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Being in Close Neighborhood with Russia

The Kazakhstan's State-Framed Identity and Latinization of the Script - An Attempt for Westernization or Creating Own Subalternity?

Gaziza Shakhanova

Abstract

Nazarbayev's initiative on 'Modernization of the Public Consciousness' clearly signaled changes in the state's identity policy. By implementing language reforms and switching the Kazakh alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin script, the state authorities declared their strong willingness to diminish Russia's cultural influence and finally demarcate the state's Cyrillic-based past from Latin-based future. The article argues that despite the Kazakhstan authorities' vehement attempts to reforge the nation's linguistic habits, the state's identity seems to confirm its Subaltern nature: while dreaming to become Western-like, it acts like Russia. The Post-Soviet Studies on Nation-Building Tools help to explore how language and national identity issues come to interplay in Kazakhstan's official discourse, while the Postcolonial theory helps to explore the surprising moments of resemblance between Kazakhstan's and Russia's recent narratives on cultural and educational reforms.

Keywords

Postcolonialism, National Identity, Kazakhstan, Russia, Kazakh language.

Kazakhstan's State-Framed Identity and the Latinization of the Alphabet

In April 2017, President Nazarbayev expressed his confidence that the nation's consciousness needs to be modernized (Nazarbayev 2017a). While understanding it more in a cultural way - like a return to traditions and educational reforms - he declared that by 2025 the Kazakh alphabet needs to be re-coded from the Cyrillic to Latin script. The idea was nothing new. The reform was firstly announced in 2006 (Nazarbayev 2006), and in 2012 it was implemented as a part of the strategy 'Kazakhstan-2050' (Nazarbayev 2012a, 2012b). However, the most intriguing moment was related to the forceful adoption of the presidential decree in October 2017 followed by the amendments precipitously issued in February 2018, since it was not clear what system (diphthongs, digraphs or apostrophes) should be used. Commenting on his reform, N.Nazarbayev argued: 'By using the Latin script we are entering the evolving informational world – the language of the internet, the language of science and culture'. Although they claim that Latinization will help in the nation's modernization may be disputable, one could argue that this was the only possible decision by which N.Nazarbayev has reached his political goals. The reform seems ambitious enough to designate possibly the last term of his presidency, yet neutral enough to keep friendly relations with Russia. According to Kazakhstan's population census of 2009, from 10 096 763 inhabitants, Russians represent 23.7 % while Kazakhs 63.1%².

Indeed, for Kazakhstan's political authorities the process of nation's consolidation could turn into a challenging campaign. This is the case especially in a situation when 'your neighbor claims to have a legitimate say in your domestic affairs because, allegedly, a large portion of your population is made up by “their” people' (Isaacs and Polese 2016, p. 2). The common border of nearly 7000 km and high numbers of Russians living in the northern, western, as well as the eastern parts of Kazakhstan 'created an environment conducive to the formation of pro-Russian separatist movements' (Rees and Williams 2017, p. 815).

The state-led language policies always served as the traditional nation-building tools (Anderson 2006; Isaacs and Polese 2016). In 1996, while adopting the first concept on the state's identity, the Kazakh authorities aimed primarily to overcome the state's colonial infantilism and expected the Kazakh language to play a consolidating role in the inter-ethnic communication. In 1997, the Language Law had been adopted declaring that '[i]t is the duty of every citizen of the Republic of Kazakhstan to master the state language' (Burkhanov 2015, p. 6). 'The Language Law also eliminated the status of Russian as a language of interethnic communication but confirmed the Constitution's provision allowing it to be used on an equal basis with the state language in state agencies and local self-government organizations' (Burkhanov 2015, p. 6). Commenting on that situation, 'Kazakhstan's national-patriots', however, believed that despite the state support the 'Kazakh language continues to be marginalised' (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 919). As no surprise, in the early 2000-s, it became clear that in terms of implementing vernacular language and cultural practices, the 'Kazakhization' process did not succeed due to several reasons: the absence of clear attitudes in self-identification, the prevailing importance of sub-ethnicities vs. the general category, and 'the existence of a weak inner cultural core or “negative identity” among the ruling elite' (Cummings 2005, p. 153). However, since 2007 the situation has started to change gradually. 'The efforts of the Kazakhstani state coalesced around the creation of a distinct, Kazakh-speaking, non-ethnically exclusive “Kazakhstani” nation' (Rees and Williams 2017). In 2011, the state authorities tried to change the tactics from the enforcement of the one-language-policy to the tri-linguistic approach in education (Kazakh, Russian, English). In 2012, N. Nazarbayev announced the final term of the Latinization to be finished by 2025. In 2017, the Latin script of the Kazakh language had been already approved and conveyed to the society. Despite the number of meetings and expert discussions (Melich and Adibayeva 2013, p. 272), no national referendum on the reforms' necessity or their timeliness had been carried on. 'The centralized authorities regularly seek to foster a common identity over a given territory, often without recourse to a plebiscite (Foucher 1991)' (Isaacs and Polese 2016, p. 2). Indeed, whether the Kazakh language would become popular as a result of the state-led reforms is a big issue itself. By contrast, Benedict Anderson argues that although all the nation-states have their print-languages, in some of them only 'a tiny fraction of the population “uses” the national language in conversation or on paper' (Anderson 2006, p. 48). Indisputably, Anderson is right in saying that 'the most important thing about

language is its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarities' (Anderson 2006, p.136).

The issues of the state's identity and language policy implementation (as a state toolkit in the process of the nation-building) intersect in the domain of 'nationalizing nationalisms' (Brubaker 1996, pp. 5, 9, 83-84, 103, 106). The political elites of the existing states undertake nationalizing practices 'in the name of a "core nation"' as 'the legitimate owner of the state' (Brubaker 1996, p. 5). In Roger Brubaker's understanding, a nationalizing state is 'the state of and for a particular ethnocultural "core nation" whose language, culture demographic position, economic welfare, and political hegemony must be protected and promoted by the state' (Brubaker 1996, p. 103). According to Brubaker, 'the new states of post-Communist Eurasia', being represented by their elites as 'incomplete' or 'unrealized' nations, have aptly used the rhetoric of resentment towards the state's past and its lost opportunities, which provided a solid ground for promotion of the language and the culture of the core nation (Brubaker 1996, p. 9). The criteria of the nationalizing state are in place in the case of Kazakhstan. Throughout the manifold strategic documents, the interests of the core nation (the Kazakh nation), as well as the promotion of the Kazakh language and culture have been prioritized since the early years of the state's sovereignty. The resentments against the oppressive colonial past – the totalitarian regime under the USSR - which deprived the Kazakhs of learning their mother language still serve as a good toe-hold in the current process of crafting the state identity by N.Nazarbayev (Nazarbayev 1996, 1997b, 1999a, 2001, 2008, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2015, 2016, 2017). 'By evoking the metaphor of "language death", the elites represented the survival of their language as tantamount to the survival of their nation' (Davé 2007, p. 100). Kazakhstan, in analogy with other postcolonial states, 'has attempted to manufacture a unifying, official national idea to co-opt the various autonomous, local articulations of a language-based, genealogically defined Kazakh identity that are at odds with the state-sponsored ethnolinguistic revival' (Davé 2007, p. 170).

The article aims not to contribute to the existing debates on the forging processes of Kazakhstan's identity in traditional or non-traditional; civic, ethnic, nationalistic or religious dimensions (Bhavna Davé 2007, Chris Donnacha O'Beachain and Rob Kevlihan 2013, Rico Isaacs and Abele Polese 2015, 2016). Kazakhstan's supra-ethnic identity have been also explored by Kristoffer Michael Rees and Nora Webb Williams (2017). The insightful work on how non-Kazakh ethnicities - the Tatar and Korean minorities – have been able to adapt to the official discourse on Kazakhstani identity in order to win their own places in cultural-political and economic realms is provided by Yves-Marie Davenel and EunsilYim (2016). The processes of how the state-led developmental strategies (like Strategy-2030) serve to exercise presidential control on the central and regional levels have been explored by Diana Kudaibergenova (2015) not tot purport to go deep into the various aspects of the Kazakh nation's ethnogenesis, the heritage of the tribal relations or the Soviet and post-Soviet legacies as parts of the nation-building processes. These issues had been aptly explored in the works by Shirin Akiner (1995), Terry Martin (2001), Martha

Brill Olcott (2002), Francine Hirsch (2005), Sally Cummings (2005), Bhavna Davé (2007).

Instead, the focus is on how Kazakhstan's political elites have attempted to cut off the cultural influence of Russia by carrying out the recent Latinization of script and trying to demarcate between Cyrillic-based linguistic past and Latin-based future. More specifically, the emphasis is on how Kazakhstan authorities have attempted to use the alphabet's Latinization issue in the official discourse on the national identity's forging, and why the last state-led initiative of Kazakhstan RukhaniZhangiru[Руханижаңғыру], in certain ways, resembles the Russian official discourse on cultural and educational reforms. If the Kazakhstan script's Latinization could be classed as a process of decolonization, then why Kazakhstan's way of de-colonization resembles Russia's discourse? Do the Kazakhstan elites consciously resemble Russia's discourse; or is it a mere 'semblance' or 'similitude' (Bhabha 1994, p. 172)? The article consists of four main chapters. In the next chapter, a brief sketch of the critical voices of scholars who consider the post-Soviet space as a theoretical caveat for its post-socialist or post-Soviet past and put under the question the applicability of postcolonialism to the Central Asian region as a whole. The theoretical part is also complemented by the references to the current studies on how Kazakhstan's political authorities use the postcolonial rhetoric to legitimate their nationalizing policy on the Kazakh language, as well as how the non-state actors (citizens) in Kazakhstan reflect the state-driven language reform by creating a counter-hegemonic narrative. Further, examine Kazakhstan's official discourse on the recent language and education reforms. Firstly, the analyses of Kazakhstan's main strategic documents related to the national identity and language issues, which had been adopted in the period between 1996-2017. By tracing any predictions of the 'national identity' with any relation to the language/languages and Latinization, the search for the changes in internal structures of the documents through time. Secondly, by drawing parallels between Kazakhstan's and Russia's recent strategic documents on cultural and educational reforms on an attempt to trace some parallels of resemblance. However, I do not attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of resemblances is not attempted rather, to provide some tentative explanation of the observed tendencies. The content analysis of the presidential and state secretary's speeches, as well as the metaphor analysis complement this empirical part.

Theoretical background

The question of applicability of the postcolonial theory to the Central Asian states has been aptly explored in many works by David Chioni Moore (2001), Deniz Kandiyoti (2002), Bhavna Davé (2007), Laura Adams (2008), MadinaTlostanova (2010, 2017), Sergey Abashin (2014), Catherine Owen, John Heathershaw and Igor Savin More (2017). According to some of the scholars, the case of Central Asia stays apart from the classical cases of Western colonization because the region did not pass through the reformative processes of modernity. As Deniz Kandiyoti argues, 'the field of post-colonial studies is itself Eurocentric to the extent that it privileges a particular type of colonial encounter—namely, that between the capitalist metropolises of the West and their colonies or semi-colonies in the rest of the world' (Kandiyoti 2002, p. 286). Madina

Tlostanova, while exploring the Central Asian states' ways of de-colonization, argues that the theorists should differ between the socialist modernity and the modernity itself. According to her, the post-socialist experience is not a conventional type of colonialism (Tlostanova 2017, p. 11). 'The Socialist experience cannot be taken exclusively to ideology the same way as it cannot be limited by colonialism. It existed at their intersection leading to the creation of a model which – after the collapse of Socialism – turned out to be colonial as a whole, about the winning neoliberal modernity/coloniality, yet retaining traces of its own internal imperial-colonial structures' (Tlostanova 2017, p. 11). However, at the same time, there is still a lot of common between the Western/liberal/capitalist and socialist modernity, 'since the Socialist modernity, after all, originated in the West and therefore shared such familiar features of modernity as progressivism, Orientalism, racism, providentialism, hetero-patriarchy, and a cult of newness' (Tlostanova 2017, p. 6). Laura Adams to the Central Asian region invites us to go beyond merely borrowing descriptive terms... and to refine postcolonial theory by exposing it to a broader range of imperial projects, especially those that are not based on capitalism as a historical mode of domination' (Adams 2008, p. 6). What postcolonial and post-Western scholars have in common is 'their focus on power relations between dominant and subordinate actors and a recognition of the effects of imperial legacies in contemporary international politics' (Owen, Heathershaw and Savin 2017, p. 2). Overall, it would not be a mistake to use postcolonial theory to trace how the state authorities use their power to build up the hybrid discourse by borrowing and re-articulating the terms and tools from their Russian vis-a-vis.

To understand the continuity of Kazakhstan's postcolonial identity and the resemblance of Russia's cultural reforms in Kazakhstani discourse, two concepts: Homi Bhabha's notion of the 'mimicking' and 'hybridity' (Bhabha 1994), and Gaytri Spivak's concept of 'subalternity' (Spivak 1988) has been borrowed. To understand how by inserting the Western-like, Asian-like, Russian-like models of resemblance, Kazakhstan's political elites have created a state-subaltern, which is addicted to following any other path, except the own way. For Spivak, the subaltern is the one who cannot speak or lack modes of representation (Spivak 1988). Bhabha's concept of mimicking helps 'to explore how states are challenging the hegemony' of master's practices and institutions (Owen, Heathershaw and Savin 2017, p. 8). As a result of mimicking, it is 'almost the same, but not quite' (Bhabha 1994, p. 85-92). The subordinate actors 'are not passive receptors of imperial/neo-imperial projects but can disrupt and appropriate those projects for their ends, both at the institutional and everyday levels' (Owen, Heathershaw and Savin 2017, p.9). The postcolonial identity is in place in case of the post-Soviet states: while Russia resembles the Western normative order by using subversive techniques and tries to catch up with the Western modernization (Morozov 2015), Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan (in terms of adoption of legislation) emulate Russia's political discourse and institutions (Owen, Heathershaw and Savin 2017, p. 16). The further analysis demonstrates how the Kazakh authorities resemble the Russian discourse - in terms of

usage of phrases and instruments; in holding similar cultural events or declaring similar political initiatives; and even in implementing into practice Russia-like activities, like support of the Cadet schools or military-sport patriotic youth camps (as it is widely practiced in Russia).

The postcolonialism of any nation is tightly bounded to the decolonization of consciousness of the subjugated minds. 'Colonialism is, first of all, a matter of consciousness and needs to be defeated ultimately in the minds of men' (Ashis Nandy 1983, p. 63). The question of decolonization is two-fold. On the one hand, it is the political elites who create and popularize the nation-building ideas through the political discourse (Isaacs and Polese 2015, p. 372), which needs to be explored in my article. On the other hand, it is non-state actors who have their strong say when internalizing the state-led policy or rejecting it (Isaacs and Polese 2015, p. 372). As Isaacs and Polese argue, the 'nation-building can only be proposed by elites but needs to be accepted (or renegotiated/rejected) by those who have a say in the construction of a national identity and who are an integrated aspect of the nation-building process' (Isaacs and Polese 2015, p. 372). Bhavna Davé, while commenting on the de-colonization of Kazakhstan's elites, pointed out that the former Soviet elites have 'successfully reconfigured themselves to achieve normalization and legitimacy' (Davé 2007, p. 24). In the contrast, for the state, being independent means, first of all, a 'process of decolonization and the construction of an autonomous national imagination' (Davé 2007, p. 24). In practice, Kazakhstan's political elites re-appropriated the official discourse on decolonization, and rather than invoking wide critical intellectual discussions they keep this place empty of talks (Kudaibergenova 2016, p.917). As far as the postcolonial sense of the state is not fully realized, and the people are deprived of intellectual talks, the Kazakhstani society stays 'subjugated' by its nation-builders and their manipulative discourse (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 933). All in all, it is the political elites in power who invoke the emulative, resembling or subversive strategies into the hybridized discourse. As long the political elites will not attempt to de-colonize their consciousness and open the space for critical intellectual thinking, the nation will remain 'subaltern' – like the one in-between, missing of representation, not being able to retain its power over its realm.

Kazakhstan's postcolonialism as a political and nationalizing discourse, appropriated by the political elites and the contesting groups, has been explored by Diana Kudaibergenova. As Kudaibergenova claims, the Kazakhstan's ruling class use and abuse the postcolonial rhetoric to legitimate their political goals, whilst the political opposition and national patriots are kept aside from intellectual debates on the nation's decolonization, including 'official discussions on ethnicity, language, and national identity' (Kudaibergenova 2016, pp. 917, 925). For the ruling elites, 'Re-legitimizing their positions in the post-Soviet era meant that they had to accept the language of former oppression and position themselves as legitimate guardians of the post-Soviet nation. The only way to do so was to construct their own narratives on post-Soviet postcoloniality' (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 921). Apart from the political elites and opposition, it is the

national patriots, who still 'see the problem of historicity of postcolonialism unresolved' and condemn the people-in-power for lack of efforts in the state's decolonization - by the means of core language's forceful promotion (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 919). All in all, Kazakhstan remains in an uncomfortable position of the postcolonial state 'where memories of former oppression and domination by the Russian and Soviet empires are framed in dangerously loose, yet very popular, political narratives' (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 933). In the next chapter, I am going to explore how the language issue has been used in the official discourse, and how the 'cohesive role' of the Kazakh language has changed through time.

The Analysis of Texts: Comparing the Strategic Programs

The analysis is done in two steps. Firstly, nine official programs which had been adopted within 1996-2017. These are the Concept on the state identity (1996), the Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2030' (1997), the Doctrine on national unity-2020 (2010), the Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2050' (2012), the Patriotic Act Mangylik El [Мәңгілік Ел] (2014), the Concept on strengthening and development of the national identity and unity (2015), 100 steps of implementation of the institutional reforms (2015), the Program on Modernization of the Public Consciousness RukhaniZhangiru[Руханижаңғыру] (2017), the Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2025' (2018). All texts are uploaded on the official site www.akorda.kz. Additionally, analyses of the Presidential speeches made at the annual sessions of Assembleiaiia Naroda Kazakhstanana (the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan) in 1996, 1997a, 1999a, 1999b, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012b, 2013a, 2014b, 2015, 2016, 2017b. The materials of the Assembly are extremely important to be grasped in the analysis since the Assembly is conceived as a 'supra-political structure' (Nazarbayev 2013a, 2014b), which presents the Kazakhstani identity 'decoupled from ethnonational derived identities' (Rees and Williams 2017). While analyzing the documents, the search for the general changes in internal structures through time was taken up. Specifically, to start by tracing any predictions of the 'national identity' to 'the Kazakh language', 'the Latinization reform', 'the Russian/English languages', as well as 'the languages of other ethnicities'. While analyzing the texts, it was interesting to trace how the state authorities have attributed the 'cohesive role' to the Kazakh language/Kazakh culture/Kazakh ethnicity or people/Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.

