.), Vol. II, p. 401.

45 Qipchaqs were the primitive original Turkish race. They lived mostly in Khokand and played a dominant role in the political affairs of the Khanate. They spoke a dialect, which was mixture of Mongolian and Djagatai languages, and in physical features, they resembled with Mongolians: *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 383.

46 Persians were the earliest inhabitants of Central Asia who serviced as Iranians speaking Tajiks: V. V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History Central Asian*, translation from Russian by V. and Minorsky, Vol. I, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1956, p. 15. Being Shais, they served as slaves in the Amir’s office and practised small trade and handicrafts. However, by dint of bravery, some rose to high positions. For example, Shahrukh Khan and Mohammad Hassan Khan and their Topchibachi (chiefs of artillery) Zeinal Beg, Mohmad Bey, and Leshkar Bey served as commanders in Bukharan Khanate: *Russian Protectorates of Central Asia, Bukhara and Khiva*, 1865-1924, p. 7; *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 371.


48 Jews were the migrants from Kazvin and Merv (Iran) and settled in Bukhara, Samarkand and Karshi with total population of 10,000. They practised trade and handicrafts and being non-Muslims were subjected to annual Jazia (tribute) of over 2,000 tillas: *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 372.


the Iranian blood belonged to the pure Uzbek stock\(^51\) and same was the case with other ethnic groups, of whom a comprehensive group-wise data is far to seek.\(^52\) However, the entire population of the Khanates was estimated at five million: 3 million in Bukhara, 1.5 million in Khokand and 0.5 million in Khiva by 1850 A.D.,\(^53\) though 1897 reports reveal a different story. Bukhara was estimated at 2 \(\frac{1}{2}\) to 3 million,\(^54\) Khiva between 700,000 to 800,000\(^55\) and Khokand at 3 millions.\(^56\) Most of the population was settled\(^57\) in the river valleys or oases and very rarely in deserts or mountain regions. This raised immense pressure on the major cities and towns. By 1897, Farghana and Samarkand districts had together a population of 2,432,000 in an area of 161,000 sq. kms. averaging 15.1 persons per sq. km. Bukhara and Khivan population was estimated at 3.1 million over an area of 2,78,000 sq. km., averaging density of 11.2 persons per sq. km.\(^58\) Significantly, the higher ever density recorded was in Andijan with 464.6 persons per sq. km. notwithstanding the fact that Andijan constituted just 1% of surface area of the Republic of Uzbekistan.\(^59\) Compared to southern Turkmenistan,\(^60\) the deserts of southern Kazakhstan had fairly less

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\(^{51}\) *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 346.

\(^{52}\) Such difficulty was due to the sparse population of the Khanates. Secondly, was the fear of collecting the population information in the wake of Russian invasions. Thirdly, no need was felt by the rulers to gather the information regarding the number of population in their respective Khanates: *Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924*, pp. 6-7.


\(^{54}\) The low Soviet official figure of 1.53 million was due to the troubled years of civil war during 1917-1922 with a loss of 25% of population: *Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924*, pp. 6-7, 346.

\(^{55}\) Another estimate was that the population ranged from 506,000 to 1,100,000: I. I. Gier, *Turkestan*, 2nd edition, Tashkent, 1909, p. 9. However, the Soviet estimates in 1924 put the figure at 461,000: *Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva -1865-1924*, pp. 10, 347.

\(^{56}\) *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 380.

\(^{57}\) In Bukhara Khanate, the sedentary population was estimated at 65% out of which 20% were semi-nomadic and 15% nomads. In Khiva the figures was 72% sedentary out of which 6% was nomadic and 25% was semi-nomadic: *Russian Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva -1865-1924*, p.10.

\(^{58}\) *Peoples of Central Asia*, p. 172.


\(^{60}\) *The Peoples of Central Asia*, p. 173.
population density of 0.9 persons per sq. km. and 0.8 persons per sq. km.; in both cases, the majority of population was rural.

