Chapter III

The Emergence And Consolidation

Of Ethnic Tensions

In Central Asia
Ethnicity - Definitional Perspectives

Conventionally, the concept 'minority' has denoted not only a group with literally less than half of a country's population, but also with social, economic and political disadvantages, relative to its proportion of the population. The decade of the 1970's saw among American scholars the substitution of the quantitatively neutral term 'ethnicity' for 'minorities', thus allowing for the possibilities either that a numerical majority is in a subordinate position as in South Africa, or that a minority ethnic group might be disproportionately advantaged in one of the elements of power.

Definitions of ethnicity vary according to the interest of the persons analysing it.

1 This definition goes back at least to Louis Wirth's 'The problem of Minority Groups' in the Science of Man in the World Crisis, Ralph Linton ed. (New York, Columbia, University Press 1945), pp. 347-374. See also E.G. Cynthia Enloe, 'Ethnic Conflict and Political Development' (Boston, Little Brown, 1973), popularised the shift of term from minority to ethnicity.

2 R.A. Schermerhorn 'Comparative Ethnic Relations' (New York, Random House, 1970), calls groups in this situation "Mass Subjects".
According to Glazer and Moynihan, social scientists tend to broaden the use of the term "ethnic group" to refer not only to sub-groups and minorities but to all the groups of a society characterized by a distinct sense of difference owing to culture and descent. They add that the significance of ethnicity as a social reality is not the particular characteristics on which it is built but in that it serves as a basis for mobilization.³

Glazer and Moynihan observe:

There is some legitimacy in finding that forms of identification based on social realities, as different as religion, language and national origin, all have something in common, such that a new term is coined to refer to all of them, 'ethnicity'. What they have in common is that they have all become effective foci for group mobilization, for concrete political 'ends', challenging the primacy for such mobilization of class on the one hand, and nation on the other.⁴


⁴ Ibid.
A standard definition of ethnic groups and ethnicity is a wide variance from the purely altitudinal approach of Connor. It specifies the mandatory presence of attributes such as:

(i) Common descent (real or supposed),
(ii) Socially relevant cultural or physical characteristics; and
(iii) a set of attitudes and behaviours within a social category, for a social group to qualify as an ethnic group. The proportions of the 'mix' will vary. Nationalism is the claim which such groups make for self-determination. Achievement of sovereignty by such ethnic groups transparently by such ethnic groups. Thus the nation is an outcome of nationalism, not just the political expression of self-determination by an ethnic group.5

A widely used definition of ethnicity is given by Barth who defines an ethnic unit as those individuals who say they belong to ethnic group A rather than ethnic group B, and are willing to be treated and allow their

5 Paul Brass ed. Ethnic Groups and the State (London Crawn Helm 1985)
behaviour to be interpreted and judged as As and not Bs. 6

According to Ballard, ethnicity is a political phenomenon, in which material interests unites with moral and emotional bonds. 7

**Ethnic Groups**

Many things distinguish human beings from one another. Ethnicity is one of the most common ways. Social scientists have defined ethnic group in different ways. It may be defined as a group of individuals with a shared sense of peoplehood. 8 Individuals of this group should have similar social, cultural and physical characteristics. Members of this group are equally distinguishable from others as outsiders and insiders. Religion, race, language, nationality are the members of ethnic group. The most important feature of the members of these ethnic groups is a social collectivity


between them. According to Abhwe Cohen,⁹ "an ethnic group is collectivity of people, collectivity of people refers to the individuals who have the same pattern of normative behaviour. Pattern of normative behaviour is defined as symbolic formations and activities found in kinship marriage, friendship rituals and other ceremonies".

In a large society there are distinct category/categories of small groups of population distinct in race, religion, language or nationality. The social scientists apply the term minority to these groups, subordinate in terms of power and privilege to the majority or dominant group. A minority is defined not by being outnumbered but by having the following five characteristics: a) distinguishing physical or cultural traits b) involuntary membership, c) ingroup marriage, d) awareness of sub-ordination and e) unequal treatment. Minority group are classified in terms of race, ethnicity, religion and gender and these serve as barriers to harmonious relations between groups and even nations. Different neighbouring countries are in conflict with each other, because of the racial and ethnic differences. Iran and Iraq, Greece and Turkey, China and Japan, India and Pakistan are just a few examples in this context.

Racial, ethnic and religious boundaries are also present and are the cause of tension within a given society, e.g. Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India are some of the examples of neighbouring countries. In India the communal dispute of December, 1993 has taken a heavy toll of life. Thousands were killed, thousands injured, hundreds burnt alive and thousand rendered homeless. Property worth billions of rupees was either damaged or destroyed.

Languages divides the people within nations such as Canada and Belgium. Conversely being dominant in numbers does not guarantee a group to control its destiny and assure it of the majority status. In many societies the numerical majority is dominated by numerical minority. In the Republic of South Africa, fewer than one in five people are white, but they dominate the black and Asian people. Throughout the United States are countries in neighbourhood today in which the majority of people are black or Indian or Hispanic, but white Americans are dominant force.

Types of Minority Groups:

There are four types of minority groups; the four criteria for classifying minority groups are race,
Anthony D. Smith distinguishes an "ethnic group" by the following four features:

(a) the sense of unique group origins;
(b) the knowledge of a unique group history and belief in its destiny;
(c) one or more dimensions of collective cultural individuality;
(d) a sense of unique collective solidarity.\textsuperscript{10}

**Nature of Ethnic Groups**

Minority groups who are designated by their ethnicity are differentiated from the dominant group on the basis of cultural differences such as language, attitude towards marriage and parenthood, food habits and so forth. Ethnic group, therefore, is a distinct category of the population in a large society because of their national origin/nationality and whose culture, race, religion is usually different from its own. The members of such a group are, or feel themselves, or

are thought to be bound together by common ties of race or nationality or culture, and thought of by others, as being separate and distinct. Ethnicity has become more salient than other forms of mobilization because it can combine an interest with an effective tie.