Second, to compare Kazakhstan's and Russia's official discourse there was a need to consult four principal documents: the Nazarbayev's address to the Nation on the Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2050' (Nazarbayev 2012a) and Nazarbayev's address to the Nation on Rukhani Zhangiru (Nazarbayev 2017a), as well as Putin's pre-election article (Putin 2012a) and Putin's Address to the Federal Council (Putin 2012b). In the first place, Kazakhstan's materials had been put under analysis, followed by the analysis of the relevant documents from Russia's official side. The analysis is supplemented by the metaphor analysis of the speeches made by the senior officials. The comparative analysis of two discourses helped to reveal the certain structure of resemblances in terms of the documents' structure, tools, and phrases. While analyzing the documents, the peculiar interest is to draw some

parallels and give a tentative explanation to the commonalities rather than providing an exhaustive list of resemblances.

The official discourse on Kazakhstan's Identity and Kazakh language

Over the past two decades, the state policy on the nation-building process in Kazakhstan has been focused on the promotion of the ideas of the civic state, as well as Kazakh language and culture (Yves-Marie Davenel and EunsilYim 2016, p. 46). Indeed, the Kazakh language and culture have been steadily used by the state authorities as a cohesive or binding force, which is supposed to grasp the heterogeneous society of Kazakhstan and forge the 'Kazakhstani' identity. While in the late 1990s, the rhetoric of the political authorities mostly approached to the country's colonial past and described the Kazakh nation as being deprived of its language, in the mid of 2000-s the official discourse seemed to be more assertive in promoting of the Kazakh language as 'the language of languages'. However, despite the state legislative support, the Kazakh language for a long time has remained as 'the language of the poor and marginalized' (Bissenova2004). Beginning in 2005, the political authorities have started to invoke the idea of the Latinization into the official discourse. Both announcements of 2005 and 2012 coincided with the start of Nazarbayev's presidency terms and did not stipulate any practical movements. Mostly they had been conceived as the state-led endeavors to measure the society's overall reflections before embarking on the final stage. 'The main factor, which cements the nation is the Kazakh language, the language of the state⁴' (Nazarbayev 2013a). In 2013, by invoking parallels with the disappearing languages N.Nazarbayev seemed to be trying to assure the nation in the necessity of the Latinization. 'Nowadays in the world, according to various data, from 10 to 25 unwritten languages extinct, the complex strata of ethnical cultures are wiped out⁵' (Nazarbayev 2013a). The presidential announcement of 2017 appears to be his last call for the Latinization. In this vein, the events in Crimea of 2014 should not be dismissed as the main reason for the reform's acceleration. Apart from the Kazakh language, 'Russian is also distinguished from the other non-Kazakh languages spoken in the republic', which have not been given the official status according to the constitution (Rees and Williams 2017). Alongside with the Kazakh and Russian languages, the crucial importance is given to the English language, since the system of three-language instruction in schools has been officially implemented in 2017. Table-1 Demonstrates, how the idea of Kazakh language has evolved in the official discourse within 1996-2017.

Table 1 illustrates how the political authorities have used the Kazakh language as a state toolkit in the forging of identity. Between 1996-2007, alongside with the Kazakh language and culture, the cohesive role was attributed to the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan as to the instrument if the inter-ethnic concord and unity, however since 2008, the state-framed focus has shifted to 'the Kazakh ethnicity' [казахскийэтнос] and 'the Kazakh people' [казахскийнарод] as a 'consolidating power' [консолидирующаясила]. In January 2014, the Kazakh language has acquired a new abstract status: a MangylikTil

[Мәңгіліктіл]¹⁵ or Eternal language. In 2015, the state-built identity has been renamed accordingly *Manğylik El* [МәңгілікЕл] or Eternal country in Nazarbayev's understanding¹⁶ (Nazarbayev 2016). Interestingly, before the idea of the Eternal country, in February 2014, N. Nazarbayev suggest renaming Kazakhstan differently as the *Kazakh Eli* [Қазақели] or the Land of Kazakhs. By rebranding the state and discarding the ending 'stan', which he thought to be perceived with negative connotations, N. Nazarbayev believed to help to change the fate of the nation: 'The name of our state contains this ending - "stan", as well as other Central Asian states possess it. Currently, the foreigners express an interest in Mongolia with two million population, which does not have "stan" in its name. Therefore, we should consider the possibility of changing the name to the "Kazakh Eli",

Table 1 "Identity and the use of language in the official discourse within 1996-2017"

| | 1996 ⁶ | 1997 | 1999 ⁸ | 2000 ⁹ | 2001 ¹⁰ | 2003 ¹¹ | 2005 ¹² | 2006 ¹³ | 2007 ¹⁴ |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--------------------------|--|
| Predication of "identity" | Civic identity; Kazakhstanian identity | Civic identity; Eurasian identity | Multiethnic identity; Kazakhstanian identity | Civic identity; Kazakhstanian identity | Civic identity | Civic identity; Kazakhstanian identity | Multiethnic identity | Civic identity | Civic identity |
| Cohesive role | Kazakh language; Kazakh nation | Kazakh culture | Kazakh language; the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan | Kazakh culture | Kazakh culture | Kazakh language; Kazakh culture; the Assembly of the Peoples of Kazakhstan | Kazakh language; Kazakh culture; Kazakh people | Kazakh language | Kazakh language |
| Language | Kazakh; Russian; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English | Kazakh; Russian; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; Others | Kazakh; Russian; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages |

however it first must be discussed with our people¹⁷¹. Not surprisingly, the nationalistic idea Kazakh Eli did not succeed in its implementation, instead, the loose and stretchable- 'Eternal country with Eternal language' has won. Contrary to the top-down analysis, when the scholars explore how national identity is 'imagined' by political elites, Kristoffer Rees and Nora Webb Williams conducted an extended interview in Almaty, Shymkent, and Oskemen to know whether the state-led identity policy reflects the citizens' aspirations (Rees and Williams 2017). According to the insightful findings of Rees and Williams, the cohesive role of the Kazakh language might be considered as a serious limitation in the building of the supra-ethnic identity as there is a significant number of the non-Kazakh speaking population (both, among the non-Kazakh ethnicities and Kazakhs themselves)

Continuation of the Table 1

| | 2017 ²⁷ | 2016 ²⁶ | 2015 ²⁵ | 2014 ²⁴ | 2013 ²³ | 2012 ²² | 2011 ²¹ | 2010 ²⁰ | 2009 ¹⁹ | 2008 ¹⁸ |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| National identity | National identity | Civic identity based on <i>Mangylik El</i> [Мәңгілік Ел] | Civic identity based on <i>Mangylik El</i> [Мәңгілік Ел] // 28 | Civic identity | Kazakhstani identity (one nation-one country-one destiny) | Kazakhstani identity (one country-one nation) | Kazakhstani identity | Kazakhstani identity (one country-one destiny) | Civic identity; Kazakhstani identity | Multietnic identity |
| Kazakh culture | Supranational values; the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan | Kazakh language; Kazakhstani culture | Kazakh language or <i>Mangylik El</i> [Мәңгілік Ел] | Kazakh people; Kazakh language | Kazakh people; Kazakh language | Kazakh language | Kazakh language | Kazakh people; Kazakh language | Kazakh language | Kazakh ethnicity; Kazakh language; the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan |
| <i>Latinization</i> | of People of Kazakhstan | Kazakhstani culture | [Мәңгілік Ел] | [Мәңгілік Ел] | Kazakhstani culture | <i>Latinization</i> | other ethnic languages | other ethnic languages | other ethnic languages | other ethnic languages |
| Kazakh; English | Kazakh; Russian; English | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages | Kazakh; Russian; English; other ethnic languages |

Source: www.akorda.kz, www.assembly.kz

who do not speak the Kazakh language. Moreover, as Rees and Williams argue, although the non-Kazakh speaking respondents confirm their affiliation with the Kazakhstani identity, for many of them 'their identification as Kazakhstani is, from the perspective of language choice, a counter-state identification' (Rees and Williams 2017). Even though the non-Kazakh speaking citizens recognize the state-led Kazakhstani identity, they reframe it 'into a counter-state narrative of identity that refutes the necessity of Kazakh language knowledge for belonging in the Kazakhstani political community'(Rees and Williams 2017). Indeed, between the state-led policies on nation-building and how they are received by non-state actors, there could remain 'grey zones' (Isaacs and Polese 2015, p. 371).

To understand this cleavage in the state-citizens dialogue on the language issue, we should pay attention to the highly contested state-led model of the Kazakhstani identity (Isaacs and Polese 2015, pp. 371-372, 375-376). Indeed, 'the Kazakh political authorities by holding experiments with different approaches and models, including Eurasia, Turkic brotherhood and civic Kazakhstani nation preferred to embark on the neo-Soviet approach of the "one big family"' (Burkhanov and Sharipova 2015, p. 26). On the other hand, the state authorities in parallel to the idea of the Kazakhstani identity or Kazakhstanness (which aims at the ethnic minorities) promote the ideas of Kazakhness, the political entity of the titular Kazakh nation and the titular Kazakh language (Laurelle 2015, p. 2). As Laruelle suggests, the idea of Kazakhstanness will be vanished up with time as the Slavic minorities would represent the decreasing part of the state's population, while the ethnic minorities would be given their rights 'in a folkloric way', and 'there are few chances that a movement contesting the Kazakhness of Kazakhstan will emerge in the years ahead' (Laurelle 2015, p. 16). The Latinization reform seems to prove this point of view. First, the state-led policy of Latinization is aimed at the Kazakh audience (and mostly targets the young generation at schools and civil servants who need to learn the Latinized alphabet in a forced way). While the citizens affiliate themselves with the Kazakhstani identity, they do not fully recognize the Kazakh language's cohesive or bounding role. This lack of consent among the citizens is not something new since the state-led policy is implemented in the authoritative top-down way. As Davé argues, in Kazakhstan 'the obstacles to forging an integrationist, civic statehood come from the authoritarian-patrimonial system that uses a mix of ideological rhetoric, informal and personalist control, coercion and co-optation to continuously manage and regulate the role and standing of its ethnic minorities' (Davé 2007, p. 136). As a whole, Kazakhstan's state developmental concepts are ambivalent, in the core, as the state authorities have to find uneasy accommodation between their own regime's legitimation and intra-elite aspirations (Kudaibergenova 2015, p. 450). So far just a few voices officially came out to protest in Kazakhstan – the voices of the 'Slavic-Turkic Unity of Kazakhstan', as well as the 'Russian society in Kazakhstan', who published their manifests the same day in one newspaper released by 'Semirech'e Cossack Community'²⁹ in Almaty. Davé, while commenting on the absence of voices on the language issue in Kazakhstan, argues that

this question is 'paradoxically linked to the failure of the ruling elites to develop a shared national idea and to rally the support of the society in cultural and identity construction and institution-building' (Davé 2007, p. 171). On contrast, many voices condemning Latinization and regarding it as a sign of 'bewilderment', 'treachery', 'undermining of Russia's authority in the region', and even as 'spitting to Russia's side' belong to the political elites of Russia.

With keeping Laruelle's argument in mind, it is easy to answer another question of Rees and Williams who reasonably ask why the state authorities in 2014 instead of promoting the ideas of Kazakhstani and Kazakhstanness, invoked the idea of the Mangylik El 'rather than ult, halyq, or something else' (Rees and Williams 2017). Further, why in 2017 N. Nazarbayev instead of supporting the ideas of Kazakhstanness invoked the idea of Kazakhness by declaring the Rukhani Zhangiru program and inviting the nation to preserve the Kazakh traditions, Kazakh literature, wedding ceremonies, and ancient pre-Soviet monuments. Do the political authorities believe that ethnic minorities living in Kazakhstan take care of the preservation of the authentic Kazakh culture? Again, the answer lies in the hybrid (Laruelle 2015, p. 1), three-faceted nature of the state-led identity, no matter how Kazakhstan's political authorities call such approach, as a 'moderate' or 'skillful' (Davé 2007, p. 103), it conveys ambivalent decisions into the societal life. As Kudaibergenova succinctly points, the 'compartmentalised ideology captures how Nazarbayev's quasi-ideology shuffled between these multiple discourses, adjusting to the "audiences" targeted by his message' (Kudaibergenova 2016, p. 921). In the core, the last presidential messages on coming back to traditions and Latinization have been directly addressed to the Kazakh audience, while the rest of the society (the ethnic minorities) have been provided their 'folkloric ways' of expression. As far as the state-led policy prioritize 'the core' of its citizenry, the ideas like Kazakhstanness would remain formal, while Latinization would turn into a sacralized category.

Kazakhstan's and Russia's Official Discourses on Cultural and Educational Reforms: Striking Resemblances

Let us begin this chapter by invoking a contentious argument: Kazakhstan, while dreaming to become a Western-like, acts like Russia. The first half of the argument: 'dreaming to become a Western-like' should be understood broadly as the embracement of the Western values and the capitalist order, and in this chapter, it is primarily related to the state's normative dependence on the West. The Western normative dependence of Kazakhstan's political authorities in the process of the identity's crafting could be traced elsewhere. Rees and Williams, while analyzing Kazakhstan's regime's policies have noticed their plausible affiliation to the 'Western models of minority rights'; 'liberal-oriented multiculturalism'; 'democratic regime' (Rees and Williams 2017), no matter how symbolic, declaratory or superficial they are in practice. The standards of the international organizations have been officially put into the basis of the main official documents on the state identity³⁰. Not only the Kazakhstan authorities' 'commitment to internationalism and

civic statehood' (Davé 2007, p. 103), but also the Western-like institutions³¹, economic modernization³², cultural³³ and educational³⁴ reforms have been internalized by the political elites. By drawing parallels with the United States, Germany, Sweden, Finland, as well as the EU and NAFTA the state authorities have targeted the ideal models for resemblance (Abdikalikova 2015a, 2016a, 2017a). Let me bring two remarkable citations by the State Secretary Gul'shara Abdikalikova³⁵. 'Not so long time ago the US President Obama in his address to the US Congress of 21/01/2015 accentuated the economics of the middle class. This proves again that the strategic course of the Elbasy [Елбасы] is right, actual and taken on time³⁶ (Abdikalikova 2015b). Or another remark by her, 'George Bush Senior... said about our president in a simple and disarming way: "He could predict the future"³⁷' (Abdikalikova 2015d). In this relation, Kazakhstan's case does not stay far from Russia's case where the political elites are also dependent on Western approval (Morozov 2015). Parallel to the Western norms, the political elites of Kazakhstan admire the Asian approaches³⁸ in the nations' modernization of Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia and China (Abdikalikova 2017b). The state's long-term programs like Strategy-2050 have been adopted following the experience of China, Malaysia and Turkey (Nazarbayev 2014a). Kazakhstan's democracy has emerged similarly to Japan, Singapore and South Korea (Nazarbayev 2013b). The state-owned sovereign wealth fund 'Samruk-Kazyna' has been based on the experience of the similar institutions in Singapore, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates³⁹ (Nazarbayev 2014c). States as Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, Hongkong, Taiwan, and the United Arab Emirates serve as models where the state language is combined with the usage of the English language (Nazarbayev 2012b, 2015). However, this also speaks in favor of Western dependence.

More often both the Western and Asian approaches are involved in the comparison. For example, the United States, Germany, Singapore, and Great Britain are experienced in having meritocratic state civil service (Abdikalikova 2016b), while China, Malaysia, Russia, as well as the United States and Germany are good in support of scientists (Abdikalikova 2016c). The anticorruption Law of Kazakhstan has grasped the experience of such states like Singapore, South Korea, Hongkong, Estonia, and Georgia⁴⁰. However, here is a statement to mention N.Nazarbayev's disappointment in any of the models of resemblance: 'Some of the state and political leaders in different formats have attempted to embed us into their ideas of Panislamism, on the one side, as well as Pan-Turkism, on the other side, and so-called "values and benefits" of the Western civilization, freedom, and democracy... However, the Kazakhstani people, managed to take our fate into our hands⁴¹' (Nazarbayev 2015). Despite many other examples, which I do not quote here, the claim that much like the state-led policy on Kazakhstan's identity is highly contentious like the state-led talk on 'Which model should we follow?' is also contested and subject to the demands of the political authorities. The Western normative standards are highly desirable for copying in practice, even if in a declaratory and superficial way while the Asian models serve as models for making references to, personal inspirations of N.Nazarbayev (as in the case with Lee Kuan Yew) or mere rationale for setting up new

state-owned institutions channeled by public budget.

The second part of the argument: 'Kazakhstan acts like Russia' is the most intriguing one which needs to unfold further. Table 2 demonstrates the striking commonalities between Kazakhstan's and Russia's official discourse on cultural and educational reforms. The comparison of the documents Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2050' (Nazarbayev 2012a) and Rukhani Zhangiru (Nazarbayev 2017a) demonstrates almost the same political agenda compared to Russia's presidential messages on the 'National question' (Putin 2012a) and 'Spiritual Bonds' (Putin 2012b). The documents span the same range of questions: (1) historically important events of the state; (2) role of values (traditions, culture, patriotism); (3) state-led practices in the nation-building (promotion of the interests of the core nation, its language and culture); (4) threats to the state's security (value crisis and alien ideologies); (5) models for positive resemblance (e.g. success of Hollywood-made movies); (6) tools of education (e.g. '100 textbooks'); (7) support for the regional intelligentsia.”