The main occupation of the people was agriculture and herdsmship, which were complementary to each other. The crops were diverse in nature, value and varieties, and these included cotton, wheat, barley, rice, millet, maize, tobacco, sugar, poppy, etc. For millet, Khokand had high repute and barley was not so good and was used simply as fodder for the cattle. Sericulture was mainly produced in Bukhara and Khokand. Besides, the peoples, particularly Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Kalmaks, Nayman, Qipchaqs, raised livestock including horses, camel, sheep, yaks, assess, etc. though only three animals- horses, sheep and the camel were popular

The low population density was due to extreme climatic conditions including the lack of fodder for grazing of the livestock. Besides, the continuous life on the saddle reduced the sexual potency and process of reproduction among the humans in cities and towns: R. B. Ekvall, Cultural Relations on the Kansu - Tibetan Boarder, Chicago, 1939, p. 81: Cf. Central Asia, p.9.


Hunting was also an important occupation of the nomadic peoples though it lost its relevance once people took to settled way of life in the 19th century.

Cotton was mostly cultivated in Bukhara and Farghana. However, after the Russian conquest, its cultivation received the greatest impetus in all fertile areas to meet the requirements of the textile industries in Russia which production declined during American Civil War (1860-65).

Wheat was a special crop to Bukhara and Khiva: Travels in Central Asia, p. 419-420.

Maize was introduced from India, but was not so important crop: N. Masanov, “Northern Areas (Transoxiana and the Steppes) Pastoral Production,” History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. V, Part V, p.377.

Tobacco appeared in the region in the 17th century when it was banned in Persia by Shah Abbas I and in India by Emperor Jahangir. It was mostly cultivated in Karshi and was superior to Bukhara: Alexander Burns, Travels in Bukhara, p. 169.

Sugar was more expensive commodity than any other crop: Travels in Bukhara, p. 170.

The horse was regarded by the people as an alter ego and, as such, was one of the most important means of transportation and warfare. It had different races and types. Turkmen Horse was the finest, sold between 100-300 ducats (gold coins formerly used in certain European countries), followed by Uzbek Horse, suited for long journeys, and exported to India and...
among the nomads. They exchanged their wool and milk for the grains and other products with the sedentary peoples, a contributory to rural-urban interdependence.\(^76\)

(D). Khanates: Religio-Cultural, Ideology and Political Profile:

Central Asia, cradle of civilizations, noticed several historical developments in its making.\(^77\) One such development was related to the faiths of the people: Paganism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Islam. The latter was introduced as a part of the religious duty\(^78\) by Qutaiba-ibn-Muslim in Bukhara and Samarkand and Transoxiana in 715 A.D.\(^79\) though its consolidation suffered a setback for power change in Arabia. It was with the efforts of Nasir Ibn Sayar (734-742 A.D), the ablest Arab General, that Islamic faith was permanently established in the region.\(^80\)

The process of Islamization had followed a series of military expeditions under the Umayyids (661-750 A.D), and the Abbasids (750-1258 A.D.). In 751 A.D, the Abbasids defeated the Uighurs of Semireche in the Battle of Talas (near present Afghanistan. Other two types were Kazak and Khokandi Horses: *Travels in Central Asia*, pp. 420-421, 431; *A History of Inner Asia*, pp. 41-42.

Sheep were source of meat and wool for domestic textile industries. Like horses, it had different types. However, sheep with fat tail and fine in taste were found in Bukhara: *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 421; *A History of Inner Asia*, pp. 41-42.

Camel was a main source of transport with two types – one humped and another double humped (*Ner*): *Travels in Central Asia*, p. 421; *A History of Inner Asia*, pp. 41-42.

Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asia Frontiers of China and Russia, p. 152.

Till the 18th century, Central Asia was considered as a black box by the Westerners with no civilizational past though Arnold Toynbee once described it as a region “where routes converged from all quarters of the compass, and from which routes radiate to all quarters of the compass.”: *Regional Studies*, Vol. XXIV, No.3, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad, 2006, p.36. However, after Soviet demise, it assumed importance to which energy explorations played a significant role. The region has become crucial to regional and global powers.


Though Qutaiba-ibn-Muslim succeeded in introducing Islam in different parts of Central Asia, yet Islam did not emerge as a popular faith for the people’s strong faith in Zoroastrianism and paganism. This is why clay statues, originally idols, were freely sold in Bukhara till the middle of the 10th century. Rudki, a Tajik poet, in his verses expressed that Earth and Sky were the father and mother of mankind. It was only after the conversion of Mongols that Islam gained the real foothold in the region due to the royal patronage: *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, Vol. I, pp. 15-16.