For the purpose of mobilization ethnic groups may mobilize any one of its characteristics—race, language, religion, nationality or common history and take recourse of a particular one it choose at a particular time depends on the past or recent history. Let us illustrate it as under:

In the Indian subcontinent ethnicity based on religion was considered to be the most important factor and led to the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, but a few years later a different characteristics or identities based on language and cultures lessened the tie of religion and led to the partition of Pakistan into Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Pakistan is multi-ethnic state, the major five ethnic groups are Punjabi's, Sindhis, Pathans, Baluch's and the Muhajirs. The Muhajirs are refugees who migrated from India during the time of partition in
1947 and settled mostly in Karachi and Hyderabad cities of Sind Province. The four provinces of Pakistan are represented by distinct communities i.e. Punjabi - Punjabis, Sind - Sindhis, Baluchistan - Baluchis (NWFP - Pathans. All the four provinces have their own language, culture, traditions and social structure. Similarly, India is the vast multi-ethnic state, and, as such, possesses a stant for disintegration.

An ethnic group generally consists of individuals, who speak the same language and share common cultures. Identity is a concept which relates and describes an individual to what he or she is. It reveals the membership of individual among specific group formed on the basis of language, religion, region or nationality etc. It is a sense of solidarity and shows the relation of individual to his or her group.

**Ethnic Identification**

There are several ways in which ethnicity is identified:

**Tangible Ascriptive Characteristics**

The traditional way has been to enumerate tangible ascriptive characteristics by which one group differs
from another. The aspects typically focused on, have been historical, cultural, origin, race and religion.

Informal Social Reality

The second aspect of ethnic identification is the informal social reality of ethnic perception.

The informal ethnic identification of others is highly subjective, and so is self-identification. This perception not only relies on tangible characteristics, psychology is involved as well. Ethnic consciousness is widely seen as the most decisive dimension of ethnic identity. It is also recognized to be a sorely elusive phenomenon.

Ethnic identity formation is viewed as a process that involves three sets of struggles. One takes place within the ethnic group itself for control over its material and symbolic resources, which in turn involves defining the group's boundaries and its rules for inclusion and exclusion. (1) The second takes place between ethnic groups as a competition for rights, privileges and available resources. The third takes place between the state and the groups that dominate it on the one hand, and the population that inhabit its territory.

Patterns adopted by the Soviets for Ethnic Identification.

Ethnic identification pattern in the Soviet Union has been through Census enumeration, through administrative practice of officially identifying each Soviet citizen by his or her nationality (national nost) at birth, and throughout their whole life. People are bureaucratically categorized according to nationality in all personal documents and in government rosters and everybody has an official ethnic identity, be it Uzbek, Russian, Georgian, Tajiks. While this administration ethnic identification has a life of its own, it is also basis of ethnic identification.

Traditional, ethnic identifications in erstwhile Soviet Union.

The traditional way for determining the ethnic identity is nominal and ascriptive, by an enumeration of historical background, cultural and linguistic origin and religious tradition.

Informal ethnic identification

Informal ethnic identification is a pervasive
social reality in the USSR, its intensity varies both geographically and situationally.

Ethnic identity system is generally attached to the political goals of an individual. The demand for the autonomy of one's own culture, language or religion is seen as ethnicity.

Thus nationalism is an aspect of human culture and civilization, and therefore similar cultural characteristics like language, historical traditions, social customs, and religious trends, and similar social, religious and political institutions go to determine the nationality of groups of people.

Identification of Ethnic Determinants in Central Asia.

The ethnic strife in the former Soviet Union has been the outcome of non-implementation of Leninist Nationality Policy, designed to build an integrated Soviet Socialist State, resulted instead in promoting other nationalisms. According to Teresa Rakowska Norm other factors which contributed to the rise of ethno nationalism in Soviet Union are:

(a) The perceptions of being oppressed by an imperial power (in this case the Russians);
The impact of modernization; and

Interaction with the outside world, which offered models and opportunities for comparisons. 12

Ethnic conflict in Central Asia and elsewhere was expressed against the hegemony of Russians. Ethnic conflict affects a given people both at the intra and inter-ethnic group levels. All of these promise to become more and more acute, and they threaten to engulf the fortunes and misfortunes of others near and far. The ethnic identity arises as much due to changing economic fortunes and misfortunes. The resulting ethnic strife poses a serious threat, but can also be defused through more timely attention to processes of ethnic identification.

Economic grievances and complaints about corruption and inefficiency are equally widespread. For example, the demographic explosion and economic mismanagement have created severe unemployment problems, which are a major cause of discontent and principal

cause of inter-ethnic tension.13

Similarly, high prices, inadequate housing and consumer-essential commodities shortages are a principal cause of popular complaint and often the source of inter-ethnic tensions. During the Kazakhstan disturbances of July 1989, the rioters complained of high prices charged by the Co-operatives run by immigrants from the Caucasus and demanded their expulsion.14

Disturbances in Tajikistan in the winter of 1990 were prompted partly by rumors that the Armenian


refuges were going to be settled in the area, thus causing anxiety over the impact of such moves on the housing situation, and were the real cause of anti-Armenian sentiments.  

The same factors contribute to Armenia–Azerbaijani clashes in January, 1990, eliminate nuclear testing in Kazakhstan.  