While both presidents recognize the necessity to catch up with the world industrial and technological achievements, the cultural globalization stays aside of their interests. N.Nazarbayev, alongside with V.Putin call the nation to guard the national cultural core and traditions: in case of Russia, this plan has been called as 'Spiritual Bonds' [Духовныескрепы] (Putin 2012b), while in Kazakhstan as RukhaniZhangiru [Руханижаңғыру] (Nazarbayev 2017a). Both presidents stress out the responsibility of every citizen to be a patriot and pay significant attention to the patriotic education of the youth, what is reflected in the Patriotic act Mangylik El of 2014 in Kazakhstan, and in the Program on the Patriotic Education 2011-2015 in Russia, which has been regularly prolonged since 2001. As far as history is concerned, it is the quite surprising moment to notice that N.Nazarbayev refers to 1000-years of the Kazakh history and culture (Nazarbayev 2017a). Probably, the reason lies in the provocative speech of V.Putin at the Seliger meeting in 2014, where he expressed his confidence that 'The Kazakhs never had a statehood [before Nazarbayev]' and that 'The Kazakhs support the ideas of Eurasianism because they benefit from ... staying in the space of the so-called big Russian world'⁴³, which forced the changes in Kazakhstan's state-led identification. The above-given commonalities, probably, do not prove absolutely that one state imitates the other. However, there are some reasons to suspect it to be the case. The Kazakhstan elites' post-independent 'assumption of power' has been closely related to Russia, as its political and historical Other, 'as a result of the interaction with Russia, Kazakhstan influenced Russification economically, socially and culturally' (Cummings 2005, p. 14). Indeed, to a large extent, some similarities could be explained by the Soviet past, which imposed the common normative values, as 'patriotism'⁴⁴. The political elites of Kazakhstan, as well as of Russia have re-adopted the ideas of the 'Soviet patriotism', as the main non-official ideology. In this relation, some state-led processes of building up of the historical memory take the same forms: through invocation of respect for the 9th of May as a Day of victory over the 'brown plague of fascism' (Nazarbayev 2014), as well as establishing the state-

Table 2 “Comparison of Kazakhstan's and Russia's discourse on cultural and educational reforms

| Historical Events | Russia | | Kazakhstan | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| | January 2012 1000 Years of History | December 2012 1000 Years of History | December 2012 300 Years since the Anrakay Battle 42 | April 2017 1000 Years of History |
| Values | The Russian Cultural Code | <i>The Peoples' Traditions</i> | <i>The Traditions and Culture is a genetical code</i> | <i>The National Culture and National Code</i> |
| Identity in relation with | Civil patriotism | Family values <i>Patriotism is a civil responsibility</i> | Family institute New Patriotism is an overall responsibility | Patriotism |
| Threats | Multinational Identity <i>The Russian culture</i> <i>The Russian people</i> | National and Spiritual Identity <i>The Russian culture</i> <i>The Russian people</i> <i>The Russian language</i> | Kazakhstani identity <i>The Kazakh people</i> <i>The Kazakh language</i> | National Identity <i>The Kazakh culture</i> |
| Positive models for resemblance | Inter-ethnic conflicts Nationalism Religious intolerance | Value crisis. Value catastrophe in 21st Century Shortage of —spiritual bondsll | Civilizational value crisis. Crisis of the world-outlook [мировоззренческих] and ideological values | Negative foreign ideological influence |
| Instruments | <i>Hollywood movies production</i> 100 books which every pupil must read (with reference to the US experience in the 1920-s) <i>The Cultural Therapy</i> | - | - | <i>Hollywood movies production</i> 100 overseas textbooks in social sciences which need to be translated to the Kazakh language |
| | | The Russian culture influences on the worldculture. <i>Support of the cultural projects by the state</i> Support for the Regional Intelligentsia | The preservation of the Cultural code <i>Support for the Regional Intelligentsia</i> | <i>The Kazakh Culture</i> (translated to the UN languages) must be delivered to the world. <i>Support of the cultural projects by the state</i> Support for the Regional Intelligentsia (100 of New Faces) |

Source: www.akorda.kz, www.kremlin.ru

owned centers on education of patriotic youth like Molodezh' [Молодежь] (Nazarbayev 2013b) in Kazakhstan and RosMolodezh' [Росмолодежь] in Russia (in 2008) in analogy with the youth-oriented Soviet policy. The heritage of the Russian empire legacy - the Cadets – has also been imported into the Kazakhstani practice since 1996 in the form of the Cadet school named after Shokan Ualikhanov [Кадетский корпус им. Ш.Уалиханова]⁴⁵. In 2015, another parallel with the Russian empire was invoked by the State secretary G.Abdikalikova, who re-articulated Russia's monarchical triune 'Autocracy-Orthodoxy-Nationality' [Самодержавие-Православие-Народность]⁴⁶ into the Nation's Father-People-Eternal Country' [Елбасы, Народ, Мәңгілік Ел]⁴⁷. As it is rightly pointed, 'Mimicry, as an elite practice, is primarily accessible through the discourse at the postcolonial state level, evident in the rationale given for the development of laws, political institutions and foreign policy decisions' (Catherine Owen, John Heathershaw and Igor Savin 2017: 19). In 2015, following Russia's Law on the Foreign Agents and the Law on Gay Propaganda, Kazakhstan's political elites attempted to undertake the same legislative initiatives (Owen, Heathershaw and Savin 2017:16) which had not been approved as the country was planning to host Expo-2017 and anticipating foreign investors' capitals⁴⁸. In some cases, the political rhetoric of both presidents went almost hand in hand. In 2012, both presidents announced that no way they would let the mono-ethnic state to appear (Putin 2012a, Nazarbayev 2012a). In 2013, N.Nazarbayev argued about the failure of the multicultural project in the European states (Nazarbayev 2011, 2013a), while Putin did it in 2012 (Putin 2012a). Yet there remain vague examples to mention here, N.Nazarbayev's grandson has lately announced his willingness to run the 'Snow Leopard Foundation'⁴⁹ almost like V.Putin, who has been supervising 'The Amur Tiger Program' since roughly 2013.

Coming back to Latinization, on the one hand, this reform could be taken as an attempt by the political elites to decolonize the nation's consciousness by cutting it off from Russia's cultural influence. On the other hand, the reform seems to be fragmental and ineffective, since there is no consent within the society on whether the Kazakh language should play a cohesive role or not. However, what devaluates any decolonization-like movements, in this case, is not the absence of the consent or solidarity, but the way how the Kazakhstan political elites run their policy - by mimicking the Russian discourse. While, in general, the state-led policy formally targets the Western and Asian models, in practice it is conducted in a similar way as in Russia. Despite the state-led attempts to free the country from the Russian cultural influence - the Latinization of the script or the translation of one hundred foreign textbooks to the Kazakh language - such policies will not yield many results because the political elites remain trapped in the colonial paradigm of thinking.

Conclusion

The Chairman of the Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in his interview to BBC, while commenting Putin's claim about Kazakhstan's belonging to the Russian world, said the following: 'Speaking about [Kazakhstan's belonging to] the Russian world, we don't

agree [on this], because here we have our world, which is Kazakh⁵⁰. Being pushed by the provocative claims of President Putin, Kazakhstan's state authorities have forced the shift of the Kazakh alphabet from Cyrillic to Latin script in 2017. In the core, the Latinization reform is another facet of the nationalizing policy on the state-led identity of Kazakhstan, which, however, seems to have a limited effect on society. First, the state-led policy of Latinization is aimed at the Kazakh audience and mostly targets the young generation at schools and civil servants who need to learn the Latinized alphabet in a forced way. Second, the citizens do not fully recognize the Kazakh language's cohesive or bounding role taking into account the authoritative top-down way of its implementation and consequent lack of consent within the society. At the same time, the Latinization could be regarded as a state-driven attempt to decolonize the nation's consciousness through restriction of Russia's cultural influence. However, paying attention to how much the Kazakhstan political elites have borrowed from their Russian vis-à-vis, the state-led talks on decolonization remain vague and doubtful. By bringing numerous parallels between Kazakhstan's commitment to the Western and Asian approaches the political elites are aimed at further legitimization of their activities, while Russia's way is much more down to the reality and suitable for practical resemblance. Overall, by inserting the Western-like, Asian-like, Russian-like models of resemblance, the political elites have created a state-subaltern, the one who is not merely lacking representation by political means, but addicted to following any other path, except the own way. As long as the state authorities remain stigmatized by their inferior status and choose to stay dependent, they would not succeed in breaking out of the colonial way of thinking

Notes

1. Translation of the author [Всвязислатиницеймывсеస్తుаемибобщий, развивающийсяинформационныймир, языкинтернета, языканаукиикультуры], 'Nazarbaev: v kirilitseneskol' kobukv, kotorievoobsche v kazakhskoileksike ne uchastvuyut', Zakon.kz, 1 December 2017, available at: <https://www.zakon.kz/4891855-nazarbaev-v-kirilitse-neskolko-bukv.html> Accessed 9 July 2018.
2. The Population Census of 2009, Kazakhstan's Agency of Statistics (2011).
3. For more information on the symbolic nation-building tools see Chris Isaacs (2016) "Cinema and Nation-Building in Kazakhstan".
4. Translation of the author [И сегодня главным фактором, цементирующим нацию, является казахский язык - языкгосударства].
5. Translation of the author [Сегодня в мире по разным оценкам ежегодно исчезает от 10 до 25 бесписьменных языков, уходят целые пласты этнических культур].
6. Rasporiazhenie Prezidenta Respubliki Kazakhstan 'Kontsepsia formirovaniagosudarstvennoy identichnosti Respubliki Kazakhstan' (23/05/1996), #2995; Nazarbayev (1996).
7. Nazarbayev (1997a, 1997b); the Strategy-2030 was incorporated into the Strategy-2050 (2012).
8. Nazarbayev (1999a, 1999b).
9. Nazarbayev (2000).
10. Nazarbayev (2001).
11. Nazarbayev (2003).
12. Nazarbayev (2005).
13. Nazarbayev (2006).
14. Nazarbayev (2007).

15. Translation of the author [АнатілімізМәңгілікЕлімізбенбіргеМәңгіліктілболды] or ‘Our mother language alongside with the Eternal motherland, has become an Eternal language’ (Nazarbayev 2014a).
16. Mangylik Elin Russanis translated as theNation of the Unified Future [НацияЕдиногоБудущего]. However, the Kazakh original term stipulates a more abstract understanding of it as the Eternal country/Eternal land/Eternal Nation. Nazarbayev’s understands it as the Eternal country [Вечнаястрана] (Nazarbayev 2016) or Eternal Motherland [ВечнаяРодина] (Nazarbayev 2015). Some researchers translate it as the Eternal nation (Kudaibergenova 2015: 453).
17. Translationoftheauthor [Вназваниинашейстраныестьокончание “стан”, какиудругихгосударствЦентральнойАзии. В то же время иностранцы проявляют интерес к Монголии, населениекоторой составляет всего два миллиона человек, при этом в ее названии отсутствует окончание “стан”. Возможно, надо рассмотреть со временем вопросперехода на название нашей страны Қазақелі, но прежде следует обязательно обсудить это с народом], Tengrinews.kz, 6 February 2014, availableat: https://tengrinews.kz/kazakhstan_news/nazarbaev-vopros-pereimenovaniya-kazahstana-obsudit-narodom-250064/ Accessed 9 July 2018.
18. Nazarbayev(2008).
19. Nazarbayev(2009).
20. Doktrinanatsional’ногоedinstvaKazakhstana(29/04/2010); Nazarbayev (2010).
21. Nazarbayev (2011).
22. Strategy ‘Kazakhstan-2050’ (Nazarbayev 2012a); Nazarbayev (2012b).
23. Nazarbayev (2013a).
24. PatrioticheskiiAkt‘Mangylik El’(15/12/2014); Nazarbayev (2014a, 2014b).
25. Kontsepsiiaukrepleniiairazvitiiakazakhstanskoiidentichnostiiedinstva(28/12/2015); Nazarbayev (2015).
26. Nazarbayev (2016).
27. Modernizatsiiaobschestvennogosoznaniia‘RukhaniZhangiru’(Nazarbayev 2017a).
28. Mangylik Elbecomes a successor of the previous concept UlyDala Eli[ҰлыДалаЕлі].
29. Obrascheniedvizheniaslaviano-turkskogoedinstvaKazakhstana k presyenty N. Nazarbaevu po voprosammezhnatsional'ногоedinstva v strane', KassachiyKur’er, 03/11/2017, #10-11, pp.20-21.
30. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992), as well as OSCE and OECD recommendations (Concept of 28/12/2015).
31. The commitment of the Kazakhstan state-led policy with the standards of OECD, OSCE, UN, UNICEF, UNFPA, and World Bank has been claimed by G.Abdikalikova (Abdikalikova 2015a, 2017b). In 2018, the state-owned Astana International Financial Center has been established, which follows the Anglo-Saxon Public Law in its activity. Nazarbayev University follows the internationalized Anglo-Saxon model (Laruelle 2015: 13).
32. According to N.Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan is going to get involved in the 4th industrial revolution (Nazarbayev 2018). Following the strategic plans, the state is aimed at entering into the Top-30 of the most developed states.
33. UnderRukhaniZhangiru, (1) the Kazakh literature has to be translated to UN languages and further presented to the world (the first presentation had been carried out in the headquarter of the UNESCO in Paris in October 2017); (2) the worldwide famous textbooks are going to be translated to the Kazakh language and conveyed to the schools and universities (the first translated textbooks are the works by the German, American, British theorists)(Abdikalikova 2018a).
34. Since 2010, Kazakhstan has internalized the norms of the Bologna declaration and European Higher Education Area.
35. From 2015 to 2017, G.Abdikalikova who is responsible for commenting presidential reforms and talking-to the people in the regions brought in her speeches numerous citations of the US and British political figures, while paying scarce attention to their Asian colleagues.

36. Translationoftheauthor [Совсем недавно Президент США Барак Обама в своем послании Конгрессу 21 января 2015 года также акцентировал внимание на экономике среднего класса. Это еще раз показывает выверенность, актуальность и современность Стратегического курса Елбасы] (Abdikalikova 2015b).
37. Translationoftheauthor [... Джордж Буш-старший...сказал когда-то о нашем Президенте просто и обезоруживающе: ‘Он способен предвидеть будущее’] (Abdikalikova 2015d).
38. The programs of Japan (Kokutai), Malaysia (Rukunegara), Indonesia (Panch-Sila), China (the Harmonic Development)lied into the basis of Kazakhstan’s modernization (Abdikalikova 2017b).
39. According to N.Nazarbayev, the successful experience in state-owned property management and institutional transformations have been demonstrated by the Singaporean ‘Temasek Holdings’, the Malaysian ‘Khazanah Nasional’ and the UAE ‘Mubadala’ (Nazarbayev 2014c).
40. The Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Anticorruption: <http://kyzmet.gov.kz/ru/pages/sbornik-materialov-po-issledovaniyu-zarubezhnogo-opyta-protivodeystviya-korruptsii>.
41. Translationoftheauthor [Некоторые государственные и политические лидеры мира в разных форматах пытались привлечь нас к своим, с одной стороны, идеями панисламизма, с другой – пантюркизма, а с третьей – “ценностями и преимуществами” западной цивилизации, свободы и демократии... Судьбу республики мы, казахстанцы, взяли в свои руки!].
42. TheKazakh-DhungarwarunderAnrakay (1729-1730).
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Russian Migration and Structural Change in Kazakh SSR with special reference to Agricultural Developments (1917-1991)

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Abstract

In the history of Central Asia, developments during the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Collectivisation, Industrialisation besides Colonization, has contributed in an enormous way to the socio-economic life of Central Asian States. The case of Kazakhstan is rather an exceptional one since its relationship with Russia had been the longest and more penetrating as compared to other Central Asian Republics, which lead to long lasting imprints on the Kazakh socio-economic and cultural institutions. Russian migration, which was a primary prerogative of both Czarist and Soviet regimes, changed not only the demographic and economic profile of Kazakh SSR, but also transformed the socio-cultural fabric of Kazakh society. With the colonization of Kazakhstan by Russian peasants, the Kazakh country which was a nomadic society, wholly and solely dependent on pastoral economy, changed to agricultural one and subsequently an industrial one. The present study intends to investigate the migration pattern of Russian ethnic groups to Kazakhstan and its follow up agricultural development. Moreover, the policies of Soviet government in relation to migration and agricultural development which bore both positive as well as negative effects have been discussed in the paper.

Keywords

Pastoralism, Migration, Ethnicity, Colonization, Collectivisation, Sovietization,

Introduction

The vast territory of Kazakhstan is the only republic among fifteen national republics of the former Soviet Union that is most multi-ethnic in its composition wherein it contained a large number of Slavs and many other ethnic groups¹. Indeed it was the exceptional republic, which at the time of independence did not constitute majority of titular ethnic group such as Kazakhs². This change in the demographic composition of Kazakhstan resulted from the large scale Russian migration that took place during Czarist period and which received a momentum during Soviet period. This changed demographic structure of Kazakhstan coupled with the policies of Soviet government bore both positive as well as negative impact on the socio-economic life of Kazakhs, which we are going to discuss in this paper.

Migration

Migration, a historical process is the result of instability³ at homeland or availability of better opportunities at the newly migrated land. Certain other factors like income, size of population, distribution of information, social and cultural amenities,

location of resources and government policy are related to the process of migration⁴. The migration of Russians to Kazakhstan was also a historical development that evolved over centuries. For a larger part of time Russians have been migrating as merchants, clerks, teachers, civil administrators and military personnels into the region of Central Asia⁵ and were settled in large urban centres⁶. On the basis of nature and composition of migrants, the Russian migration to Kazakhstan can be divided into three distinct phases.

First Phase of Migration

The first phase of migration started with the Russian conquest of Kazakhstan till the beginning of the Soviet era. The period was dominated by the arrival of Cossacks, civil administrators, peasant settlers and others who were motivated by pull and push factors. From this period Russian traders and soldiers became visible on the North-Western border of modern Kazakh territory.

The history of Russia conquering the territories of Central Asia goes back to the mid-16th Century when Ivan the Terrible (1530-1584) started the process with the destruction of Khanates of Kazan (modern Republic of Tatarstan) in 1552, and Astrakhan in 1556⁷. Subsequently, under Peter the Great (1682-1725)⁸ Russians arrived in Kazakhstan in large numbers forming a part of the Russian colonial expansion in Central Asia⁹. The Kazakh steppes, on the eve of Russian conquest were divided into three major Hordes, i.e. Elder, Middle and Younger Hordes¹⁰. These Hordes occupied themselves on the territories roughly in common with Semirechie, Central and Western Kazakhstan respectively. Except for a brief period, they never forged to emerge into a Steppe Empire like those of medieval Empires of Turks and Mongols¹¹.