\(^{80}\) *A History of Inner Asia*, p. 62.
Alma Atta) and, thus whole region including Kashghar then under the Qarakhanids, joined Daru-l-Islam. On the weakening of the Abbasids, the proselytizing task was taken over by the Samanids (819-1005 A.D.).

The advent of Islam did not simply supplement the historical process of religious transformation but pointed to a radical transformation in the spiritual and temporal life of the people of the region. With it, came into being the Hanafite School of Thought in Central Asia, and, with that, Middle East was linked to China across Central Asia sigremarkable east-west integration. The spread of the art of Chinese rag-paper to Samarkand and the Western world while replacing papyrus and parchment suffices east-west certify such connections. The same trend was reinforced by the export to and absorption of the art of Persian textile industry by the Samarkandis, Bukharans and Khwarzimis. Likewise, Arab natural sciences and philosophy found expression in the works of Al-Farabi (870-950 A.D), Ibn Sena (980-1037 A.D), Al-Gazali (1058-1111 A.D), Ibn-i-Khaldun (1331-1406 A.D).

However, the 9th and 10th century observed the occupation of the region by the catalyst Turkic nomadic tribes of Qarakhanids and Ghaznavids (977-1186 A.D.) from

81 The advancement of the Arabs in Kashgar is doubted. While V.V. Barthold supports the theory (Four Studies on the History of Central Asia, Vol. I, p. 11), B. G. Gufurov rejects the same: Central Asia: Pre-Historic to Pre-Modern Times, Vol. II. However, the engraved names of the Arabs like Nasir Ibn Saleh Abu Mansur, Abdul Ayat, and Zakaria Ibn Qasim on boulders in the Tangchey area of Ladakh besides indicating Arab contact with Ladakh authenticate the Barthold’s theory: Abdul Ghanī Skeikh, “Muslims in Ladakh and Sufī Traditions,” New Hope, Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan-Feb., 2003, p. 29.
82 Samanid dynasty was founded by Saman Kuda, a native of Balk, in the service of Asad, the Arab governor of Khurasan. But the family’s political fortune really began when Saman Khuda’s grandsons were rewarded for their invaluable services to Arab Islamic rule under Abbasid Caliph Al-Mamun (813-33 A.) in Samarkand, Farghana, Shash (Tashkent) and Herat: A History of Inner Asia, p. 71.
83 A History of Inner Asia, pp. 48-49.
86 Very popular was the cotton fabric made in the small town of Vadhar to the east of Samarkand. However, the Arabs did not built new towns in Central Asia but upgraded Bukhara, Samarkand and Marv: Four Studies on the History of Central Asia, Vol. I, p. 14.
the north-eastern steppes. By the 11th century, the Qarakhanids controlled the principal towns of Central Asia. Since the Qarakhanids parcellled out the state among officials who held fiefs in lieu of emoluments, it naturally weakened the state and paved the way for Central Asian occupation by the Seljug Turks (1038-1194 A.D.). In view of the varying political fortunes, the region made no unprecedented socio-economic development except under the Khwarizm Shahs with particular reference to Alau-din-Mohammad (1200-1220 A.D.). The Khwarizmis followed by the Mongols. Changiz Khan (1162-1227 A.D.), in particular, carved out a vast Mongol empire, which he later divided among his four sons as per the family traditions: Jochi, Chagtai, Ogedie/Ogatie, and Tuli.

During the Chagta’ids (1227-1370 A.D.), the native nomadic cultures combining different influences, strengthened. At the same time, the sedentary population was patronized to rebuild Bukhara, Samarkand and other important cities that had suffered the Mongol rage. In the process, followed a worthwhile intermixing of nomadic and sedentary peoples despite sharp ideological incompatibilities