Ecology and environment protection movements enjoy the strong support of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. The question of protecting the ecology is not directly linked to that of Republic's sovereignty.  

Among cultural factors contributing to discontent among the people were the Moscow's policies of Russification and sovietization. Therefore all their popular movements, and even their current governments,  


16 A test site for chemical weapons is located in Akmolinsk, and nuclear warheads are stored at the chemical testing facility at staryyozek. Martha Brill Olcott (rn.13), p. 73.  

17 The Nevada–Sea/Palatinsk Movement was formed in Alma-Ata and its primary goal was the elimination of nuclear testing in Kazakhstan.
have taken measures to change the alphabet from cyrillic either to Latin or Arabic, to make local language the official language, to reinstate the original names of the cities and to rehabilitate local literary figures.¹⁸

Social conditions

The social conditions under which ethnic conflicts have emerged in Central Asia are basically the same as those in other regions. The key elements are -

(a) a diminished standard of living;
(b) lack of confidence in tomorrow;
(c) fears of the loss of savings, as a result of inflation, rumors of monetary reforms;
(d) the possibility of unemployment; and these factors in and of themselves cause sharp increases in social tension, but they are particularly unsettling in a society such as the Soviet Union, where people have been accustomed to stability for decades. It has led to strikes, mass meetings, demonstrations and clashes with government representatives,

¹⁸

in a situation of acute political and economic conflict, as well as to a significant increase in the crime rate. In areas of ethnic conflict the same conditions provoke or significantly increase the probability of extremist action, clashes and the use of force.

Tishkov identifies the causes at the growth of ethnic tensions in these words, "inadequate development of civil society as the main source underlying the contemporary growth of nationalist feelings in the USSR." He claims that the 'previous political order' was unable to create "even rudimentary civil institutions in the form of effective local government, and to build working political and social structures through which citizens and groups, including ethnic groups could stand up for and realize their common and disparate interests and rights." As a result once the power of the Communist Party apparatus weakened, for millions of Soviet citizens "ethnic loyalty became the sole and the most readily comprehensible basis for collective action and the expression of protest in conditions of social despair and profound political disillusionment."

20. Ibid.
Soviets on Ethnicity

People living in the former Soviet Union had a dual identity. One of these identities was common to them all, since they were all 'soviets' but the other identity varied in over one hundred and twenty five ways as there were over one hundred and twenty five nationalities. Article 33 of the Soviet Union provided that every citizen of a union republic is a USSR citizens. Thereby establishing uniform union citizenship in the USSR. Citizenship is a civic identity referring to membership in a state, whereas nationality is an ethnic identity referring to membership in a people.21

In Soviet parlance 'nationality' represents quite a different concept from citizenship. Nationality is concerned with ethnic identity citizenship and

21 Linguistic ambiguity adds to the confusion in English speaking countries, since 'nationality' in English refers to both a legal relationship involving allegiance on the part of an individual and protection on the part of a State" as well as "a people having a common origin, tradition, and language and capable of forming or actually constituting a nation state" : Webster's New Colloquiate Dictionary, 1977. For documentation see R. Karlins, Ethnic Relations in the USSR.
nationality are used to express nationality/ethnic identity; народность (the term used in the 1926 census) and национальность. Nationalость is the quality of belonging to a национальность, which according to the dictionary definition, is 'a stable community of people that has developed on the basis of common language, territory, economic life and psychological (spiritual) temperament'. Народность represents an earlier and more primitive stage of social development, it too, is founded on a common language and territory, but a unified economic and cultural life has yet to be achieved. Every soviet citizen has both citizenship and nationality; thus an Uzbek, for example, is by citizenship Soviet and by nationality Uzbek; since Union republics also have citizenship; every Soviet citizen is also a citizen of union republic.22

Patterns adopted by the Soviets for Ethnic Identification

Ethnic identification pattern in the former Soviet Union used to be determined through census enumeration, through administrative practice of officially identifying each Soviet citizen by his or her nationality.

(natsional nost) at birth, and throughout their whole life. People were bureaucratically categorized according to the nationality in all personal documents and in the government rosters and everybody has an official ethnic identity, be it Uzbek, Russian, Georgian Tajik. While this administrative ethnic identification has a life of its own, it is also basis of ethnic identification.

The Soviets, have discarded religion as an identity, made the national linguistics the cornerstone of its neo-imperial policy. New political units were created based on nationality, which was rigidly linked to the issue of territory. The republics map were drawn by Stalin not with an eye to consolidating natural region, but rather for the purpose of reducing the prospects for regional unity. The republics created in this manner were formed around a 'core' nationality, which was for the largest or the dominant ethnic group in an area.

Ethnicity was given a tremendous boost by the Soviet regime. Ethnic identity was enshrined as nationality and areas that had been bilingual and non-ethnic were split up into separate nation - states.
Since people of Central Asia look for an assert their identity in terms of both ethnicity and religion.

The term ethnos or ethnic is denoted in the soviet literature a human community, referred to in spoken Russian as 'a people' (norod). The substitution of the term ethnos for the word people was made necessary by the fact that (in Russian and in many other languages) the word people has a number of different connotations, and the Russian narod is used to describe not only ethnic communities but also the 'toiling masses of people' or simply a large crowd of humans.