As a result of local Khanate's pre-occupation of war with Kalmyks (Oirats, Dzungars), Russian imperial authorities were successful in subduing the Kazakh territory. So Kazakhs were caught in middle, having no option but to throng themselves under Russian suzerainty. In 1848 the khanates were ultimately abolished and despite frequent Kazakh uprisings the Russian Empire completely took over political power. So, by 1850s the Kazakh Khanates were completely liquidated¹².

One of the important consequences of this military occupation was the migration of large number of Russians to newly conquered lands. These immigrants were welcomed by the Central government at St. Petersburg as their presence was considered to strengthen Russian hold over these areas¹³. Cossacks¹⁴ were the first group of Russians that settled down in northern Steppe areas and started construction of fortifications, which included towns and settlements¹⁵. By setting of military posts deeper in Kazakh territory, such as Akmolinsk and Turgai, they built up centres of military and political control (Uralsk, Semie, Guriev and Ust-Kamenogorsk) that played an important role in political and economic interaction of the Russian Empire¹⁶. From the first half of 18th century; several forts, Russian military and administrative Centres like Omsk, Semipalatinsk, Akmolinsk, Vernyy and others began to spring up in Kazakhstan and around these centres seasonal fairs took place which attracted large numbers of people¹⁷. Due to this, a kind of markets, although with a limited scope, emerged in these areas which till then were unknown,

the example of Verny stands a testimony which during Soviet period developed as Alma-Ata, the capital city of Kazakhstan.

The colonization was also followed by the settlement of Russian peasants. Since 1860s the entire Kazakhstan was declared state possession of the Empire, and the lands of local nomads were seized and disseminated among Russian peasants. By 1867 there were 14 Cossack villages in northern part of Semirechie and Verney oblast, with a Russian population of about 14000 in Semirechie alone¹⁸. By the end of 1870s thousands of Russian peasants got settled in Kazakhstan and were involved in dry farming¹⁹.

Other developments which accelerated Russian settlement policy were abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861²⁰ and the resettlement act of 1889, according to which state presented land allotments, the immunity free loans to peasant colonists to persuade their immigration into Central Asia especially Kazakhstan. This act authorized the free settlement of peasants on state owned land, with the result hundreds and thousands of settlers migrated towards north of Kazakhstan. The grand famine of 1891-92 which resulted in about 1800 families arriving in Semirechie without authorization from centre²¹ was also a pushing factor. Between 1889 and 1896 immigration was seen as a solution to the problem of rural over population in metropolis of Russia²². As a consequence, a vast wave of colonist explosion burst upon the country, the attraction of land in the plains of Kazakhstan led to a substantial migration into the region and these arrivals were mainly agriculturalists²³. It was followed by some persecuted religious communities, such as, Protestants and the Old Believers and criminals and political dissidents who were exiled. They established themselves in the basin of Ural River, regions of Altai Mountains, and banks of Ishim, Tobol, and Upper Irtysh rivers falling in present day Kazakhstan²⁴. From the first imperial census of Russia in 1897, ethnic Russians constituted 11% of the region's total Population whereas Ukrainians comprised 1.9%²⁵. These figures are well reflected in the following table.

Table 1: Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan: 1897

| | Number | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Kazakh | 3,392,800 | 81.8 |
| Russian | 454,400 | 11.0 |

Source: Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University. p. 198; Dave, Bhavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. Washington: The National Council for Eurasia and East European Research. p. 22.

The reforms of 1906-07 during Pyotr Arkadyevich Stolypin's reign (1906-11) opened up a new wave of Russian immigrants²⁶ and a large group of peasants and Cossacks, at the beginning of 20th century were settled in Central Asia and Kazakhstan²⁷. By 1911 Russians formed majority of population of the Oblasts of Akmolinsk (835,000 out of a total of 1,444,000 or almost 58%), and Turgay (235000 out of 713000 almost

33%)²⁸. It is reported that in 1914 more than one million Slav peasants were settled on the land taken from Kazakh nomads²⁹.

The Russian migrants hailed from different cadres of life³⁰. It is important to mention here that the migrants also constituted officials as the head of occupying forces, who came to serve the government and took the places of ousted officials of Khans³¹. As mentioned earlier, Russian authorities confiscated Kazakh lands and banned migration of nomadic Kazakhs across settled territories³². It is mentioned that almost 100 million acres of land was confiscated from the inhabitants of the present day Kazakhstan, as a consequence natives along with their cattle drove towards hills and deserts, where in most of cases both the owners and their cattle died³³. By this policy, Czarist regime tried to ease out the Russian peasant burdened by load of feudal survivals to settle freely in Asiatic Russia and these policies proved to be a catalyst for the poor peasants of European Russia, who found a chance to elevate their status from bad to good. This aspect of Russian occupation proved to be more damaging to native populace as the “land hungry peasants” were permitted to inhabit on qualitative and most fertile plough land was given to new settlers whereby displacing the Kazakh and Kirghiz nomads³⁴.

A careful analysis of historical facts reveal that migration process of ethnic Russians into Kazakhstan was primarily state sponsored initiated under the auspices of Czarist regime³⁵ and reached to its climax during Soviet era. The repressive executions for the subsistence and settlement of those Russian migrants proved havoc to the native populace as the peasant migrants were permitted to inhabit the fertile plough lands by displacing the native population. This is supported by the number of uprisings that took place during this period, for example between 1783 and 1870 at least eight major Kazakh revolts took place against these Russian settlements but they were crushed strongly by Russian army³⁶. Subsequently, this process was further promoted and accelerated by the Soviet regime under the guise of collectivization and industrialization which changed the demographic structure of Kazakhstan bearing far reaching consequences on socio-economic and cultural history of region.

Second Phase of Migration

The second phase of migration of ethnic Russians started with the beginning of Soviet era and continued until World War II. The migration pattern during this period, though changed, continued in Central Asia including Kazakhstan. During this phase, migration was endorsed for the settlement of people associated with industries and railway engineering along with peasants on a low scale. The movement boosted since Soviet Union advocated Internationalism³⁷, Socialism and New Economic policies which encouraged migration of many people from their homeland to the place of working. The influx of Russians into the region assumed an organized character after the beginning of Industrialization and changed the ethno-demographic profile of Kazakhstan.

Major developments like construction of railways, collectivization³⁸ of agriculture and industrialization took place during 1920's particularly in Kazakhstan and

these developments pushed a large number of competent persons, qualified workers, technicians, scientists and people belonging to arts and culture, which initiated a process of modernization into the region. Though the construction of railways was motivated by strategic aims³⁹, yet the completion of Trans-Aral railway between Orenburg and Tashkent facilitated Russian and Ukrainian migration to Central Asia and Kazakhstan⁴⁰. Collectivization of agriculture also promoted the process of migration, since millions of hectares of new lands were reclaimed and as such large number of urban and rural settlements sprung up often on virgin sites⁴¹.

In the wake of vigorous influx of other ethnic groups coupled with massive deaths among Kazakhs and their migration to other areas of Central Asia and China the population of Kazakhs declined constantly⁴². The first All-Union census of 1926 reveals that in Kazakhstan, Kazakh population stood at 3,627,612 (58.2%)⁴³, which however, according to the census of 1939, had declined to 2,327,625 (37.84%)⁴⁴. Taking natural growth into consideration, the total loss in population was about 1.3 million people. Though a massive migration of Russians into all non-Russian republics remained a peculiar feature of Soviet government, yet Kazakhstan was one of the most horribly affected regions⁴⁵. Contrary to this phenomenon, during this period, the share of Russians in the total population of Kazakhstan increased by 1,183,632⁴⁶ and by 1939, Russians had thus attained plurality in Kazakhstan, with 40.3% of the total population. These migrants were mostly found in both rural and urban areas of Northern and Eastern regions of Kazakhstan⁴⁷. Table 2 shows the number and percentage of Russians and Kazakhs vis-à-vis the total population in Kazakhstan from 1926 to 1939.

Table 2: Kazakhs and Russians in Kazakhstan: From 1926 to 1939

| Ethnic Group | Year | | | % Change 1926-39 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | 1926 | 1937 | 1939 | |
| Kazakhs | 3,627,612 (58.54%) | 2,181,520 (42.55%) | 2,327,625 (37.84%) | -35.83 |
| Russians | 1,275,055 (20.6%) | 1,917,673 (37.4%) | 2,458,687 (40.0%) | 92.8 |
| Total Pop. | 6,196,356 (100%) | 5,126,678 (100%) | 6,151,102 (100%) | -0.7 |

Source: Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. Washington: The National Council for Eurasia and East European Research. p. 22; Nurpeis, K. (2005). "Kazakhstan," Adle, Chahar. (Ed.). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. Paris: UNESCO. p. 254; Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University. p. 212.

The above table reflects two things; one the increasing trend of Russians in relation to decrease in Kazakhs and the decreasing trend in total population from 1926 to 1937. The migration of Kazakhs to other parts of Central Asia and China as a result of

forced collectivization, repression and subsequent deaths among Kazakhs (due to famine) were also contributing factors to this scenario. After 1937, however a slight increase in the total population is noticed but until 1939 heights of 1926 were not achieved. It is important to mention that prior to Soviet era, migration was to a great extent rural but after revolution, Russian movement into Central Asia has chiefly an urban character due to which the urbanization and urban population increased in Kazakhstan from 8.5% in 1926 to 27.8% by 1939⁴⁸.

Third Phase of Migration

The third phase (a very crucial phase), which started from the beginning of World War II until the disintegration of Soviet Union, witnessed the arrival of deportees of war⁴⁹, people associated with industries as the period saw relocation of a number of industries in Kazakhstan⁵⁰ along with the people to work on Virgin Lands⁵¹. It is believed that more than 1,500 factories moved east in 1941, out of which a fifth went to Central Asia and more than 100 settled in present day Kazakhstan, resulting in big shifts of population distribution⁵². The evacuation of people from frontlines due to the threat of possible collaboration of Volga Germans and Koreans with Nazis and Japanese respectively led to the introduction of new elements in the population distribution. This all happened in an organized scale which otherwise were present in Kazakhstan from the very beginning of the Soviet period, to which the census report of 1926 stands a testimony⁵³. The total number evacuated between June 1941 and October 1942 was close to 20 million⁵⁴, which increased the rate of urbanization to 44% in 1959 as against just 8.3% in 1926⁵⁵, as these migrated people had close association with industries rather than with agriculture. These large urban centres were settled mostly by Russians, hence termed as Russian islands in a large Central Asian Sea⁵⁶. It is believed that during this phase, Soviet government incurred twice the amount into the economy of Central Asia than it made since the pre-war days⁵⁷.

This demographic Russification continued even after World War II. Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Program that expanded the acreage under cultivation in the steppe regions of Northern Kazakhstan necessitated fresh transfer of men, material and equipments. The Virgin Lands program launched in February 1953, aiming at transforming the large areas of uncultivated steppe lands of Kazakhstan and south-western Siberia into new productive fields, led to the migration of hundreds and thousands of volunteers from the European parts of USSR who settled down and cultivated what was called the "unused lands" of Kazakhstan. The move proved great pillage for Kazakhs since it deprived them from their grazing lands for rearing their cattle and livestock.

The Kazakh resistance to collectivization⁵⁸ and subsequently the enormous loss of life due to starvation led to the overall decrease in the proportion of Kazakh population which fell dramatically from 57.1% in 1926 to 30.0% in 1959⁵⁹. Contrary to this, large influx of ethnic Russians to work on virgin lands increased the share of Russians to 42.7% in 1959⁶⁰. Out of 15 Oblasts, Russians outnumbered Kazakhs in 9 oblasts⁶¹. By 1960s, the ethnic equilibrium was adversely negative vis-à-vis Kazakhs as they became minority in

their own home land. The increasing mining activities in Central Asia further increased the numerical strength and size of Russian labour force in Central Asia including Kazakhstan.

Though the last two decades of Soviet rule witnessed a gradual decrease in the absolute number of Russians and their share in overall population in the entire region of Central Asia, yet in Kazakhstan, there was slight increase of Russians in absolute numbers and decrease in their share of the total population (Refer to table no. 3)⁶². The declining trend and pattern of Russian migration is clearly noticed from the census of 1979. The stage witnessed tremendous changes on account of changes in world scenario as well as other developments within USSR. The World War II and Cold War era which sowed seeds for corruption and disintegration of USSR were primary reasons behind the migration fluctuation. The fluctuating population developments between Russians and Kazakhs in Kazakhstan from 1959 to 1989 are well reflected from the below table.

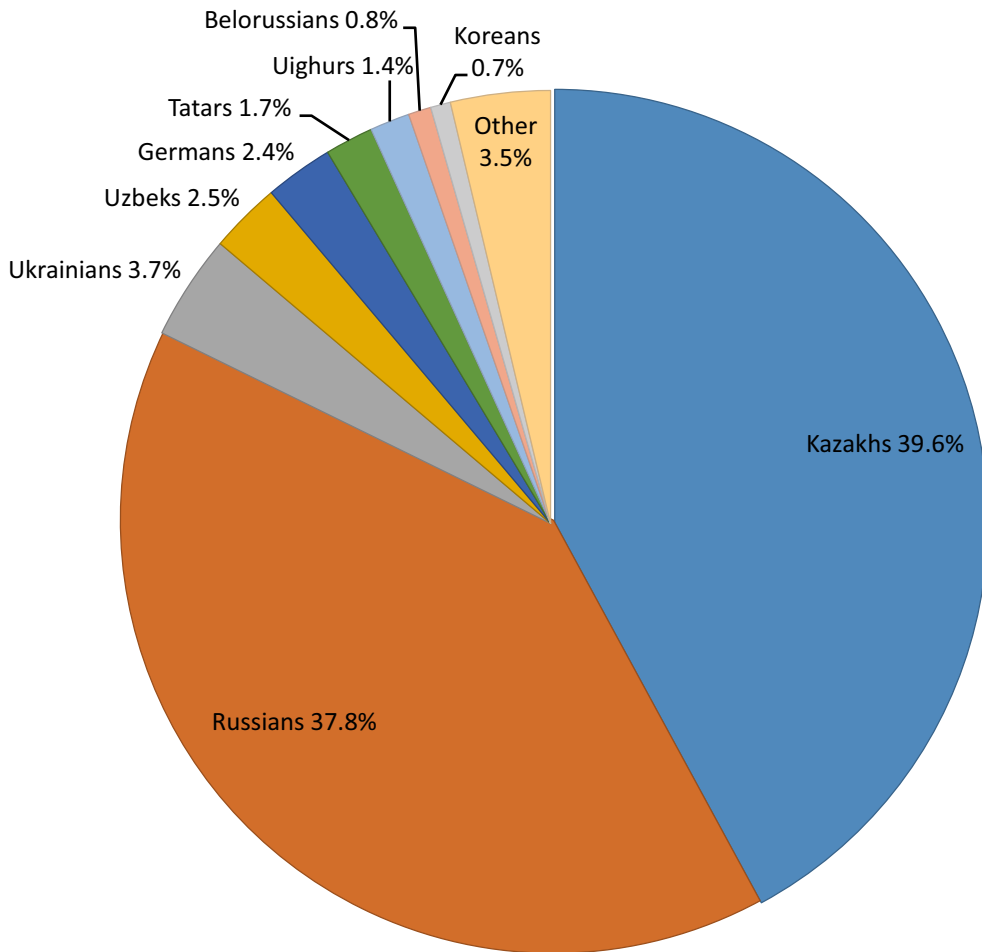
Table 3: Russians and Kazakhs in Kazakhstan: From 1959 to 1989

| Ethnic Groups | Year | | | | % Change 1959-89 |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | 1959 | 1970 | 1979 | 1989 | |
| Kazakhs | 2,794,966 (30.0%) | 4,234,166 (32.5%) | 5,289,349 (36.0%) | 6,534,616 (39.6%) | 133.7 |
| Russians | 3,974,229 (42.7%) | 5,521,917 (42.4%) | 5,991,205 (40.8%) | 6,227,549 (37.8%) | 56.6 |
| Total Population | 9,294,741 (100%) | 13,008,573 (100%) | 14,684,283 (100%) | 16,464,464 (100%) | 77.1 |

Source: Athar, G M. (2000). "Demographic Indigenization in Kazakhstan – A Spatio Temporal Analysis." *Journal of Central Asian Studies*. 11. Srinagar: p. 50. Nurpeis, K. (2005). "Kazakhs." *Adle, Chahar. History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Paris: UNESCO. Vol. VI. p. 254; Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. p. 22; Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 215.

The changes in population pattern since 1970s are primarily attributed to high birth rates among Kazakhs than among Russians⁶³, the growing migration of people of local nationalities from the countryside to cities, and out flow of Russian speaking population from the region⁶⁴, since Central Asia was no longer considered as a region of potential development in the wake Glasnost and Perestroika and subsequent disintegration of USSR. Thus, the migration process discussed above had two-fold impact on Kazakhstan. One is immigration of ethnic Russians, the other catastrophic out migration of Kazakhs from their native land. Due to migration pattern some new elements were introduced in Kazakhstan's population resulting in a complete change of composition of Social and demographic structure. The ethno-demographic structure of Kazakhstan in 1989 is well reflected from the following chart.

Figure 1: Ethnic Composition of Kazakhstan in 1989 (%age)



Source: Compiled on the basis of data cited in tables 1, 2 and 3.

Structural Changes

Migration of ethnic Russians into Central Asia including Kazakhstan remained a primary prerogative throughout the period under study. These migrations, coupled with official efforts led to gradual transformation of a nomadic society to agricultural society. Under Soviets radical changes were initiated in the socio-economic sector, Kazakhstan witnessed a process of modernization, industrialization and westernization. The region was wrenched out of Asia and thrust into Europe. The contribution of Russians (both under Czars and Soviets) to the socio-economic sector of Kazakhstan is discerned from the following discussion.