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88 The Turks were nomads who lived in the broad grass lands extending from the Caspian Sea to Mongolia. They served in the armies of all ruling dynasties of the region including Abbasids, Samanids, etc.
89 Qarakhanids did not rule whole Central Asia but only few of its provinces like Merv etc.: Four Studies on the History of Central Asia, Vol. I, p. 24.
91 A History of Inner Asia, pp. 97-98, 318.
92 A History of Inner Asia, p. 100.
93 They were called four pillars of the Mongol Empire as per Changiz Khan: “Whosoever, wishes to learn the Yasa (Changiz Khan’s Code) and Yasun (Mongol Customary Law) should follow Chagtai; whosoever, love poetry, wealth, chivalrous manners and comfort should walk in the footsteps of Ogatai, and whosoever, wishes to acquire politeness, good breeding, courage and skill in holding the weapons should wait in the attendance on Touli.”; Rashi-ud-din Tabib, The Successors of Changiz Khan, trs. John Andrew Boyle, New York: Columbia University Press, 1971, p.159.
94 Joshi, the eldest son was allotted the newly conquered area of west Irtysh as his ulus (fief): Central Asia, p. 100.
95 Chagtai was allotted Mawarannahr, Kashgaria, Semirechie, and Western Jungaria.
96 Ogedie received eastern Jungaria, Mongolia and the Chinese provinces.
97 In accordance with the Mongol customs, Touli, fourth son, took charge of his father’s household, the treasury and ancestral pastures: A History of Inner Asia, p. 113; Central Asia, pp. 100-101.
98 The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times, p. 162.
between Mongol traditions (*Yasa*) and Islamic law (*Shari’ah*). Eventually, the region was famous all over the world as the leading centre of multiculturalism. To quote Vambery:

“Amidst the terrible ravages committed by the Mongolians, theology and its votaries alone continued to flourish. In the early days of Chagtaid Khan the *mullah* of Turkestan had enjoyed a certain amount of protection … The spiritual teachers then became at the same time secular protectors and from this time forward we find the *Sadri-Shariat* (heads of religious bodies) and chief magistrates, and in general all men of remarkable piety, attaining an influence in the towns of Transoxiana unknown to the rest of Islam, an influence which maintains itself to this day.”

The Timurids succeeded Chagatais’ in 1370 A.D. Under them, the region registered a landmark development in agriculture, art, literature, science, poetry. They consolidated their rule by involving the nomads in the administration, socio-economic and cultural set up of the region. The thirty years rule of Ulug Beg (1347-1449) was a real breakthrough in astronomy, mathematics, arts and literature so much so that Central Asia witnessed a real ‘renaissance’ after the Mongol cataclysm. However, the acts of the Timurids to grant administrative and revenue assignments, the *iqtas*, with great deal of independence, contributed to

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100 History of Bukhara from the Earliest Period down to the Present, pp. 159-160.

101 *A History of Inner Asia*, p. 126.

102 Ulug Beg before assuming the power was a Governor of Transoxiana. When his father died in 1448 A.D., he was proclaimed as the Khan: *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, p. 132.

103 The astronomical observatory of Ulug Beg at the hill Chupa Ata in the eastern Samarkand was meant to measure time, course of planets and the position of the stars with accurate specimens in terms of time and space. However, Ulug Beg’s astronomical tables were later used by the European scientists in the 18th and 19th century.

104 One of the most important literati during the Timurid period was Mir Ali Sher Navai.

105 *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, p. 180; *A History of Inner Asia*, p. 132.
recurring wars among the numerous recipients, which ultimately was the source of its downfall.\textsuperscript{106}

At the beginning of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, three important developments occurred in Central Asia with adequate impact on the region’s health.\textsuperscript{107} One was the emergence of the Shaibanids, the nomadic Uzbeks under Shaibani Khan or Shahi Bakt/Shibak/Shahi Beg (1451-1510 A.D.), who advocated a forward policy as viable mechanism to overcome his adversaries. As a result, Samarkand, Bukhara and Andijan were overrun by 1500 A.D. However, his short term conquests were soon stalled by Zahir-ud-din Babar (1483-1530 A.D.), the then Farghana ruler who conquered Samarkand, Soghd, Karshi and Bukhara.\textsuperscript{108} In 1501 A.D., he was defeated, and by 1505, Shaiban Khan declared himself the \textit{de jure} ruler of Transoxiana\textsuperscript{109} including the Khanates of Bukhara and Khawarism (Khiva).\textsuperscript{110}

However, in 1510 A. D., Shaibanid rule terminated with the killing of Shaibani Khan by Shah Ismail, the Safavid king of Iran. Though with that Bukharan influence over Khwarizm ceased, yet Shaibanids loose control continued under Ubaydullah Khan (1512-1539 A. D.). In both ways, however, Shaibanids contribution to the regional development was worthwhile. Old land grants, \textit{suyurgul}, were confiscated and re-assigned to new persons to give a feeling of state