Early Russian ethnos was defined as a 'narodnost' (nationality), yet it became a nation only in the eighteenth century as a result of development of capitalist relations within it. Since late 1940's Soviet literature has used the term narodnost (nationality) to describe ethnic communities that have survived through the period when tribal communities had disintegrated but no nations were yet formed, a period that roughly coincided with the existence of slavery and feudalism. Since the incorporation of Central Asia into Soviet Union, the Soviet argument that the Soviet Union is a country 'national in composition and socialist in content'
and the homogeneous entity called the Soviet man has already been achieved, proved in failure with the violet ethnic manifestation witnessed over, as these ethnic groups by one way or the other endeavoured in their respective sphere of activities to preserve their ethnic identity loyalty to ancestral homelands proved a crucial factor in the Soviet Union during late 1990.

In the non-Russian regions the lines of ethnic differentiates tend to become simplified typically into the Russians and 'locals'. Ethnic differentiation takes on a racial overstone in Central Asia where the basic subdivision, tends to be one between 'white' and 'black', or 'Europeans', and Asian. Locals draw attention to racial and regional differences between population group, language use is the one distinguishing trend that play a role all over the Soviet Union.

"Nationality" as a category in personal documents.

The identification of nationality is standard practice in virtually all official papers in the USSR.

23 The 'locals' frequently also include subgroups which are ethnically distinctive but are rarely identified as such by 'the man in the street. For documentation see R.Kerlis (fn.18), p.30.
be they personal identity card, application forms, job record or else. While nationality on the other hand, represents a simple piece of biographical information. It also is a regulating device used by soviet bureaucracy.

In Soviet Union nationality is officially determined by the nationality of one's parents. There is no individual choice except if the parents belong to different ethnic group.

**Ethnicity Policies and Strategies**

The Tsar's subjects were divided into the ruling national post, whose religion and language, were to be given clear predominance in the life of the state and in civic society, and the other natives, who were being turned into internal aliens. There were three different ethnic pyramid of rights and privileges and the Russians were at the top. Russianness was not defined by the land you lived in, the army you served, or the passport you carried but by your inherited or adopted ethnicity. Ethnic assimilation (Russification) was the only way to partake fully the benefit of it. Ethnic identities and symbols other than Russian ones, were systematically suppressed.

Before the October Revolution, ethnicity was not
a reference point for Central Asian communities, which historically were divided not along ethno-linguistic lines but whether they were sedentary or pastoral, or nomadic.

The Bolshevik programme, on the national question, large territorially-based ethnic group-located on the peripheries were incorporated into the union as formally equal sovereign nations, irrespective of their population or geographical extent (smaller ethnic groups or those that were not located on the peripheries of the Soviet Union were granted various degrees of autonomy, depending on a range of factors of which population, size and physical location were the most important.

It was during the period 1905-17, in which Lenin's particular outlook and political organization took place, was also the time when his strategy towards the ethnic divisions of Russia was established. Lenin's view on the role of national self and related nationalism in the revolutionary process and in the post-

revolutionary future contained three basic elements; first sharp distinction was made between the nationalism of the oppressed (non-Russians of Russia), which were to be treated with empathy as the expression of true grievances destined to decline spontaneously in a socialist society, and wholly objectionable nationalism of the oppressor (of Russians), which was to be fought tooth and nail—reversing the political practices of Tsarist Russia. Second, non-Russians in the empire had the right to set up their own Nation-State, the right of self-determination. This clearly reflected in Lenin's awareness of the revolutionary potential of ethically defined liberation struggles and his wish to use them, which he did with considerable effect in 1917-19.

Third, above all the supreme task was to spread the socialist revolution, and ethnic demands were secondary to this end to be subsumed under it. The uniform and harsh disciplinarian character of Lenin's multi-ethnic party expressed this view organisationally. 25

Lenin's federal formula later on came to be known as the Leninist nationality policy. It disarmed

national tensions, offered a seemingly valid justification for the rejection of separatism and created the image of a voluntary federation. But in fact it was neither voluntary nor a federation.  

During 70 years of Soviet rule the major nationalities became coherent, articulate, and conscious nations.

This process of nation-building under Soviet rule was facilitated considerably by early Bolshevik policies, in particular the party's commitment to Lenin's notion of national self-determination and its establishment of a pseudo-federal administrative system— the first in the world with territorial units based on ethnicity— worked to consolidate, rather than erode, ethnic and national cohesion. Although Bolshevik political culture had always been profoundly anti-nationalist but let the ethnic nationalities develop culturally the Leninist tradition actually tolerated, and even encouraged national consciousness. Since Lenin's death, generations of eulogisers have tried

26 Teresa Rakowska - Harmsstone (Fn. 12).

hard to prove Stalin's total adherence to Lenin (as "the Lenin of our time"), and subsequently he has been given exclusive abuse for deviating from his infallible master. In fact, while both continuities and differences existed between the two, the one sharp and clear political division that can be documented between Lenin and Stalin was over ethnicity and nationalism. Convinced that repression would only fuel nationalist and separatist tendencies and confident that improvements in the economic base would eventually lead to the erosion of nationalism and national distinctions, Lenin urged his comrades to avoid appearances of Great Russian interference in the non-Russian-republics.

Thus in the political sphere, the interests of the minorities were to be protected through a process of 'nativization' (lorenizatsia) which meant the employment of new loyal party cadres, capable of full participation in party and state organizations, were to be selected from among the indigenous population. In the ethnic republics constitutionally the country was divided into ethnically defined republics and

governments. Native cadres were given bureaucratic structures ostensibly to represent their interests, and they developed the elites to staff them. But the selection for top bureaucratic positions were made by CPJU. This led to increasing frustration on the part of indigenous political elites, which was initially expressed through subversion of central policies and controls and gradually acquired the explosive potential that erupted in the "revolt of the republics", from 1989 to 1991.  