Before its annexation by Russia, Kazakhstan was a nomadic society and as such the economy of Kazakhs largely revolved round pastoralism. The development of agricultural and its allied aspects owe its contribution to Russians. Though the Kazakh pastoral economy had never been entirely self-sufficient, but it had proven to be the most

proficient human exploitation of the arid grasslands, which is evidenced by the persistence of pastoral nomadism through time⁶⁵. The principal socio-economic effect of Russian rule and its related modernization was the elimination of the economic viability of Kazakh pastoral nomadism⁶⁶. In view of the inevitable economic forces of modernization, the Kazakhs could not maintain their traditional economy nor the culture which was based upon it. An important impact of Russian rule and its modernization initiatives was adoption of sedentary mode of living by Kazakhs⁶⁷. The heavy influx of Russians turned not only the grazing grounds of Kazakhstan into agricultural fields, but also compelled Kazakh nomads to settle and adopt sedentary mode of life⁶⁸ since their old routes of migration were blocked by Russian settlements.

Pastoral nomads have highly developed system of land-use, enforced by custom (through trial-and-error) not by violence. Kazakhs had regarded the land (specifically, the pasture) as common to all, with traditional rights of getting benefit of land for each family within its extended group's territory. In some places, the best sites were reserved for specific families, in others, it was first-come first-serve; in still others, usage rotated on a customary fashion between families. Relations over pasture and water were vital to the Kazakh culture, which stressed peaceful resolution over bloodshed⁶⁹.

With the pressures of Russification, the nomadic conception of land was replaced by the concept of private property. The government had seized all Kazakh land as crown property⁷⁰. The best fertile plough lands were determined as surplus and as such was given to the ministry of agriculture for distribution among peasants. The Kazakhs were left with marginal lands to compete among themselves. Those Kazakhs who showed willingness in accepting modern changes benefitted but those who remained mostly traditional were more likely to be impoverished.

Traditionally Kazakhs did not lay fodder to their herds in the winter, which sometimes took a heavy toll of their herds when there were harsh winters⁷¹. With the introduction of storing fodder for winter spread, the Kazakh families laid claim over hey and meadow lands also. In this situation wealthy Kazakhs used money to buy or rent the lands of poorer Kazakhs, thus developing rich Kazakh land owners⁷². Thus, emergence of rich Kazakh landed magnates and stratification of Kazakh society came into being for the first time in their history⁷³. As available pastures declined due to Russian constriction, the Kazakh economic situation changed⁷⁴. The modern sedentary life style on the one hand forced many Kazakhs to take up subsistence farming because they could no longer maintain adequate herds; on the other hand it increased the power of numerous other Kazakhs⁷⁵. It was noted that by the early 1800s, a split was developing between those Kazakhs who benefitted from Russian rule and those who suffered. The economic impact of Russian rule made many moderate and poor Kazakhs to abandon nomadism while wealthy Kazakhs often increased their wealth. The result was that by the close of Czarist era, over 80% of the Kazakh population utilized some agriculture, while only about a third had done so merely some 40 years back⁷⁶.

The important feature of Czarist agricultural policy, the confiscation and distribution of nomadic lands among Russian settlers, led to the expansion and development of agriculture which till the mid-19th century was traditionally primitive⁷⁷. It was only with the increasing Russian control and Slav settlements in the rain-fed lands of south-east Kazakhstan that sedentary farming was introduced and some nomads began to plant winter grain. Moreover, southern Kazakhstan became part of Central Asian cotton economy⁷⁸.

Due to American Civil War supplies of imported cotton began to diminish, so Russians decided to concentrate their efforts upon expanding cotton growing districts in the Caucasus and Central Asia⁷⁹. To increase cotton production in order to free themselves from reliance on the sources outside empire, the Russians developed irrigation system which was inevitable⁸⁰. Under Soviets agricultural developments in Central Asia were to a great extent the projection of pre-1917 Russian policy with its emphasis on cotton growing and upon withdrawal from raising grain and other foodstuffs⁸¹. So Soviets at first attempted to repair the old disturbed and damaged irrigation system and to build new canals and dams across the existing rivers⁸², which led to agricultural development. With the result there was further expansion of area under cotton and gradual diminution in the area under other crops.

After the 1917 revolution, the most dramatic change was the enforced collectivization of 1928-9 accompanied by huge reduction in the number of livestock as a consequence of famine⁸³. Due to Civil war and collectivization, production of cotton and other crops decreased⁸⁴. To combat the drop in cotton production, Soviet authorities started a campaign to increase productivity by application of chemical fertilizers and planting better quality of cotton seed⁸⁵. Moreover, to combat the challenge, the problem in the sphere was solved by recruiting brilliant managers at collective farms, using machine tractors, creating appropriate potential of agricultural equipment, and improving technology of soil development as well as by comparing the good and the bad farms to provide implementation of state plan. Further, the agricultural year was divided into several cycles, such as sowing, haymaking, harvesting, cattle wintering with each agricultural cycle expected to have authorized representatives of regional organizations to exercise control⁸⁶. The Second World War was yet another manmade calamity, the negative aspects of which were borne largely by agriculture and livestock economy of Kazakhstan. During this period the number of razing fields decreased: in 1941-1945 it decreased by 126 thousand hectares or by 24.2%. In case of regional stockbreeding during the same period, the population of livestock of all types decreased by 164,686 heads or by 26%⁸⁷.

After Second World War, transition to a peaceful economy led to number of difficulties and took enormous efforts to recover. The first important main task was to recover grazing fields and to improve productivity of cereal crops up to 10.7 centners in 1948, and 11 centners in 1949. In order to increase the crop yield, it was planned to expand farming in 1948-1949 by 150 thousand hectares. In the sphere of cattle breeding it was

planned to achieve an increase and much attention was paid to the creation of collective horse farms with the aim to replace cows by horses for agricultural work⁸⁸.

The second major policy decision in 1950's was the Virgin Lands program introduced in the northern Kazakhstan⁸⁹. The program brought about 25.5 million hectares of new land into cultivation as a result Kazakhstan became a major producer of wheat and barley⁹⁰. With the reclamation of new lands for cultivation, the total sown area showed considerable increase, which the following table reflects with a year-wise distribution of new and virgin lands brought under cultivation along with the total sown area from 1953-54 to 1960.

Table 4: Virgin and Fallow Lands brought under Cultivation 1954 – 1960 (million hect.)

| | 1954 | 1955 | 1956 | 1957 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 | Total |
|--|-------------------|------|-----------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------------|-------|
| Kazakh SSR | 8.6 | 9.4 | 1.9 | 1.0 | 1.9 | 1.0 | 1.7 | 25.5 |
| Virgin Land Kray | 6.6 | 6.2 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 17.0 |
| Sown Area of all Agricultural Crops (all types of farms; Thousand hectares) | | | | | | | | |
| Year | Kazakh SSR | | Growth % | | Virgin Lands Kray | | Growth % | |
| 1940 | 6,809 | | ----- | | 3,177 | | ----- | |
| 1953 | 9,717 | | 42.7 | | 5,144 | | 61.91 | |
| 1955 | 20,629 | | 112.29 | | 13,489 | | 162.22 | |
| 1958 | 28,661 | | 38.81 | | 18,666 | | 38.37 | |
| 1960 | 28,561 | | 0.34 | | 18,397 | | -1.44 | |
| Total Growth % | 319.45 | | ----- | | 479.06 | | ----- | |

Source: Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University. pp. 254, 257.

In the 1950s, some 640,000 migrant workers arrived in Kazakhstan and 1.8 million hectares of steppe land or 60 percent of Kazakhstan's newly opened land was ploughed and hundreds of collective farms were established. The program helped Kazakhstan produce 20 percent of the Soviet Union's grain and helped make Kazakhstan the third largest grain producer in the Soviet Union behind Russia and Ukraine. In 1956, Kazakhstan produced 16.38 million kilograms of bread, more than the 11 preceding years combined⁹¹. Not only cotton but other crops also increased under this programme. Idle and unused lands of Kazakhstan and West Siberia were reclaimed for cultivation of wheat in an attempt to increase grain production as rapidly as possible with least investment of capital. In Central Asian republics, grain lands increased in area by 20 percent between 1940 and 1942, and the areas planted with sugar beet and oleaginous crops also expanded, and vegetables and potatoes also increased by 32 percent⁹². Following table shows grain harvest in virgin lands as well as all types of farms.

Table 5: Crop Production in Kazakhstan: From 1950 to 1978 (in 1,000 tons)

| Crops | | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1978 |
|-------------------|--------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Grain | | 3,612 | 15,511 | 22,200 | 27,891 |
| | Wheat | NA | NA | 16,077 | 18,851 |
| | Maize | 52 | 116 | 151 | 449 |
| | Rice | 55.5 | 23.1 | 274 | 478 |
| Cotton | | 49 | 86 | 105 | 260 |
| Sugar Beet | | 541 | 1,148 | 2,239 | 2,624 |
| Potato | | 1,158 | 1,265 | 1,892 | 1,728 |
| Vegetables | | 182 | 390 | 776 | NA |
| Fruits | | 60 | 70 | 206 | NA |

Source: *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*. Vol 11. 1976. p. 518; *The Europa World Year Book*. Vol. I. 1971. p. 1271; *The Europa World Year Book*. Vol. I. 1974. p. 1383; *The Europa World Year Book*. Vol. I. 1983. p. 1273.

Table 6: Gross Harvest of grain crops in the Virgin and fallow lands

| | 1949-53 | 1954-58 (annual average) | | | 1959 | 1960 | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Kazakh SSR | 3,942 | 13,700 | | | 19,085 | 18,844 | |
| Virgin Land Kray | 2,133 | 9,282 | | | 13,851 | 12,918 | |
| Gross Harvest of all grain crops (all types of Farms; Thousand tons) | | | | | | | |
| | 1913 ¹ | 1940 | 1953 | 1955 | 1958 | 1959 | 1960 |
| Kazakh SSR | 2,162 | 2,516 | 5,439 | 4,754 | 21,991 | 19,085 | 18,844 |
| Virgin Lands Kray | ----- | 1,000 | 3,365 | 3,108 | 14,333 | 13,851 | 12,918 |
| ¹ 1960 boundaries | | | | | | | |

Source: Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University. pp. 256, 259

From 1960 onwards, more focus was given to the development of industry rather than agriculture. However, during this period agriculture was favoured by budget subsidies, input support and market support and transport etc with the result agricultural crops continued to increase. During this period grain and cotton farmers received favourable relative prices. Moreover, the prime motive of Soviet policy was to increase the output of the livestock sector in order to increase living standards through higher consumption of meat and dairy products. In the 1980s Kazakhstan exported 300,000 tons

of meat per year, 250,000 tons of milk and 150 million eggs to other Soviet republics and the result was that, meat output in the Soviet Union increased by 60 % during 1970s and 1980s⁹³.

Although in 1991, agricultural output accounted for less than 15 % of GDP yet just over a quarter of the workforce was formally employed in agriculture. Although less important in terms of total acreage, rice and cotton were significant crops in the south, and cotton was Kazakhstan's third largest export to non-Soviet markets after mineral fertilizers and coal⁹⁴. Oil crops, regionally important in two eastern regions, supplied 40 % of domestic demand⁹⁵.

Conclusion

After a careful analysis of historical facts, it is very clear that Kazakhstan, which was once referred as backward region, emerged as one of the developed republics of former Soviet Union with the positive contribution of Ethnic Russians in collaboration with the Soviet regime in due course of time. Drastic institutional development of Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic took place and at the time of soviet disintegration, Kazakhstan figured among more developed republics of the former Soviet Union.

However, the assertion does not mean that Soviet policies bore no negative effects. There were some negative aspects of the soviet policies as well. For example, the collectivization, which was forced in nature, led to some adverse effects, on the demographic structure of Kazakhs during the period under consideration. The census of 1926 reveals that the Kazakh population in Kazakhstan stood at 3,627,612 (58%) which however, according to the census of 1939 had declined to 2,640,000 (43%). Despite the fact that collectivisation costed millions of lives, Moscow continued with ruthlessly her policy of advance.

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1. Nurpeis, K. (2005). "Kazakhstan." Adle, Chahryar. (Ed.). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. Paris: UNESCO. p. 254; Oka, Natsuko. (2006). "The 'Triadic Nexus' in Kazakhstan: A Comparative Study of Russians, Uighurs, and Koreans." Leda, Osamu. (Ed.) *Beyond Sovereignty: From Status Law to Transnational Citizenship*. Sapporo: Hokkaido University. p. 359.
2. According to 1989 census, Kazakhs constitute 39.7% of the total population of Kazakhstan while as Russians were 37.8%. In other Republics like Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the titular ethnic groups (i.e., Kyrgyz, Tajiks and Uzbeks) were 52.4%, 62% and 71.4% respectively, on the other hand Russians in these Republics comprised of 21.4%, 8% and 8.3% respectively in 1989 census figures. Heleniak, Tim. (2013). "The Changing Nationality Composition of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian States," *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics*, 38(6). England: pp. 371–375; Athar, G M. (2000) "Demographic Indigenization in Kazakhstan: A Spatio Temporal Analysis." *Journal of Central Asian Studies*. 11. Srinagar: University of Kashmir. p. 50.
3. Instability is of many kinds political, social and economic etc. For example, when the political climate is not responding, minimal job opportunities are available and social instability.

4. William, Leasure J. and Robert A. Lewis. (1968). "Internal Migration in Russia in the Late 19th Century," *Slavic Review*. 27(3). USA: p. 375.
5. The term Central Asia denotes here Czarist Central Asia or erstwhile five Soviet Central Asian Republics, i.e. Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. For details see Allworth, Edward. (1967). *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule*. New York and London: Columbia University Press. p. 158; Hambly, Gavin. (1969). *Central Asia*. New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc. p. 169.
6. Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Bloomington: Indiana University. p. 183.
7. Rahul, Ram. (1997). *Central Asia: An Outline History*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company. p. 124.
8. The rumors of gold deposits and mineral resources of Central Asia drew Russian attention from the time of Peter the Great, who sent large expeditions as far as Irtysh and Khiva to seek out these deposits. Hambly, Gavin. (1969). *Central Asia*. p. 221.
9. The process of peasant settlements on Kazakh lands was accelerated further under Catherine the Great (1762-96), by establishing and regularizing taxation system and granting land allotments to Russian peasants. Moreover, during this period a number of decrees were passed, which were followed by the migration of large number of Russians and other Europeans to the newly conquered lands. Kassymova, Didar. et al. (2012). *Historical Dictionary of Kazakhstan*. UK: The Scarecrow Press. p. 228; Wheelar, Geoffrey. (1966). *The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia*. London: Bodley Head. p. 35; Clem, Ralph Scott. (1973). "Impact of Demographic and Socio-Economic Forces Upon the Nationality Question in Central Asia." Edward Allworth (Ed.). *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central*. New York: Praeger Publications. pp. 198-200.
10. Russian "Orda" Kazakh "Juz" and a minor one called Burkey's Horde, formed on the western side of the Younger Horde between the Ural and Volga rivers.
11. In view of this growing disparity, it was inevitable for Russia to restrain herself from these territories. Initially Russia started with slow pace and was contented with the acceptance of tutelage by various Kazakh leaders rather than by any actual military control. This process started in 1730, when Abul Khayr, the khan of the Younger Horde, requested to be under the suzerainty of Czar and the request was granted. For the most part of eighteenth century, Russia received similar assurances of loyalty from other Kazakh leaders, which was only a political expediency designed to strengthen their positions in inter-tribal wars. Soucek, Svat. (2000). *A History of Inner Asia*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 196-197.
12. The Khan of Younger Horde (Abul Khayr) sought support of the Russians against Kalmyks on the condition to accept Vassalage. The Russians subjugated the Middle horde by 1798, but the Elder horde managed to remain independent till 1820s when the growing Kokand power towards south forced them to choose Russian protection or to die a natural death under Kokand Khanate. Russia, later on sought to interpret these oaths of loyalty as agreements for annexation. Tolesh, Fariza A. (no date) *The Population History of Kazakhstan*. p. 5. Retrieved from <http://princeton.edu/papers>. on 05 Nov., 2015.
13. W P and Zelda K. Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd. pp. 44-56; Kassymova, Didar. et al (2012). *Historical Dictionary of Kazakhstan*. p. 228.
14. The term "Cossack" has a wider scope but we used the term in the context of those Slavic speaking people who became known as members of autonomous, semi-military communities, predominantly located in Ukraine and Russia and also those who left South-East Russia to save themselves from the brutality of land

lords of Russia. They used to work as a defense force for Russian Government to save South-East part of the empire.

15. After its conquest, Russians built a large number of fortifications such as Novo-Alexandrova (on the eastern bank of the Caspian Sea 1834), a line of forts between Orsk and Troitsk (1835-37). W P and Zeld K. Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. pp. 44-56.
16. Author name unavailable. (1958). "Russian Military and Civilian Settlements 1824-1917," *Central Asian Review*, 6(2). London: pp. 143-151.
17. Soucek, Svat. (2000). *A History of Inner Asia*. p. 197.
18. Those who arrived in Central Asia and Kazakhstan during the period under consideration did not thought it better to live there permanently, and regarded the stay as a part of their career in order to obtain some positions in military and civil administration of Russia and to carry on their career, as it was pre-requisite to serve in the remote areas of Turkestan and the Caucasus. Williams, D S M. (1966). "Russian Peasant Settlement in Semirechie," *Central Asian Review*. 14(2). London: p. 111; Gorshenina, Svetlana. (2004). *The Private Collections of Russian Turkestan in the Second Half of the 19th and Early 20th Century*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag. pp. 73-74.
19. Brower, Daniel R. (2003). *Turkestan and the fate of the Russian Empire*. London: Routledge Curzon. p. 128.
20. Nurpeis, K. (2005). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol VI. pp. 241-242.
21. Williams, D S M. (1966). *Central Asian Review*. 14(2). p. 111.
22. William, Leasure J. and Robert A. Lewis (1960). *Slavic Review*. 27(3). p. 377.
23. W. P and Z K Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. pp. 45-46; William, Leasure J. and Robert A. Lewis (1960). *Slavic Review*. 27(3). p. 382.
24. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). "Russian Minority in Central Asia: Migration Politics and Language." *Occasional Papers*. Washington D C: Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars. p. 2.
25. Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*, Washington D.C: The National Council for Eurasia and East European Research. p. 22.
26. For details see Williams, D.S.M. (1966). *Central Asian Review*. 14(2). pp. 115-119.
27. Cossacks were especially settled down along the Northern border of Kazakhstan, whereby mid-19th century they already formed majority of foreign population.
28. Kradder, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 207.
29. Williams, D.S.M. (1966). *Central Asian Review*. 14(2). p. 117.
30. Firstly, Cossacks, then military personals and administrators and were followed by peasant colonists etc.
31. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). *Occasional Papers*. p. 2.
32. Kassymova, Didar. (2012). et al. *Historical Dictionary of Kazakhstan*. p. 228. For more details about confiscation of lands, see Mikhailov, N. (1937). *Soviet Geography: the new Industrial and Economic Distributions*. UK: Methuen. pp. 103-107.
33. W P and Zeld K. Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. pp. 57-58.
34. Hambly, Gavin. (1969). *Central Asia*. p. 219.
35. Possibly Russia was first country in whole world who established a Specialized State Migration Management Department in 1763, whose primary objective was to promote migration from Western Europe to Russia. The establishment of department was having a different context from that of ours, but it can also be concluded that state was at the back of migration process. Focus Migration, available online at http://hwwi.de/russian_federation, accessed on 10 April. 2016. Moreover, In 1867 Nikolai Maev, a military statistician and future editor of the official newspaper,

Turkestan'skie Vedomosti, wrote that: "The tremendous distance which separates Turkestan Province even from Orenburg, not to mention other Russian towns, will for long continue to be one of the main obstacles to the stable establishment of Russian influence and civilization in Turkestan Province [...] the difficulty of the route is increased still more because of the insignificant Russian population in the forts and posts located on the Kirgiz [sic] steppe. So long as the population along the post and caravan routes from Orenburg to Tashkent does not increase, Turkestan Province will remain an entirely separate place, with very few dealings with Russia owing to the difficulty and distance of the road. N. A. Maev "Zapiska o merakh k uvelicheniyu russkogo naseleniya v Turkestanskoi Oblasti" 19/07/1867 TsGARUz, C.f, Morrison, A. (2015). "Peasant Settlers and the Civilizing Mission in Russian Turkestan, 1865-1917." *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 43(3). p. 393-94.