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{A History of Inner Asia}, p. 127.
\textsuperscript{107} One important development was the discovery of sea route from Western Europe to India and China which marginalized Central Asia’s strategic and commercial importance. Second, was the establishment of Safavid Empire in Iran which cut Central Asia from the Middle East on account of ideological differences: Seymour Becker, \textit{Russian Protectorates in Bukhara and Khiva -1865-1924}, pp. 4, 346.
sovereignty, and, with that, the *iqta* system was reintroduced.\(^{111}\) Irrigation mechanism was developed to boost the agriculture production. Caravan *sarias* (moving traders) with *sardabas* (covered reservoirs) were constructed to boost trade and commerce and facilitate the smooth traveling of the caravans. Stone and metal works were improved. *Madrassas* (traditional colleges) were build to disseminate the secular and religious knowledge. The cumulative result of such reforms was that Bukhara and Samarkand became famous centres of art and literature next to other cities of the Muslim world.\(^{112}\)

By the middle of the 16\(^{th}\) century, the Khanates fragmented into different principalities. Abdullah Khan assumed the Khanship of the Transoxiana, and the Russians drove Jani Khan, the Astrakhanid ruler of Volga, eastwards, whereupon he joined the military expeditions of Shaibanid ruler, Abdullah Khan.\(^{113}\) On his death and that of his son, Jani Khan became the ruler of Transoxiana and thus began the Astrakhanid or Tuquy-Timurids/Janids rule in Central Asia (1599-1785).\(^{114}\)

Under the Janids (1599-1785 A.D), Central Asia registered great deal of progress\(^{115}\) no matter the region was susceptible to the Persian invasions under Nadir Shah in 1739 A.D.\(^{116}\) Under the circumstances, Janid king, Abul Fayz (1711-1747

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\(^{112}\) *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, pp. 194-195.

\(^{113}\) Ibid.

\(^{114}\) *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, pp. 194-195; *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, p. 45.

\(^{115}\) During this period, trade and commercial relations with neighbouring countries like Russia improved. Fascinated by the development of the Khanates, the Mughal Indian Emperor, Aurangzab (1655-1705 A.D.) sent to Bukhara an ambassador with elephants and other costly goods as a token of respect. Ahmad II of Turkey also addressed Bukharan ruler in great epithets: *History of Bukhara from the Earliest Period down to the Present*, p.333; *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, p. 195; A. Mukhtarov, “The Manghits,” *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Part V, p. 53.

A.D), became a vassal of Nadir Shah, and appointed the Manghit chief, Mohammad Rahim Bi, as the virtual vassal ruler of Bukhara. On the death of Nadir Shah (1749 A.D), Rahim Bi threw off the semblance of loyalty, entered into Bukhara and put to death Abdul Fayz and thus assumed as the Manghit rulership of Bukhara lasting up to 1919 A.D.\textsuperscript{117}

On the other hand, Safavid control over Khwarizm ended due to Shia-Sunni conflicts which brought one Uzbek group, the Illbars, under Din Mohammad Hajam/Haji Mohammad Khan, in power in 1511 A.D.\textsuperscript{118} The Bukharan kings strived to bring Khwarizm under their control. Hajam was dislodged for a while. But with the support of Shah Tahmasp-I (1524-1576), the dethroned Illbar King re-assumed power of Khwarizm in 1598 A.D.\textsuperscript{119} However, during his reign, Khwarizm presented a hazy picture following seven years civil wars and the changing course of Amu River which miserably affected irrigation and agriculture, rather whole Khwarizm economy.\textsuperscript{120} It was compounded due to the ethnic conflicts under the reign of Isfandyar (1603-42). To please Turkmens for their backing, Isfandyar oppressed Uzbeks and Uighurs, many of whom fled to Bukhara and other adjacent regions. His successor, Abdul Ghazi (1642-1663 A.D) reversed the policy of Isfandyar and deprived the Turkmens of their land and water resources.\textsuperscript{121} The confiscated lands were divided among the Uzbeks as the civil and military officials in the

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\textsuperscript{117} Manghits controlled Emirate of Bukhara up to 1860 whence it was conquered by the Tsars. So, after 1860, Bukhara became a vassal state of the Tsars till 1919.