The nativization among other things provided for schooling in local languages, with provision made for ethnic communities within each republic. National Soviets were to be created for ethnic communities living outside their ethnic areas and for those without designated areas. Jews, for example, had their own schools, local Soviets, and a special section of the Communist Party.  

When Lenin died in 1924, and Stalin dominated political scene of the Soviet Union for three decades.

29 Teresa Kukowska-Harmstone (Fn.12), p.523.
30 Ronald Grigor Suny (Fn.27), p.506.
Stalin's major pre-occupation was to consolidate personal autocracy. He mistrusted everyone and ruthlessly destroyed real and supposed enemies.

He abruptly changed the nation's economic course. He called for high tempo industrialization and then embarked on a massive campaign to force agricultural collectivization. His drive for industrialization and personal autocracy made sensitivity to ethnic interests a thing of the past. His character and perceptions were reflected in the implementation of nationalities policy, especially in its gratuitous brutality. Under his dictatorship, the state's treatment of non-Russians peoples reached an absolute nadir as their national communist leaders were either imprisoned or executed. Their national writers and artists persecuted and several small nationalities deported en masse from their homelands.

Stalin's policies of collectivization and industrialization transformed the face of the country, in economic and social sphere. Traditional social structure and elites were ruthlessly destroyed and soviet style modernization was set in motion. The fires of ethnic hatreds were fanned by the arrival in
the countryside of workers, detachments from urban and industrial centres, most of them Russians, who came to help in de-Kulakization (expropriation of 'rich' peasants) and the establishment of rural collectives. New cities and industrialized areas in the non-Russian republics witnessed the huge influx of Russians. The urbanized areas became culturally Russian. This aggravated the traditional rural-urban cleavage and let it a new ethnic coloration as the villages remained dominated by natives.

An appearance of ethnic calm was reinforced by an official claim that the national question in the Soviet Union had been solved. The non-Russian nationalities not only survived Stalinism but also emerged with new strengths - national intelligentsia, as higher rate of literacy, more urbanized and informed populations. Most of the national republics became more "national" demographically and culturally. National elites grew stronger, powerful, often defying attempts by the central Soviet authorities to exercise control over the affairs in their republics. Rather than a homogeneous Soviet people, the Soviet form of modernization produced coherent, consolidated, conscious nationalities firmly consolidated in their own national territories. An

Ibid. p.507.
outstanding brutal collectivisation of agriculture and the drive for industrialization produced heavy social strife, that, surprisingly, rarely took on a nationalist image. 32

At the same time local non-Russian cadres, intelligentsia increased rapidly as they used their particular ethnic identity to advance their personal careers. As a result nationalist tensions were built up. No two national groups, however, experienced this process at the same rate or to the same degree. Greater national consolidation on the one hand, and toward assimilation and even russification, on the other, created an unresolvable tension for the non-Russians. The modernization drive felt by the non-Russian as an aggression on their ethnic identities, and felt uncertain of their future existence. In the past a few decades, one nationality or the other began to experience profound anxiety about the loss of its cultural heritage, its demographic position and pollution, environmental hazards and ecological imbalance. The people felt this sense that their nations were in danger.

The economic and political decentralization reforms carried out by Khrushchev in 1950's and early

32 Teodor Shanin, (Fn.24), p.419.
1960's allowed for the emergence of powerful and corrupt local elites. This decentralized administrative structure facilitated wide-spread corruption, close kinship ties and cultural affinity linked member of the dominant nationality in elaborate networks of illegal economic activity, while excluding others, particularly members of other ethnicities.

This greater autonomy for republics led to the dominance of local ethnic 'mafias' while economic decentralization had led to the expansion of the 'second economy' and cultural autonomy has bred nationalism. 33

During this period a consensus of dignitaries replaced terror as the mode of management and this made those problems more pronounced. Local dignitaries tended to gang up, often along ethnic lines to facilitate their privileges.

Ethnic political mafias enjoyed a relatively free reign in the border regions of the Soviet Union. Georgia, Armenia, and Central Asia were particularly

33 Ronald Grigor Suny (Fn.27), p.519.
notorious as free wheeling zones of patronage and entrepreneurial inventiveness.

At the same time, ethnic minorities in several republics, such as Armenia in Azerbaijan, Abkhazians in Georgia and Tajiks in Uzbekistan, expressed discrimination that was unacknowledged by the authorities. Russians in non-Russian republics also complained of discrimination arising from 'affirmative action' policies favouring the dominant nationality in each republic had degenerated into Cronyism and nepotism. 34

For Armenians, the most acute concern was the loss of a part of their territory, Nagorno Karabakh, by the Azerbaijan, for Azerbaijan, the danger came from Armenian imperialists, for Georgians, from Abkhazian successionists, for Estonians and Latvians, the danger came from the large numbers of ethnic Russians who had settled in their territory, undetermining the linguistic and demographic supremacy of the local populations. The natives complain that Moscow plunders their natural resources. Even the Great Russians felt threatened fearing the destruction of their villages and historic monuments, the poisoning of their rivers, and in more

34 Ronald Grigor Suny (Fn.27), p.512.
perverse imaginations the growing presence of foreigners, Muslims and Jews. Even they (Russians) found expression in complaints that the greatest hardships in the course of Soviet development had been borne by the Russian Republic at the cost of backward regions of the country, and subsidized the economies of the non-Russian republics.

Most Soviet and Western scholars admit that ethnic consciousness does not necessarily decline with the modernization of society or moving towards socialism. With the coming of Gorbachev, ethnic consciousness had come to surface. In Soviet Union ethnic communities are linked by language, folk culture, shared territory, and very often a common culture. At the time of Bolshevik revolution the Russian empire comprised mostly of peasants, who continued to identify either with their region or religion.