36. Though some of them were having a political character but the agrarian nature cannot be undermined. Jha, Manisha. (2007). *Ethnicity Modernity and Nationalism in Central Asia: Nation Building Experiences in Kazakhstan*. New Delhi: Academic Excellence Publishers and Distributers. p. 2.
37. Soviet Socialist state tried to promote the ideology of internationalism, which meant a proportional representation of other nationalities in the party and administrative structure of any of the republic. However, within the orbit of its socialist orientation mobility was the characteristic feature of their titular nationality and was often regulated by strategic presence of members of Slavic nationalities, largely Russians, sent from European regions of Soviet Union. These representatives of Center exercised substantial control by occupying positions of Second Secretary of Communist Party in the republics or serving as deputies to titular figureheads. Dave, Bhavana. (October, 2004). "Minorities and Participation in Public Life: Kazakhstan," Sub-regional Seminar, *Minority Rights: Cultural Diversity and Development in Central Asia*, Bishkek: p. 9.
38. In 1920s, the program of collectivization of Agriculture began to take shape at first in villages in the form of commune formations and a campaign was led for the creation and expansion of these collective farms. The policy meant at consolidating individual landholdings and labors into collective farms; basically Kolkhoz (Collective farm) and Sovkhoz (state farm) and sought to modernize Soviet agriculture by the use of modern equipments and latest scientific methods. However, this policy was accompanied by repression and deportation as its essential features. Kokaisl, P. (2013). "Soviet Collectivisation and its Specific Focus on Central Asia." *Agris on-line Papers in Economics and Informatics*. 5(4). Czech Republic: p. 124.
39. For example, the railway line from Akmolinsk to Kartaly (The railway line of about 480 miles) in order to shorten the distance for obtaining fuel for power stations, iron and steel plants etc. Another railway line was built beyond Aktiubinsk in order to connect it with Emba Oil fields. W. P and Z K Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. pp. 124-127.
40. Nuri, Maqsoodul Hassan. (1997). "Kazakhstan: Challenges of Nation Building." *Regional Studies*. 15(3). Islamabad: p. 92.
41. Kokaisl, P. (2013). *Agris on-line Papers in Economics and Informatics*. 5(4). p. 125.
42. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). *Occasional Papers*. p. 2.
43. Nurpeis, K. (2005). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. VI. p. 254.
44. Kradder, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 212.
45. This decrease was partly due to the collectivization and nationalization of all aspects of economy migration of Kazakhs to other areas of Central Asia and China. Kokaisl, P. (2013). *Agris on-line Papers in Economics and Informatics*, 5(4). pp. 121-130; Harris, Chauncy D. (1993). "The New

- Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview.” *Post-Soviet Geography*. 34(8). Chicago: p. 7.
46. Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. p. 22.
47. Athar, G M. (2000). *Journal of Central Asian Studies* 11. p. 50. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). *Occasional Papers*. p. 2.
48. Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 214.
49. So, by this, a new demographic element was introduced in the demographic structure of Central Asia.
50. It was because of the fear of Nazi occupation that USSR decided to shift most of its industry to Urals and Central Asia.
51. Virgin lands Policy was an Agricultural plan introduced by Nikita Khrushchev. The corn program and Virgin and Wasteland program were interrelated. This program was created in order to prevent the reduction of wheat area as corn area has increased. It was thus to boost Soviet Union’s agricultural production and to avert food shortages plaguing Soviet general population. Without this Program the area under wheat would have been largely reduced and crises in the bread supply would have occurred.
52. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). *Occasional Papers*. p. 2.
53. In 1926, the number of Germans in Kazakhstan was 51,094, constituting 0.8% of the total population. Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. p. 22.
54. Kalesnik, S. V. and V F. Pavlenko. (1976). *Soviet Union A Geographical Survey*. Moscow: Progress Publishers. p. 143.
55. Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. pp. 210-218; Kalesnik, S. V. and V F. Pavlenko. (1976). *Soviet Union A Geographical Survey*. p. 97.
56. Clem, Ralph Scott. (1973). *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central*. pp. 36-38.
57. Finally, movement reversed in favour of European Russia, since after the war certain industries were once again re-established on their original sites, resulting in the migration of workers along with plants. Kradder, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 190; Nuri, Maqsoodul Hassan, (1997). *Regional Studies*, 15(3). p. 92.
58. Kazakhs considered it a colonizational threat to their very survival. Pandey, Rahul. (2009). *The Emergence of Ethno-Nationalism in Kazakhstan: 1991-2001*. New Delhi: M. Phil Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University. p. 25.
59. Harris, Chauncy D. (1993). “The New Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview.” *Post-Soviet Geography*. 34(8). Chicago: University of Chicago. p. 8.
60. Nurpeis, K. (2005). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. p. 254.
61. For details see Athar, G M. (2000). *Journal of Central Asian Studies*. 11. p. 50.
62. Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 215; Dave, Bavana and Peter Sinnott. (2002). *Demographic and Language Politics in the 1999 Kazakhstan Census*. p. 22; Athar, G M. (2000). *Journal of Central Asian Studies*. 11. pp. 50-51; Nurpeis, K. (2005). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. p. 254.
63. For Example, in 1950s, Kazakhs had the highest birth rate with 7.4 children per family. Retrieved from <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/762/Kazakhstan>. On 14/05/2018. Peyrouse, Sebastien. (2008). *Occasional Papers*. p. 3.

64. Tishkov, Valery A. (1995). "Russians in Central Asia and Kazakhstan." Yaacov Ro'i (Ed.). *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*. London: Frank CASS. p. 292.
65. McNeill, William H. (1964). *Europe's Steppe Frontier (1500-1800)*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 154-155.
66. Olcott, Martha B. (1987). *The Kazakhs*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press Stanford University. pp. 83-99.
67. Fisher, Lyn R. (1989). *Nationalism and Revolution in Kazakhstan, 1900-1920*. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Montana. p. 25.
68. However, this does not mean that whole of Kazakhstan was turned to sedentary mode of life, which is shown by the fact that overall cultivated area amounted to 8 or 9 per cent of Steppe oblast on the eve of the First World War. On the other hand, in 1916, on an area covering present day Kazakhstan, there were 18 million sheep and goats, 5 million cattle and 4.5 million horses. Poujol, C. and V. Fourniau. (2005). "Trade and the Economy (Second Half of Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century)." Chahar Adle (Ed.). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. Paris: UNESCO. p. 60.
69. Fisher, Lyn R. (1989). *Nationalism and Revolution in Kazakhstan, 1900-1920*. p. 26.
70. Fisher, Lyn R. (1989). *Nationalism and Revolution in Kazakhstan, 1900-1920*. p. 27.
71. The great nomad chieftain with countless herds could be struck by the zhut, or his rivals could carry off his livestock, leaving him a poor man dependent on his wealthier kin. By working for them, he could attain animals for himself, or he could let his kin pasture what livestock he had left, while he grew millet and harvested wild hay for them. The ex-nomad's goal was always to regain his herds.
72. Olcott, Martha B. *Kazakhs*. p. 18.
73. Fisher, Lyn R. (1989). *Nationalism and Revolution in Kazakhstan, 1900-1920*. p. 24-28.
74. The economic situation changed differently in different regions e.g., in the north, close to the Russian markets and transport, the wealthy Kazakh was Russian-oriented. In the remote east, the traditional milieu was least affected. In the south, due to the influence of Kokand, the Kazakh elite was incorporated in the Turkestani world; however, there also developed large numbers of nomadic Kazakhs who had drifted southward as the Russian pressure in the north forced them to seek other pastures. Finally, in the west, those near Russia were much affected but the tribes in the Ust-Urt and Turgai regions remained much more traditional. In the four northern oblasts in 1916, the herds totalled 2,200,000 horses 2,400,000 cattle, 500,000 camels, and 9,200,000 sheep and goats. Demko, George J. (1969). *The Russian Colonization of Kazakhstan, 1896-1916*. Netherlands: Indiana University. pp. 179, 223).
75. Olcott, Martha B. *Kazakhs*. pp. 93-94.
76. Olcott, Martha B. *Kazakhs*. p. 93.
77. Williams, D S M. (1966). *Central Asian Review*. 14(2). p. 111; Gorshenina, Svetlana. (2004). *The Private Collections of Russian Turkestan in the Second Half of the 19th and Early 20th Century*. Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag. pp. 73-74.
78. Although Kazakhstan remained a much smaller cotton producer than other Central Asian Republics. Josephson, P. et al. (2013). *An Environmental History of Russia*. New York: Cambridge University Press. pp. 69-72.
79. Poujol, C. and V. Fourniau. (2005). *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*. Vol. VI. pp. 57-60.
80. Matley, Ian M. (1967). "Agricultural Development." Edward Allworth (Ed.), *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule*. New York and London: Columbia University Press. p. 274.
81. The Czarist agricultural policy aimed at increasing cotton growing fields. This extension of cotton growing

tracts appropriated lands previously used for raising Sorghum, alfalfa and rice rather than grains such as wheat.

82. For more details about the construction of new dams and irrigation canals see W P and Z K Coates. (1951). *Soviets in Central Asia*. pp. 102-104.
83. Josephson, P. et al. (2013). *An Environmental History of Russia*. pp. 81-83.
84. This drop in the productivity can be assigned to the disorders and frustrations resulting from Collectivization campaign.
85. Matley, Ian Murray. (1967). *Central Asia: A Century of Russian Rule*. p. 290.
86. Agriculture of Northern Kazakhstan in the context of command administrative system of managing, 11 October 2013, <http://e-history.kz/en/contents/view/1622>. Accessed online on 15/12/2017. p. 2.
87. Agriculture of Northern Kazakhstan in the context of command administrative system of managing, 11 October 2013, <http://e-history.kz/en/contents/view/1622>. Accessed online on 15/12/2017. p. 1.
88. Agriculture of Northern Kazakhstan in the context of command administrative system of managing, 11 October 2013, <http://e-history.kz/en/contents/view/1622>. Accessed online on 15/12/2017. p. 2.
89. Josephson, P. et al. (2013). *An Environmental History of Russia*. pp. 92-93.
90. Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. p. 257.
91. *Economic History of Kazakhstan*. <http://factsanddetails.com/centralasia/Kazakhstan>. Accessed online on 20/03/2018. p. 3.
92. Voznesensky, N A. (1948). *The Economy of USSR During World War II*. Washington D C: Public Affairs Press. pp. 50-57.
93. Petrick, Martin. Richard Pomfret. (2016). *Agricultural policies in Kazakhstan*. Discussion Paper No. 155. Germany: Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies. p.10.
94. Out of 39 million hectares of cultivated land, 65 % was devoted to cereals and 33 % to fodder crops.
95. Petrick, Martin. Richard Pomfret. (2016). *Agricultural policies in Kazakhstan*. p.10.

India's Expanding Interests in Central Asia

Policies, Issues and Challenges

Ramakrushna Pradhan

Abstract

India and Central Asia constitutes strategic neighbours and natural allies. Both the regions are geographically proximate, share common history and cultural affinity. Notwithstanding the great historical linkages, New Delhi's presence in and policies towards Central Asian countries over the past decades have demonstrated the challenges of competing with China on energy issues, with Russia on matters of regional security, with Pakistan on issues of Islam and secularism and with the U.S. on matters of regional influence. India so far has managed to secure only a tenuous foothold in Central Asia with a tag of late comer. When considered alongside other major players, India has yet to translate the aspirations of its recent connect Central Asia policy into reality with strategic and sustainable policy action. Hence, until recently India was considered as a minor player with minimal presence in the region lacking clarity, vision and Continuity in its policy towards the region. It neither had the political will power nor the economic strength to pursue its agenda in Central Asia unlike China and its policy initiatives are lagging far behind those of China, Russia and the US. Nevertheless, the recent emphasis accorded to Central Asian Republics by Indian Prime Minister Mr. Modi by terming their relationship as that of a 'Partnership for Prosperity' New Delhi perhaps has signaled its arrival in the heartland region. However, this is just a drop of the entire ocean. With this premise an attempt has been made in this article to know the strategic interests of India in Central Asia in terms of geo-economics and geopolitics and to investigate what policies India follow in this region to secure and strive its interests and what more needs to be done. This article endeavours to objectify why India seeks to reconnect with Central Asia and lays emphasis on the geostrategic and geo-economic perspectives for the reengagement with the region with due weight on the geopolitical significance of the region for New Delhi.

Keywords

India, Central Asia, Geopolitics, Geo-strategy, Energy, Security, Terrorism, CASAREM, TAPI, Foreign Policy.

Introduction

Historically, India's relation with the Central Asian Republics has always been good. The genesis of Central Asian dynamics in India's strategic thought as well explained in Kautilya's Arthashastra is a testimony to the importance New Delhi attaches to the heartland region. A study of India's political history also reveals vividly the relationship New Delhi shares with the five Central Asian republics even before Sovietisation of the region. Central Asia was also a bridge for promoting Indian commerce and culture across Asia through the famous Silk Route (Stobdan, 2001: 55). It is also amply propounded in

and Central Asian Khanates. Both the regions share an exceedingly superb bonding and thorough friendship in the sand's of time.

However, India's ties with Central Asia were never consistent. It waned following the consolidation of the British Indian Empire around the mid-nineteenth century. Even though relations were revived in the years following independence, they failed to acquire any depth or intensity. Indian presence in Central Asia was characterized by its closeness to the Kremlin following the Sino-Indian border conflict of 1962 (Sharma, 2009: 3). It was further strengthened by the Sino-Soviet schism in the years to come. India anyhow managed to get a cultural anchor in the region under the Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1971 (Ibid). However, its presence in the region nevertheless remained 'muted' and constrained by its ties to the Kremlin (Stobdan, 2004: 7). Further, the lack of vision for a broader engagement with the region always pushes India in the back seat. The end of the Cold War brought the world into standstill with collapse of the great USSR. The sudden disintegration of the largest political landmass on earth undoubtedly left the Indian political establishment in shock and surprise. However, it helped in ushering a cataclysmic shift in India's foreign policy discourse – away from Nehruvian idealism towards realism and pragmatism towards the region.

This trend of realism and pragmatism is very much continued to find its place in India's relations with Central Asia in recent years. In the context of the changing geostrategic and geo-economics dynamic in Central Asian landscape, India started recognising the CAR as an area of strategic importance. 'Look North Policy' of India in 1990s is a standing example of this. During a visit to Turkmenistan in September 1995, the then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao made it aptly clear that 'for India', Central Asia is an area 'of high priority, where we aim to stay engaged far into the future. We are independent partner with no selfish motives. We only desire honest and open friendship and to promote stability and cooperation without causing harm to any third country' (Muni, 2003: 110). Yet, such a proclamation of the 'Look North Policy' offering the proposition of 'secularism', 'democracy', and 'literacy' as national strength that India and Central Asia both share has waned for years to come. So much so that, at present hardly anybody have any idea of what Look North Policy was all about. Ironically when put into context many confuse it with Look East Policy. This probably reflects India's least strategic priority towards the region at least in the 1990s. When the world powers positively remained engaged in CAR, India – a strategic neighbour choose to stay away from the region under the guise of domestic compulsions in Kashmir and economic downturn facing the nation.

Nevertheless, time have the healing capacity. The trend of realism and pragmatism that was vanished for a while in the policy making process once again resurfaced in India's foreign policy doctrine of 1997 popularly known as 'Gujural Doctrine' (Sen Gouta, 1997). Public rhetoric to the effect also gained momentum, especially with the coming to power of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and its proclaimed ambition to make India occupy the global political centre stage. Nevertheless,

this is only a step taken in the direction of consolidation of strong bonding and deep relationship.

It is until recently, India's relations with the region were viewed in the historical and cultural prisms. But the sudden changes in the international political scenario, emerging geopolitics of Central Asia in redefining the geopolitical map of Asia, geostrategic situations in Eurasia, regional security assuming priority in global political agenda and geo-economic interests taking over military aspect in the early 2000s have opened up Central Asia to its neighbours for influence and attraction. India being the proximate player and natural ally could not stay away from the region for this time and tried to venture into the region of immediate geopolitical and geostrategic interests.