\textsuperscript{118} Arabshahids / Yadigarid Shaibanids were a Chagatai dynasty which traced its lineage to Jochi through Shaiban: Ethnolinguistically, they were Qipchaq - Turkic speaking Turko-Mongols: A History of Inner Asia, Appendix I, p. 327; M. Annanepesov, “The Khanate of Khiva (Khwarazm),” History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. V, p.64.


\textsuperscript{120} Only spoils from different regions sustained the aristocracy: History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. V, p. 66.

\textsuperscript{121} Abdul Ghazi was exiled from Khwarizm several times. He remained in Tashkant between 1623-25, in Persia, 1629-39, and at Kalmuk court - 1639-42: History of Civilizations of Central Asia, Vol. V, p. 66.
administrative structure of the Khanate of Bukhara.\textsuperscript{122} Abdul Ghazi’s successors, Anusha Mohammad (1663-85 A.D.) and Erenk/Arang/Aurang (1688-1694 A.D.) were weak enough to stop Khwarizm becoming vassalage of Khanate of Bukhara in 1695.\textsuperscript{123} However, the ongoing civil wars pre-empted Russians to dip into the troubled waters of region in the 18th century for their imperialist designs. While Khwarizm was experiencing political instability, one of its kings, Khan Illbar II (1728-40 AD) attempted to conquer Khwarizm but was beheaded by Nadir Shah (1736-47 AD). In sequence, Nadir Shah installed Tahir Beg (1740) as a subordinate king of Khwarizm (Khiva) with some monetary obligations or tribute for corresponding protection (\textit{mali aman}). With Nadir Shah’s death, Khiva registered civil war on the ethnic grounds, which continued for several years, whereafter one Mohammad Amin (\textit{Inoq}) assumed the \textit{de facto} khanship of Khiva (1770-1790 AD). It was ultimately his son, Nazar Khan (Iltuzar/Ilt Nazar Khan), who became the \textit{de jure} Khan of Khiva in 1790 A.D. Thus appeared another independent Khanate of Khiva on the Central Asian map.\textsuperscript{124}

Khokand which formed a part of Khanate of Bukhara during the Shaibanids and Astrakhanids was divided among several Khawaja families.\textsuperscript{125} In 1709, Shahrukh Bi, the \textit{Khwaja} of Chadak, rose against the Amir of Bukhara and assumed the title of Khan. Thus, was added to the Khanate of Bukhara and Khiva a third Khanate -

\textsuperscript{122} It is maintained that Abdul Ghazi was struck by poor performance of Khwarizm in literary field. As a result, he undertook the arduous responsibility of writing the history of the region. He wrote \textit{Shajara-i-Terakine} which dealt with traditional history of Mongols. It was later supplemented by \textit{Shajaratu’l Atrak}, which dealt with the history of Shaibanids and the Khanate of Khiva down to 1644. After him, it was continued by his son Anusha Mohammad in 1665: M. Annanepesov, “The Khanate of Khiva (Khwarazm),” \textit{History of Civilizations of Central Asia}, Vol. V, p. 67.

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{History of Civilizations of Central Asia}, Vol. V, p. 68.


\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Khwaja} was an honorific title assumed by the Naqsbandi dervishes of Transoxiana between the mid 16th and 18th century. Having the patronage of the rulers, the \textit{Khwajas} wielded considerable spiritual, economic and political influences under different regimes in Kasghgar, Yarkhand, Khiva, Bukhara, Andijan, etc.: H. N. Bababekov, “Farghana and the Khanate of Khokand,” \textit{History of Civilizations of Central Asia}, Vol. V, pp. 72-73; \textit{Four Studies on the History of Central Asia}, Vol. I, p. 66; \textit{A History of Inner Asia}, Appendix I, p. 329.
Khanate of Khokand. The former two Khanates were reduced to vassalage by the Tsars and the latter was subsequently transformed into an *oblast* (province) of Governor-General of Turkestan under the Tsars (1860s-1919).  

Thus, entire Central Asia was characteristic of endemic wars for power control among different dynasties. In the process, several empires emerged and disintegrated under the nomads and the sedentary peoples. Cossequently, the region symbolised varying political fortunes during which Khanate of Bukhara, Khiva and Khokand sought birth with considerable foreign influences especially from Iran/Persia.

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127 *Central Asia*, p. 204.