According to Brezhnev, "all the problems of the relations between the rationalities have not been solved."

35. Ibid.
36. XXVI, CPMU, Congress: Documents and Resolutions, (Moscow, 1980), pp. 73-74.
Accordingly the leadership approached the ethnic policies as had been done by his predecessors. The live and let live practices placated many officials of non-Russian ethnic groups. A good Muscovite Joke also described the ethnic policies of the day: Riding on a train when the track suddenly ends, Brezhnev simply had the curtains drawn (while Stalin had the conductor shot and Khrushchev ordered the passengers to drag left train forward). 37

From 1953 to 1960, a new form of ethnic politics emerged, in which minority demands began to be formulated by indigenous political elites. It was under Khrushchev and Brezhnev that ethnic politics was the dominant mode of expression of minority interests. It revolved round the demands by the republics indigenous leaders for controlling influence over their republics nomenclature, for greater control over their economic resources and overall economic policies affecting their republics and for cultural autonomy. Cultural demands centered on the development and use of local languages, literature and art, and on religious freedom.

37 Quoted in Teodor Shanin (fn. 24), p. 43.
Attitude of the Soviet leaders towards the 'nationality' question varied from one leadership to another - Stalin claimed that the nationality question has been solved in the USSR. While presenting his report of the Central Committee to 26th Congress of the CPSU in February, 1981, Brezhnev admitted that "all the problems of the relations between the nationalities have not been solved." 38

It was hoped that the intensive economic development, would speed up the process of drawing different nationalities closer.

Ethnic Relations under Gorbachev.

While Mikhail Gorbachev was elected General Secretary of the Communist Party (March 11, 1985) of Soviet Union (CPSU), he placed nationalities issue on the top of Soviet political agenda. In his speech at the plenary session of (Communist Party of Soviet Union) on 7 February, 1988, Gorbachev spoke about, among other things, the nationalities problem in the USSR. 'This is a critical question of our society' and called for a

38 XXVI CPSU Congress: Documents and Resolution, Moscow, 1988, pp.73-74.
very thorough review of our nationalities policy, and along all lines - both in theory and practice.

At the 19th Party Confe rence held in May - June, 1988, gave new life to reformers. In the Conference it was adopted that the development of national language and culture received further impetus. The Conference also adopted a resolution, stating that on the banner of the Soviet socialist state was inscribed along with the 'internationalist unity of all nations and nationalities of the USSR, the right of nations to self-determination, revival and advancement of national cultures, priority progress of formerly backward national regions. The resolution urged for creation of conditions for national Russian bilingualism to develop harmoneously and naturally with due account for specific conditions in each region and without formalism. It enjoined 'more concern for active functioning of national languages in various spheres of political, public and cultural life' and stressed that 'the study of the


Quoted in Narikoo and Surbhi ed Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia, New Delhi, South Asia Publishers, 1992, p.125. For documentation see 19th All Union CPSU Conference (Moscow, June 28-July 1,1986), Soviet and Documents, New Delhi, pp.81-85.
languages of the people which gave name to a republic by citizens of other nationalities residing in it, above all, by children and young people, should be encouraged". Further the most important point contained on the formulation on the nationalities question as laid down by the 19th Party Conference resolution was prohibition on contrapositing encouragement of study of local language to the democratic principle of the free choice of the language of instruction.

In the 19th All Union Party Conference shortcomings and errors in the pursuance of the nationalities policy were thoroughly discussed. The resolution on relations between Soviet nationalities adopted at the Conference creativity adopted and affirmed the Leninist norms and principles of the nationalities policy and resolutely removed artificial elements and deformation from them.

The years between 1985-1990 there had been multi-dimensional and multi-directional tide of protests, unrest, discontent and the worst post-war

41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
ethnic bloodshed and demonstrations across the U.S.S.R., in which national grievances occupied a pivotal position alongside economic unrest. From Baltic States to Central Asian republic and from Alma Ata to Abkhazia, no region of this vast land-mass and polyethnic and multinational character of the Soviet society escaped, from this national self-assertion. Whether in the form of anti-Russian demonstrations - as in Kazakhstan and Georgia, or in the emergence of a new socio-political movement demanding greater economic and political autonomy such as the initial popular fronts of three Baltic states, or in the form of worst communal outburst, in Nagorno Karabakh between Azeris and Azerbaijanis. These inter-ethnic clashes and national awakening movements contributed to worldwide trend towards ethnic revival and growth of modern, post-industrial nationalism. The interethic tensions intensified. The non-slavs responded to the worldwide trend of ethnic revival.

It is now widely accepted that nationalism and even nationality itself, far from being natural or having primordial characteristics of human societies, are relatively recent phenomena that arise at specific historic conjunctures. Rather than espousing a 'sleeping
beauty' theory of nationalism - one that would claim that nationalism is always present but can only express itself, once a political opening is offered - most scholars today believe that the very formation of nation is highly contingent on the growth of markets, capitalisms, urbanization, mass education and the spread of literacy.⁴³

According to Dellner, 'men do not in general become nationalist from the sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not, well-based or myth-founded; they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognized.'⁴⁴

Over and above the 13th Party Congress gave a new life to reformers. In accordance with the Party directives, constitutional amendments were approved on December 1989, thereby created a congress of peoples' deputies. This measure was intended to redress the grievances of non-slav peoples of the former Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, a large number of 'informal' organizations enjoying ambiguous status under Soviet law and sprung.


⁴⁴ Ibid
Concerned with environmental, spiritual, philanthropic, and recreational interests, they had existed before 1985 and were an essential component of emerging civil society that had provided much of the impetus for reform. But by 1989 they numbered at least 60,000 and many had a explicitly political hue. The first were in Baltic states in 1987.

**NEW SOCIAL STRATUM**

The strength of new social stratum found in the artists and musicians and co-operatives. Thousands of ecological, political, human rights, trade union, cultural and educational organisations have also sprung up in the non-Russian republics. Among the most influential were cultural organisations like the Estonian Heritage Society and the Ukrainian Association of Independent Creative Intelligentsia, human rights group like the anti-Stalinist memorial organizations, which document the abuses of Stalinism and its neo-Stalinist successor, and ecological movements like Tajikistan's 'Askhona' (openness) group, Tajikistan's anti-nuclear 'levada' movements. Am all of these groups are participated in popular front co-alitions to dislodge
communists from positions of power. 45

The launching of Perestroika, witnessed a climate of genuine liberalization spread in late 1986 and the situation changed dramatically.

A series of upheaval and demonstration, increased number of articles, letters and roundtable debates and discussions in the Soviet media began to figure and speak out against over-centralization, Soviet federal structure and against economic policies, against language and culture policies.

The emergence of popular fronts in the three Baltic republics, served as both inspiration and model to other groups, not only in non-Russian republics, but also in Byelorussia, Moldavia and Georgia, and even in many cities of the Russian republic itself.

In 1988 the emergence of peoples fronts in all the republics, demands steadily mounted for liberalization, autonomy and even independence. In return a powerful Russia nationalist movement emerged among Russians settled both in the Russian federation and in other republics.

45 Nadia Diuk and Andrian Karatnycky, “Nationalism Part of the Solution” Oasie, Fall, 1990, p.554.
According to Lapidus, the Soviet leadership had two distinct, though mutually reinforcing currents, to cope up with the rising tide of national unrest:

(1) The growing assertiveness of national elites (and above all, their cultural intelligentsia) in challenging the extreme centralisation of the Soviet system and demanding greater economic, political and cultural autonomy.

(2) The second current is more amorphous and unorganised but intense and potentially explosive sense of resentment. It is particularly strong among unskilled workers and under-employed or unemployed youth, whose economic and political grievances are in effect displaced into ethnic hostility directed against outsiders.

Challenges put forth before Gorbachev were two-fold:

(1) Demands for economic, political and cultural autonomy; and

(2) Communal violence.

46 See Mail W. Lapidus, "Gorbachev's Nationalities Problem", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 60, p. 95.
So, Mikhail Gorbachev placed nationalities issue on the top of Soviet Political agenda.

The factors responsible for the global phenomenon of ethnic revival -

(a) Historical, (b) Social, (c) Political,
(d) Injustices to which many people are subjected due to the colonisation and neo-colonist policies and also discrimination against immigrant racial and ethno-religious grounds in multi-ethnic state.

Ethnic Nationalism

The twentieth century witnessed intense and endemic ethnic conflicts. There have been ethnic riots in Malaysia between the Malays and the Chinese, between Tamils and Sinhalese in Sri Lanka, a war against Huk and Moro muslims guerrillas in the Philippines. In west Asia with Kurds in Iraq and Iran, the Turkmen, Bluch in Iran, the Armenians in Turkey, the Assyrians in Iraq. There have been persistent ethno-national rivalies, as between Greeks and Turks, especially in and over Cyprus, between Bulgarians and Yugoslavs. The Serbians do not tolerate Bosnian muslims; the (Christian) Armenian animosity towards the (muslims) Azerbaijan over the
disputed territory of Nagorno Karabakh; the Iraqi offensive against its own citizens - Shiite population all these point towards resurgence of ethnic nationalism.

According to Walker Connor, of 132 independent states in 1971, only 12 were ethnically homogeneous representing 9.1% of the total, while another 25 (or 18.9%) have a single ethnic community comprising over 90% of the states population. A further 25 have a single ethnic community comprising 75-90% of the population and 31 have an ethnic community representing 50-74% of the states population. On the other side, in 39 states (or 29.5%), the largest ethnic group comprised less than 50% of the population, while in 53 states (41.2%), the population is divided into one more than five significant groups.47

Ethno-nationalism is found in developed as well as developing countries. Belgium has its problems with the Flemings against the Walloons, Canada has had to deal with secessionist forces in French Quebec and the Basques are fighting for autonomy from Spain, Great Britain is confronted with Scottish and Welsh national

movements, despite the fact that Scotland and Wales have been integral parts of the British state for centuries.

**Ethnic Nationalism - Definition**

An interesting definition of ethnic nationalism has been given by Benedict Anderson: "...it (the nation) is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign". 48

The striking features of Anderson's definition is that ethnic nationalism is seen as a powerful myth, which despite its ambiguity has the capacity for mobilisation. However, in discussing ethnic conflicts it is not ethnicity, or the ethnic identity per se, which is the subject - matter of conflict research, but the point at which ethnic identities are mobilized for political goals.

The ethnic nationalism, relies first and foremost on the existence of an identifiable community or culture. In these cases, the nationalists come to believe that their cultural communities are recognized by one and all,

while others are treated as ethnic groups which may, or may not, be eligible for the status of nations.

Characteristics

The main characteristics of ethnic politics is that it is pursued within an existing state structure and allows for multiple loyalties. Ethnic movements are transformed into national movements when loyalty to one's own nation becomes exclusive and rejects an other allegiance. The movements then develops into separatism, with demands focussed on the establishment of political independence.

EASTERN EUROPE

In Eastern Europe, relations are complicated in some socialist countries with polyethnic populations, which recently became conflict prone and acquired a violent character. Of the Eastern European countries, there are two ethnically homogeneous states - Poland and Hungary. Poland is nationally and religiously the most cohesive, 95 per cent of its population of 40 million people both ethnically polish and roman catholic.

49 Teresa Makowska-Harmstone, (Fn.12), pp.531-532.
Second most ethnically cohesive country is Hungary. Out of its 11 million population 90 percent people are Magyar.

Every other Eastern European country has either significant national minorities or is even ethnically diverse. Of these Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are most diverse.

Yugoslavia

The following table enlists the major nationalities of Yugoslavia:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Population in million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia Hercegovina</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An amalgam of six nationalities, these nationalities are further divided by religious differences. The major
Table No.2: Czechoslovakia population by nationality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Czech socialist republic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Slovak</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech</td>
<td>5742</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>9804</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4541</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>4953</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian (Magyar)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians and</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others and</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unspecified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,350</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>5237</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>15,587</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table No. 3: The Federal pattern of USSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the union republic</th>
<th>Number of autonomous republic</th>
<th>Number of autonomous regions</th>
<th>Number of national areas</th>
<th>Total area (600) sq.km.</th>
<th>Population 1989 (mln)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Russian Soviet Federative socialist republic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17,075</td>
<td>1473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ukrainian SSR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bjelorussian SSR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lithuanian SSR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Latvian SSR</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Estonian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Moldavian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Uzbek, SSR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...contd
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kazakhstan SSR</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>2,717</th>
<th>16.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Kirghiz SSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>198</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tajik SSR</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Turkmen SSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>488</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Georgian SSR</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Armenia SSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Azerbaijan SSR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
religious are Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Muslims. Internecine conflicts are boiling over. Prior to the collapse of communism, they described themselves as Yugoslavians, but today they identify and describe each other as Croats, Serbs, Bosnians etc. Open enmity and hatred has crossed all the limits. Neighbours are killing each other on the basis of ethnic identities—languages, culture and religion.

Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovakia is a federation between the more numerous and developed Czechs, constitute 62.9% of the population or 10 million in number, and the Slovaks (Table 2).


The former Soviet structure comprised of 15 union republics, 18 autonomous republics, 23 autonomous provinces and 46 autonomous regions (all of which are themselves multinational), (Table 10.3). Indeed, not a single non-Russian nation in the Soviet Union exists without significant intermingling of Russian or some other ethnic minority.

All of which are themselves multinational, are
Table No. 4: National composition of Soviet Union Republics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>137.6</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>147.3</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Slav</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byelorussian</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsesk</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbek</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajik</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirgiz</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmen</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic Republics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvian</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

contd...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldavian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Caucasia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>93.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

different in language, culture, historical experience, religion, and level of economic and social development made the former Soviet population (Table 4). There is contrast between the history of each individual republic, region, area, etc. Similarly difference and complexities are immense among the individual republics. Yet although the different groups put their own distinct demands (e.g., Jews and emigration) to the Soviet authorities, the different groups have different demands confronting them. In most republics languages issue, linked inevitably to question of culture and education, environment and ecological crisis are the issues. Together with some groups demanding the restoration of their state structure previously abolished by Stalin. Disputed territories, like Nagorno Karabakh, presented on additional set of problems.

Soviets claimed that there are no serious problem and that the nationality question has been solved, is simply a myth. The ethnic or nationality question always held an extremely important place in the ideology of Leninism, as was natural for a country like Soviet Union. In 1920's the Communist Party paid a great deal of attention toward ethnic problems which were
discussed nearly at very Congress. At that time definite mechanisms existed for studying and resolving ethnic conflicts.

For several decades Soviet nationality policy was based on the expectation that modernization and socialism would automatically erode national identities and loyalties and that a new multinational community, based on the equality, prosperity, harmony and increasing uniformity of all its members, would be the outcome.

This argument is further supported by the writings of S. Diamanshteyn. He says, "All the main broader regions of the Soviet Union are inhabited by non-Russian peoples... The safety of our frontiers depends not only on the strength of the Red Army but also on the loyalty of the frontier population to the Soviet Government. In this field much can be achieved by a correct nationality policy, i.e. one whose task is to unite these nationalities into a single whole. This will strengthen and stabilize our frontiers and decrease the danger of war". 50

Soviet authorities claim that they have solved the nationality problem. Lenin said, the new system of the socialist Soviet republic, as a federation of free republics of the different nations inhabiting Russia, has been finally accepted in this country in the sphere of domestic politics.  

Further, in the early 1930's Stalin declared that the ethnic problem in our country had been solved fully and completely and that a Soviet culture had been created, national in form and socialist in content.

One of the important objectives of the Soviet State had been the Russification of Central Asia and the people resisted every step of the state in this direction. As a result, there had been no national integration, but only subjugation. The conclusion, therefore, is that nationality question in the Soviet union remains unsolved due to religious and cultural divide.


53 According to Alexander Bennington, the loyalty to clan and Islam remains greater to Soviet values, though some tension exists between the Muslim people, the split between the Muslims and Slavs goes much deeper. For complete documentation see Alexander Bennington and Marcus Raskin, The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State (London, Groom Helm, 1983), p.161.
The subjugation and imposition of communist rule on the traditional social structure that were sometimes called feudal (though these never has been true feudalism in Central Asia).

Communism and traditional society proved to be quite incompatible. To this, Doris Kumer maintains that clan and tribal consciousness "not only survived but (became) even stronger in the Soviet era... A majority of the national cadres remained loyal to their clan and tribe."