The entire edifice of India's international relations with the newly Central Asian republics was probably laid down during this period. India's commonness with CAR countries, close relations and cultural affinity were instrumental in exceedingly bringing the relationship between the two Asian neighbour further closer and enabled in greater security and economic engagement. Until disconnected to each other, India and Central Asia started recognising the importance and strategic necessity of each other in the emerging Asian geopolitical dynamics. India as of 2015 has a very close and firm bonding with all the five Central Asian republics. Positive relations with both the regions have further strengthened by forging bilateral and multilateral cooperation's in the field of security, economic, energy and strategic. The recent visit of Tajik President to India and India's Foreign Minister to Tajikistan, both sides show the desire for respective sides to forge strong ties. The idea of 'Connect Central Asia' as coined by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India is believed to usher in a new era and dynamic vision in the relationship between India and Central Asia.

The recent visit of Indian Prime Minister to the landlocked region in July, 2015 has further leased a new life to the relationship between New Delhi in CARs. His five nation tour preceding the Ufa Summit has been designed to create a regional influence of India in the inner Asian countries through partnership for prosperity. Modi's Central Asian engagement has for the first time covered a broad area including everything from energy ties, pipeline politics, trade and commerce, transportation, security and counter terrorism and cooperation in health care and pharmaceuticals. He went on to reiterate that 'India is the new frontier of opportunities for the world while Central Asia represents a vast region of immense resources (Eurasianet, 2015).' India's reengagement with Central Asia and the rising profile in past one decade or so has been spurred by its soft power image in contrast to the hard power positioning of the regional players including Russia, China and Pakistan. Importantly, the countries of the region also seriously interested to remain engaged with New Delhi as their search of a Chinese alternative ends here.

India's Geo-strategic and Geo-economic Interests in Central Asia

India's attempted re-engagement in Central Asia over the last two decade has been spurred on by a need to realise Indian interests in following broad areas: to achieve a substantial footprint on the hydrocarbon map of the region enabling India to diversify and

secure energy sources vital to her growth momentum; to check the Islamist agenda of Pakistan against India; to protect and preserve India's security interests in the region against the rise of radical Islam as a political force in Central Asia; to keep a tab on drug trafficking and potential weapons proliferation in this geo-strategically important region; to promote interests in the commercial arena. Finally, Central Asian Republics can provide support for India's emerging regional/global power status; India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council; countering Pakistan's anti-India rhetoric and importantly, it will provide India with a grand stage alongside the US, Russia and China to play a greater role in Asian regional dynamics. India as of now cannot leapfrog its way to the global high table without demonstrating effective initiative at the regional level - Central Asia being an important regional constituent.

Energy Security

Assured and uninterrupted supply of energy is critical for running India's economic engine. The country currently sources almost three quarters of its oil consumption from abroad. India's dependence on imported oil is projected to escalate from the current level of 83.5 per cent as of June 2012 (The Hindu Business line, 2012) to more than 90 per cent by 2030 (TERI, 2012). Much of its imports are from the volatile Middle East region. Thus energy security has become a central component of India's national security and foreign policy. With India projected to remain more dependent on equity oil and energy reducing dependence on the Middle East and cultivating alternative sources of energy has become a vital concern. This is where Central Asia home to an estimated 4 per cent (270–360 trillion cubic feet) of the world's gas reserves (ICG, 2007: 12); and 2.7 per cent (13–15 billion barrels) of world oil reserves fits into the Indian scheme of things (Sharma, 2009: 4).

The energy resources of Central Asia including the Caspian Sea region will play an important role in India's energy security strategy. Central Asian oil and gas are of high quality and are largely untapped. The investment environment is open and friendly (Arvanitopoulos, 2009). In addition, Central Asia is relatively more stable than the Middle East and African energy-rich countries. Importantly, the vast resources of offshore and onshore hydrocarbon reserves in the Caspian Sea littoral states (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) along with the enormous hydro-electricity potential of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan plus the enriched Uranium of the region offers significant opportunities for India to capitalise on both hands.

Central Asia thus is of prime importance in India's energy security policy at a time when India has declared 'energy security to be only secondary to its national security' (Peel, 2004: 15) as her state policy. Kazakhstan is one of the biggest Uranium producers in the world as it has a share of 38 percent in the total output of the mineral (Niti Central, 2015). Prime Minister Modi extended nuclear cooperation with Kazakhstan and the two countries agreed on a new deal for the supply of Uranium. Between 2009 and 2014, Kazakhstan had provided India with 2100 metric tons of Uranium. In the current five year

period (2015-19), India would get 5000 Metric tons of Uranium. This would allow us to start operations in many nuclear plants which are currently closed due to lack of fuel. The joint statement also made a mention of a feasibility study for “exploring the possibility of transportation of oil and gas either through pipeline or as LNG from Kazakhstan to India” (Economic Times, 2015). In the coming years, the government should look at expanding engagement with Kazakhstan in the sector through ONGC Videsh Limited. The state owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation of India over the past decade has sought to invest in Kazakhstan which has three of world’s richest oilfields (ICG, 2007: 12). ONGC acquired sizeable stakes in the Alibekmola and Kurmangazy oilfields in the Caspian Sea region in Kazakhstan (Ivan Campbell, 2013: 3). Recently ONGC also attempted to buy a share of US Company ConocoPhillip’s holding in Kashagan oil field. The public sector firm recently started exploratory drilling in the Satpayev block and is also in lookout for gaining a stake in other oil fields in the oil rich country. During Indian Prime Minister’s July visit both India and Turkmenistan were also discussed the establishment of a representative office of ONGC Videsh in Ashgabat (Niti Central, 2015). Nevertheless, India’s policy and strategy on energy import from Central Asia is still evolving

TAPI

TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) Project is an ambitious pipeline for transporting natural gas from Central Asia to South Asia for the first time started in 1995 (Report, 2011). The proposed pipeline project is a USD 10 Billion (Niti Central, 2015). The project covers 1040 miles (1680 kilometers) route from Dauletabad in Turkmenistan through Herat, Helmand and Kandahar in Afghanistan to Quetta and Multan in Pakistan and then on to Fazilka in India (Report, 2011) passing through some of the worst conflict ridden areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Turkmenistan has the world’s fourth largest reservoir of Natural Gas and would be a steady source of the resource for South Asia. The TAPI project is intended to transport 33 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas from Turkmenistan via Afghanistan and Pakistan to India (Ibid). However, the construction of the pipeline has been stalled for various reasons such as prior commitment of Turkmenistan gas reserves to Russia; difficulties in engaging with the regime in Ashgabat; security risks associated with pipeline that will run through trouble torn Afghanistan and Pakistan; lack of financing to the gas project by international companies; India reserve with regard to security of supply. Nevertheless, the recent visit of Indian Prime Minister to Turkmenistan on July 11, 2015 has able to clear the air and a joint statement been prepared to address the issue at hand. The joint statement welcomed the establishment of the “TAPI Ltd” special purpose vehicle for the project and the “leaders reaffirmed their strong commitment towards timely implementation of this strategic project” (MEA, 2015). Timely completion of the project is mutually beneficial for both India and Turkmenistan. The latter currently depends on oil exports to China for revenues and would find an alternate source after the completion of this project. Greater cooperation in the area of oil exploration between the two countries – India and

Turkmenistan was also discussed and the leaders welcomed the establishment of a representative office of ONGC Videsh in Ashgabat.

CASAREM

The Central Asia-South Asia Regional Electricity Market (CASAREM) (World Bank, 2014) is based on the vision of a Greater Central Asia. This in turn is based on the premise that Central and South Asia are, or can become a single integrated unit committed to economic activity and growth. The countries of the region and particularly India as the leading force of South Asia have deep cultural and historical ties and many common concerns such as against terrorism, finding outlets for energy supplies, achieving prosperity through economic cooperation and moving towards enhanced security and stability. This concept further strengthens the spirit of regional security and regional cooperation. The CASAREM is already connected with Afghanistan from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and has the potentiality and possibility to connect other South Asian countries including India, if effective initiatives are taken. It can help India in providing electricity to its north Indian cities which are generally subjected to blackout during summer. The 2015 summer Delhi power blackouts and electricity crisis is a classic example where CASAREM can amply help India to get rid of crisis.

National Security

Central Asia is of vital importance to India for reasons of national security. New Delhi sees the region including Afghanistan as a source of religious extremism and hot bed of radical Islam leading to formation of militant groups in the region. The disintegration of the Soviet Union also has provided the militant groups in the region a fertile ground for their breeding. The resurgence of Taliban, Hizb-ul-Tahrir and other terrorist groups spreading venom against India would seriously threaten India's interests unless addressed at the earliest. This security concerns are compounded by the proliferation of drug-trafficking in Central Asia. India's security therefore is closely tied to the instability in the region between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The unholy alliance between the Taliban and Pakistan has contributed to terrorist attacks against India on several occasions. The IMU has close links with the Taliban and the ISI (Blank, 2003: 141). A UNI report dated 3 April 2000, states that "Afghan and Pakistan trained mercenaries are seeking fresh pastures to exploit their brand of fundamentalism with Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan emerging as their new hot spots (Ibid)." A recent report in 2015 also laid concern on the rising terrorism in Central Asia by ISIS and Taliban jointly. To counter these, India's cooperative security initiatives have already begun with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan (Rohde, 2002: 30). For these reasons India is keen to play a bigger role in Central Asia security apparatus to prevent real and perceived threat to her national security. For that India has setup a military base at Ayni in Tajikistan in 2004. Tajikistan shares a narrow 20 kilometres stretch with Afghanistan territory which separates it from Pakistan occupied Kashmir poses serious concerns for

represents India's strategic aspirations and attempt to project military power in Central Asia was recently undone by Tajikistan on the Russian direction.

The Indian Government in July 2011 during the Visit of her Defence minister to Kyrgyzstan had announced plans to open a joint military research centre and also invited the Kyrgyz soldier to join UN Peacekeeping operation with a view to engage with the region militarily through a low political and soft power approach (Ivan Campbell, 2013: 5). When the Vice-President of India visited Tajikistan in April, 2013, both the government in a joint statement have stressed importance on security cooperation to deal with the security threats coming from Afghanistan (The Hindu, 2013). India also established Joint Working Groups on Terrorism with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. But India's direct collaboration with the Central Asian states in defence affairs are limited by the growing role and presence of Russia led CIS regulated CSTO and China led SCO. Now India being the full member of SCO as declared in its Ufa Summit in Russia on July 9-10, 2015 can have a larger role and access to the region on matters of security and counter terrorism using the SCO platform. However, it remains to be seen how far India can be successful in countering Chinese influence in the organisation and to say the region.

SCO and India

The SCO has now emerged as a major geo-strategic, security and economic initiative in the entire Eurasia. India's application for full membership in SCO at its Dushanbe summit 2014 a stepping-stone in the direction of its growing role in the region has been materialised at the Ufa Summit of 2015 in Russia (Ufa, 2015). All the Central Asian Countries and Russia have supported India's full membership in the SCO. China though was a bit reluctant initially finally approved India's full membership in the organisation along with Pakistan. Nevertheless, membership in the organization will not merely help India in getting entry into the region but also would enable to propel its interests vis-à-vis China in the region. It would also facilitate India to counter Pakistan's anti-India propaganda and ensure its economic participation with the greater Central Asian region while Provide New Delhi a market in Central Asia as an alternative to Chinese goods. Importantly, the energy crunch of India will get a ray of hope with Central Asian oil and gas being imported to India through Iran's Chhabar port. The operation of International North-South Transportation Corridor (INSTC) is a positive initiative which may encourage the partner country to strengthen it to the next level of construction of pipeline with a win-win design for both the supplier and consumer countries.

Drug Trafficking and Weapon Proliferation

Transnational organized crime is a multifaceted phenomenon which manifests itself in different activities such as illicit drug, human trafficking, arms trafficking and money laundering in the Central Asia region. But amongst them drug trafficking is the most prominent activity of organized criminal groups that enable them to generate big profit. It has become the serious threat to the security of Central Asian Region and beyond.

Afghanistan a border state of Central Asia neighbouring Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is the number one opium producer of the world as per the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime. Tajikistan is the gateway for Afghan drugs to Central Asia. According to the annual report of International Narcotics Control Board one third of Afghanistan's opium crop passed through Tajikistan and its neighbour country Kazakhstan. The emergence of Central Asia as a transit route for drugs is directly linked to the growing spread of drug addiction amongst the Central Asian people (UNODC, 2011). But most worrying effect of the drug trade has been the revenue used for anti-government forces, organized crime and widespread public corruption contaminating power. The militants not only concentrate their activities on opium and heroin trafficking but they also convert their profit to money, small arms and some other material. For instance drug money creates opportunities for organized crime groups and terrorist groups to have additional capacity for militant activities in the region. The spread of small arms from Afghanistan has greatly contributed to militants activities on the CARs. Thus, Afghanistan provides a permanent source with a variety of weapons; the huge quantities of small arms ranging from assault rifles to hand grenades are supplied from Afghanistan to the militants in the region. Kyrgyzstan is particularly worried about weapons which are coming into the country from Tajikistan. The illicit drug trade has become the serious threat to Central Asian security as it does not only damage human health, but generates corruption, weakens governance, strengthen criminal organization with potential to disturb peace and stability as well in the region. Drug trafficking also poses a major security threat to the region (Sharma, 2009: 8). India needs to pay greater heed to drug trafficking, since much of the money generated is used to fund activities of extremist Islamist terror networks. This is an area where India has a broad overlap of interests with the three other key players in the region – US, Russia and China – with whom it could engage in multilateral cooperation.

Economic and Trade Relations

Although, in economic terms India and Central Asia do not share much satisfactory relationship, India has somewhat meagre presence in Central Asian energy sector and growing presence in the field of pharmaceuticals. Trade in consumer goods is increasing but is constrained by economic barriers, particularly in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. With Tajikistan, India's trade was worth \$10.7 million in 2004–5 and \$32.56 million in 2009–10 (DNA India, 2012). A joint venture between India's Ajanta Pharma and the Ministry of Health in Turkmenistan, named Turkmen Derman Ajanta Pharma Limited (TDAPL), provides approximately half of the pharmaceutical needs of Turkmenistan. India has widened information exchange programmes with Turkmenistan, establishing the \$0.5 million Turkmen-Indian Industrial Training Centre as a gift to train Turkmen citizens in basic skills in the manufacture of tools and components, in business practices for small and medium enterprises, and to provide financial, computer, and language training through its Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme (Rohde, 2002: 33).

India's trade with Uzbekistan amounted to more than \$121 million in 2004. There are more than thirty Uzbek-Indian joint ventures in Uzbekistan (Sachdeva, 2010: 138). A significant source of revenue for India is in pharmaceutical sales from Ajanta Pharma and Reddy Labs (Uzbek Embassy, 2005). The two countries are considering Indian gas exploration in Uzbekistan through India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) (Ibid).

India's exports to Kyrgyzstan were worth \$22.56 million in 2010–11 and Kyrgyz exports to India amounted to \$1.2 million (MEA, 2012). Apparel and clothing, leather goods, drugs and pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals and tea are some of the important items in India's export basket to Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz exports to India consist mainly of raw hides, metallic ores and metal scrap.

Trade between India and Kazakhstan in 2011 was around \$291.50 million (MEA, 2012a). Major commodities of export from India to Kazakhstan are tea, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, machinery, tobacco, valves and consumer items. Major items of import by India are asbestos, soft wheat, steel, aluminium, wool and raw hides. Prospects for cooperation between the two countries in the spheres of oil and gas, civil nuclear energy, metals and minerals, agriculture, public health, information technology, education, culture and defence are promising. The two countries are developing bilateral trade in mechanical engineering and pharmaceuticals and in the defence sector. An agreement between ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) and KazMunaiGaz on Satpayev oil block in the Caspian Sea and a MoU between NPCIL and Kazatomprom envisaging cooperation, including supply of uranium to India among others, was signed in 2009. A MoU for cooperation in the field of space, an extradition treaty and the protocol on the accession of Kazakhstan to WTO were also signed in 2009. A fresh agreement between OVL and KazMunaiGaz for the purchase of 25 per cent stake in the Satpayev oil block was signed in Astana on 16 April 2011 during the visit of the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (Ibid). Discussions are currently underway for cooperation in the fields of fertilizer production, setting up of a petrochemical complex, a sulphuric acid plant, gold mining, thermal power plants, an Information Technology Park, etc. Agreements in the fields of agriculture, health, culture, science and technology, and education etc. are also being discussed (Ibid). The Central Asian countries also provide a convenient and low-cost hub for Indian travellers. Services in the form of flights from India to London, the US and Europe provide a lucrative export for the CARs.

Promoting 'Make in India'

The recent visit of Indian Prime Minister is different from his other trips to USA, China and Europe where he was essentially looking at attracting foreign investment and convincing companies to increase production in India with a focus on Make in India to succeed. For that India will have to improve its freight connectivity with other countries and especially with Central Asia – the proximate neighbor of India. The planned route the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is a ship, rail and road connectivity project for moving freight between India, Iran, Azerbaijan and Russia (Niti

Central, 2015). The route greatly reduces the time taken for moving freight between India and Central Asia. Expansion of the corridor is a key objective of the Prime Minister as it could greatly improve India's trade connectivity with Central Asia. There were discussions over Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan joining the INSTC. The PM also proposed that the Kazakhstan – Turkmenistan – Iran Rail Link could become a linked corridor to the INSTC. Discussions have also been initiated with Kazakhstan on a dedicated freight terminal (Ibid).

The Ashgabat Agreement is a transit pact established in 2011 between Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkmenistan and Oman (Ibid). The Prime Minister sought Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan's support for India joining the agreement as it would massively improve connectivity with Central Asia. During the visit of Cabinet Minister Nitin Gadkari to Iran, both the countries have signed a pact on developing the Chabahar port (Ibid). Through the Iran route, the time taken for transporting goods between India and Central Asia would reduce immensely. For this, efforts need to continue for improving linkage between Central Asia and Iran.

In Tajikistan, he discussed the proposed Pakistan Afghanistan Tajikistan Trilateral Transit Trade Agreement (PATTTTA) (MEA, 2015a). It was decided that further consultations would start on inclusion of India into this pact as it would further strengthen trade between South Asia and Tajikistan. There were also discussions on building an alternate surface route along with other countries.

Cooperation on Agriculture

The recent tour of Mr. Modi to Central Asia has marked with substantive development on agriculture front. An important agreement was signed between the Turkmenhimiya and Indian PSU Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited for long-term sourcing of urea from Turkmenistan in July, 2015. India has proposed to set up a Urea production facility in Turkmenistan (MEA, 2015b). In the agriculture dependent, Kyrgyz Republic, there were discussions over knowledge sharing and joint efforts in agricultural research (MEA, 2015c). A plan of Action has been signed between the KazAgroInnovation and Indian Council of Agricultural Research for cooperation in the field of agriculture (MEA, 2015d).

Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare

A key area of cooperation between India and Central Asia is pharmaceuticals and healthcare. India has a competitive advantage in the global market in this field. Some of the Indian companies exporting pharmaceutical products to Central Asia are Claris Life Sciences, Ranbaxy, Dr Reddys Labs, Lupin Laboratories, Unique Laboratories and Aurobindo Pharma. Some of these companies are planning to set up manufacturing units in Central Asia itself. The pharmaceutical factory of the Kazakh-India joint venture Kazakhstanpharma is in the process of completion in Almaty (Blank, 2004: 7-9).

Investment Potential

To facilitate trade and investment with this region, Indian policymakers in the last

decade have created an institutional framework. The government has set up intergovernmental commissions for trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation with all the CARs, which have been meeting regularly. These relations have been further institutionalized through joint working groups in various fields, such as information technology, science and technology, hydrocarbons, military-technical cooperation, etc. The Indian government also extends small lines of credit to the CARs to enable Indian exporters to export to these markets without payment risk. In this scheme, about 15 to 20 per cent of the contract value is paid as advance by the importers; the balance contract value is disbursed by India's EXIM Bank upon the shipment of goods. EXIM Bank oversees the recovery of credit. To promote and facilitate trade, double taxation avoidance agreements have also been signed (Sachdeva, 2010: 138).

There have also been improvements in terms of cooperation in the banking sector. Canara Bank has links with the Commercial Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs of Tajikistan. The State Bank of India has links with Turan-Alem Bank of Kazakhstan, the Commercial Bank of Kyrgyzstan, the National Bank of Tajikistan, the State Bank for Foreign Economic Affairs of Turkmenistan and the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity of Uzbekistan. In 2003, the Indian Ministry of Commerce launched a programme named Focus CIS. The first phase focused on the five CARs plus Azerbaijan and Ukraine. Other CIS countries have also been included in the programme, which aims to promote business-to-business linkages, support trade fairs and different promotional meetings and seminars (Ibid). In 2012, India's Minister for External Affairs, S.M. Krishna, used the phrase "Connect Central Asia" based on the premise of four Cs: commerce, connectivity, consular and community (Central Asia Newswire, 2012), which seems to be taking the bilateral relations between the two Asian neighbours to a higher level.

India has also signed many agreements with these countries for technical and economic cooperation under ITEC. Thus far, thousands of candidates from Central Asia have come to India under the programme in such disciplines as diplomacy, banking, finance, trade, management and small industry promotion. Potential sectors for collaboration between India and the CARs broadly are: food sector and agribusiness: processing agro products, machinery and equipment, packaging, fertilizers, irrigation; pharmaceuticals and healthcare: medicines, formulations, medical devices, hospitals; ICT: telecom, technology parks, e-governance, IT training, business processes; textiles: machinery, garments; and energy: power generation and transmission, oil refining, and petrochemicals.

Support for UNSC Reforms and Permanent Seat for India

In its bid to reform the United Nations Security Council India is garnering support from all the countries of neighborhood and extended neighborhood. Mr. Modi and his government taking the initiative forward seems to be working towards building global support for its push for reforms in the structure of the United Nations. There has been an effort to get as many countries as possible to endorse India's claim for a permanent seat in the UNSC. It is expected that these endorsements would help in at least initiating a larger

multilateral dialogues on the agenda of UNSC reforms and could help in paving the way for India's entry in the future. The Central Asian countries stated their support for a permanent seat for India.

India's Connect Central Asia Policy

The 'Connect Central Asia Policy' (CCAP) of India was first unveiled by the then Minister of State for External Affairs, E. Ahmed in a keynote address at the 1st meeting of the India-Central Asia Dialogue, a Track II initiative organised on 12-13 June, 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (Das, 2012). The purpose of this policy is to fast track India's relations with Central Asian Republics. The policy calls for setting up universities, hospitals, information technology (IT) centres, an e-network in telemedicine connecting India to the CARs, joint commercial ventures, improving air connectivity to boost trade and tourism, joint scientific research and strategic partnerships in defence and security affairs. During SM Krishna's visit to Tajikistan on 02-03 July 2012, the former Foreign Minister expounded the unfolding policy under the rubric of 'commerce, connectivity, consular and community' (Ibid).

As part of connect Central Asia Policy, Mr. Modi's recent six day visit to five countries of the region has put the heartland right in New Delhi's global focus. He has signed several agreements with all the countries in bilateral engagement respectively. These are:

India-Uzbekistan (MEA, 2015e)

1. Economic and Strategic ties: Enhance strategic, economic and energy ties along with reviewing key regional issues including the situation in Afghanistan.
2. Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism: To intensify security cooperation and exchanges for combating terrorism, promoting regional integration and advancing stability in the region.
3. Defence and cyber security: Enhance cooperation in the fields of defence and cyber security.
4. Uranium supply contract: Implement the contract which was signed in 2014 for supply of 2,000 metric tonnes of the Uranium from mineral rich Uzbekistan to India.
5. Strengthening cooperation: In the areas of information technology, agriculture and energy.
6. International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC): India asked Uzbekistan to be part of INSTC similar to Ashgabat Agreement which is a transit pact between Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkmenistan and Oman established in 2011.
7. It should be noted that INSTC is a ship, road and rail route for moving freight between India, Iran, Russia, Europe and Central Asia.

India-Kazakhstan (MEA, 2015f)

1. Agreement on Defence and Military: Both nations will form joint working group

(JWG) on counter terrorism, defence training, exercise and production of defence equipment.

2. MoU on Cooperation on Physical Cultural and Sports: It was signed between India's Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and Kazakhstan's Ministry of Culture and Sports.
3. MoU on Technical Cooperation in the field of Railways: It was signed between India's Ministry of Railways and Kazakhstan Temir Zholy.
4. Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons: It will facilitate swapping of prisoners from both countries to serve their remaining sentence in home country.
5. Agreement on supply of Uranium to India: Kazakhstan the world's largest producer of uranium will supply a total of 5,000 tonnes of the natural uranium to India during the 2015-19.

India-Turkmenistan (MEA, 2015g)

1. MoU on Supply of Chemical Products: It was signed between the India's 'Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited' and the Turkmenistan's Turkmenhimiya'.
2. MoU Foreign Service Institutes of both nations: It was signed between Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs of India and Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.
3. Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Sports: It was signed between Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of India and State Committee for Sport of Turkmenistan.
4. Programme of Cooperation in Science and Technology: It was signed between both governments for the period of two years viz. 2015-2017.
5. MoU on Cooperation in Yoga and Traditional Medicine: It was signed between respective entities of both governments.
6. MoU on Cooperation in the Field Of Tourism: It was signed between respective entities of both governments.
7. Agreement in the field of Defence: It was signed between respective entities of both governments.

India-Tajikistan (MEA, 2015h)

1. Programme of Cooperation (POC) in the field of Culture: It was signed between Ministries of Culture of India and Tajikistan for the years 2016-18. It envisages cooperation in the field of culture between both nations through exchange of expertise for protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage.
2. Exchange of Note Verbale (NV) on setting up of Computer Labs: It conveys the intention of India to set up computer labs in 37 schools in Tajikistan.

India-Kyrgyzstan (MEA, 2015i)

1. Agreement on Defence Cooperation: It was signed to deepen cooperation between both countries in matters relating to security, defence, military education

and training. It also covers provisions to conduct of joint military exercises, exchange of military instructors, exchange of experience and information and observers etc.

2. MoU and Cooperation in the field of Elections: It was signed to deepen cooperation in matters relating to legislation on elections and referendums. It also covered rights of elections process stakeholders, modern systems and technologies as well as other issues of election administration.
3. MoU on cooperation in the sphere of Standards: Seeks to strengthen and enhance technical cooperation in the fields of conformity assessment, standardization and sharing of expertise on mutual trade. It also aims at exchanging necessary information and expertise in this regard between the two parties. Signatory parties are Ministry of Economy of Kyrgyzstan and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).
4. Agreement on Cooperation in Culture: To deepen cultural cooperation between both countries in areas such as preservation of cultural heritage, theatre, youth festivals and organisation of folk arts. It also seeks to boost cooperation in of publishing and translation of literature, culture, sports and physical exchange of archival materials, geography, history etc.

These bilateral policy initiatives if properly channelized would enable India to attain a centre stage in Central Asia which further would help New Delhi to attain its basic objectives of engagement in the greater Central Asian region.

Partnership for prosperity

Mr. Modi the Prime Minister of India during his recent visit to the five Central Asian Republics in July 2015 has laid emphasis on New Delhi's relationship with the region and regarded the region as a valued partner of India. In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited all the five Central Asian Republics. He visited Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan before going to Ufa for the BRICS Summit and visited Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on his way back. The five countries are resource rich countries and greater cooperation with them is essential for our economic progress. One of the major highlights of the NDA government's foreign policy has been the degree of continuity in terms of some key dimensions. There is a conscious effort to synchronize the foreign policy with critical economic interests. The PM seems to be working on generating as much international cooperation as possible for his primary domestic agenda of generating jobs, Make in India, Skill India and starting the second green revolution.

Modi's sweep through Central Asia covers a broad agenda, including everything from pipeline politics, energy ties and transport links to security and counterterrorism cooperation. Underlying the Indian mission is a desire to challenge the ascendancy of archrival China, whose deep pockets have been winning hearts and minds in the region in recent years (Eurasianet, 2015).

India's Geopolitical Interests

India's relations with Central Asia cannot be seen in isolation from its greater engagement in world politics. Its approach to Central Asia is in close connection with her

policies towards South Asia and its multilateral engagement with countries including China, Russia and the United States. The role of regional countries like Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan too is being closely followed to construct India's Central Asian strategy. This is why this section will attempt to study the contours of India's Central Asian engagement through its regional and extra-regional sketches.

India-Pakistan

India's relations with Central Asian countries are strongly influenced by its relations with the countries it surrounds. To quote Robert D Kaplan, "India's history is the story of invasion from a north-westerly direction," and this explains why Central Asia continues to be seen more as the source of threats than of opportunities (Sahagal and Anand, 2010)." To say India's approach to Central Asia is conditioned by its profound distrust of and tension with Pakistan (Campbell, 2013). India's ability to access Central Asia is conditioned by Pakistan policy towards New Delhi. The vulnerability of India to link directly with the region comes from its apprehension from Pakistani strategy to obstruct India and at times to cut off New Delhi from the region. This is the reason probably why the ambitious projects like TAPI, IPI and CASAREM though initiated with high vigor and indomitable spirit could not be materialized till date.

On New Delhi's part Afghanistan is a part of the Indian subcontinent and linked organically to India on account of the record of empires past (Ibid). Afghanistan also considers India a valued partner of Kabul. Both countries in the post-Taliban period have worked together in reconstruction of the ruined state. India has the credit to be the largest donor among the regional countries to Afghanistan's reconstruction and sixth largest worldwide. It has also extended support in training the military of Afghanistan in India. India's aid to Afghanistan includes in areas like education, health, road and transportation, water and sanitation and energy. That is why India fears that Afghanistan may fall under the sway of militant groups and the ill design of Pakistan giving rise to anti-India activities threatening New Delhi's national security. Conversely, Afghanistan at peace and governed along secular lines would strengthen India's position vis-à-vis Pakistan.

India-China

India-China is equally significant in geopolitical terms in defining New Delhi's relationships with Central Asian Republics. Since China shares a long land border with the republics of Central Asia and has established very good diplomatic relations with them in 1992 Beijing enjoys leverage in relationship with the CARs. In addition the economic muscle of China provides Central Asia investment opportunities which bind them together. The political willpower of China to engage in Central Asia and its economic strength to push its strategies further through an economic diplomacy out paces New Delhi in terms of trade, investment, energy acquisition, transportation building and network development. While China's trade volume with Central Asian countries in 2012 amounted to at \$ 46 billion, India's trade volume was estimated in the same year at around \$ 500 million (Ibid). China has regularly beaten several countries including India when it

comes to energy acquisition. It is the invincible player in energy sector because of its consolidation of transport networks while India is busy calculating its cost-benefit analysis. However, this shouldn't give an impression that all is well with Chinese penetration in Central Asia. The recent visit of Indian Prime Minister to the land locked region created lots of enthusiasm in the region and many believed that New Delhi would provide Central Asia an alternative to China. To quote Kazakhstani political expert Aidos Sarym said, "The way India is trying to become a more important player in Central Asia, Russia and China will probably not be altogether glad to see India here (Eurasianet, 2015)." It clearly shows that India and China clearly have some shared concerns in the region especially where issues of security is concerned. Though India cannot match the firepower of China but its soft power image will certainly provide New Delhi a leverage to play an active role in the region in the years to come.

India-US

The U.S. from the very beginning was in favour of a larger role of India in Central Asia. The support has grown even more with America's withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. It is evident from the fact that America has considered India as a valued partner in 2011 while launching its pet project New Silk Route initiative to link the region so as to bring stability in Afghanistan. It is also true that the US to sustain its economic interests in Central Asia bypassing Russia, Iran and China looks to link India with Europe through Central Asia thus providing new investment opportunities for the U.S and to undermine Chinese and Russian influence through Indian counter. Robert D Kaplan has rightly quoted, "As the United States and China become great power rivals, the direction in which India tilts could determine the course of geopolitics in Eurasia in the 21st century. India, in other words, looms as the ultimate pivot state (Ivan Campbell, 2013)."

India-Russia

Historically, India's relations with Russia have always been close which led New Delhi to cultivate superb bonding with the Central Asian Republics. However, between 1917 and 1991, India's contacts with Central Asia were largely mediated through Russia. Although, India during this period had maintained certain privileged links with Central Asia that too were filtered through Moscow and the 1971 Indo-Russian Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation in which India was definitely the junior partner. In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, New Delhi maintained close proximity with the republics of Central Asia but Russia never preferred to allow any country including India to play a significant role in its backyard. Central Asia is the geostrategic comfort zone of Russia and Kremlin in no situation would want any other country to disturb the regional balance. However, the recent Chinese dominance over the region through economic packages has outpaced the Russian influence in the traditional hinterland. That is why perhaps Kremlin has strongly advocated for the full membership of New Delhi in the Central Asian Organisation SCO to strike balance in Asia and to counter the Chinese upper hand through New Delhi's Central Asian venture.

Conclusion

Building on its superb political relationships, civilizational bonding, cultural affinity and shared history India needs to capitalize on the goodwill of the countries of the region. India has vital economic and security interests in the CARs and needs to develop a comprehensive, long-term strategy to protect and promote its geo-political interest in this region. In terms of security interests, India needs to aggressively explore and establish security and economic cooperation agreements with the CARs both on bilateral and regional basis. In this context, India's entry into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), established in June 2001 at China's initiative as a full member in 2015 is a major geopolitical development in the region. Further, Central Asia's rich natural resources endowment, including significant reserves of oil, natural gas and uranium deposits would enable India to meet its burgeoning energy needs. In order to meet its current and future energy needs, Indian firms need to participate in oil and gas exploration ventures in the region, perhaps by joining the relevant international consortia. Given the security problems relating to oil and gas transit routes through Afghanistan and Pakistan, India needs to seriously examine the viability of the proposed Russia-Central Asia-China-India pipeline. Furthermore, India needs to take energetic steps to enhance its trade and investment levels with the CARs, which are currently insignificant. Apart from trade in goods, service sectors including Education and Training, IT-software, Health-care, and Hotels appear to be promising areas for Indian trade and investments in this region and need to be aggressively pursued. Given the geopolitical and economic calculus, Central Asia is very critical for India in her foreign policy orientation. In the changed strategic scenario, Indian access to Central Asian energy resources would enable this rising Asian power to meet its energy needs and sustain its economic growth and therefore to propel its development process. The region would also help India in countering Pakistan's anti-India propaganda. India's soft power has the capability to win over the Central Asian countries against the sinister agenda of Pakistan of self goal. The recent economic crisis in China and the Russian support to India will provide New Delhi leverage to stabilize its position in the region with an even larger role and interests in the region. For this India needs to clear the false cloud of cost-benefit analysis in its dealing with the region. Some regions should be measured well beyond economic interests and Central Asia exactly fits into those schemes of things where India needs to stay engaged far into future if she at all wants to play a larger role beyond Asia. The heartland can provide India with a launch pad to scale the global high table.

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Border Disputes, War and the Changing Dynamics of India's China Policy

Sibaram Badatya

Abstract

Relations between India and China, two of the oldest living civilizations had been warm, friendly and cooperative for centuries. Both nations had established greater linkages through cultural exchanges and trade throughout history. Ancient trade and religious pilgrimages had been flourishing through the ancient silk route for centuries. After independence, the civilizational relationship gains new momentum and the spirit of 'Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai' guided a new era of the Asian century. However, the brotherhood spirit started deteriorating after the Tibetan Uprising of 1959, leading to a trust deficit and subsequent border disputes. In 1962, both the neighbours engage a brief war and stand to juxtapose in many regional and global issues. Over the years, Chinese has emerged as a major international player and India's China policy has undergone a dynamic change to balance the Chinese threat. In this background, the current paper is intended to highlight the dynamics of India's China policy and analyse the changing relationship between India and China over the years.

Keywords

India-China relations, Border disputes, War, Tibet uprising.

Introduction

India and China have been sharing a friendly and cooperative relationship since ancient times. This relationship has developed further after the independence of both countries during the late 1940s. The period between post-independence to 1957, known as the "Period of Panchsheel" is perhaps the golden age of India China relationship. India's full support to China's freedom movement and its reorganization, its unconditional support to China's admission into UN, support to China's stand on Korean crisis, annexation of Tibet and India's policies towards Formosa crisis are some of the events on which India and China shared similar thoughts. But, the year of 1989 was the important turning point of age-old relationship and the event that reshuffled the whole game was the Tibetan uprising of 1959.

Understanding the India-China Border Issues

India and China share 3,488 kilometers long border and has been long-standing border issues throughout the stretches at different regions, namely eastern, middle and western sector (Ministry of Home Affairs). While in the Eastern Sector, China claims the large portions of the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which is now under Indian control, at the Chin, which it believe is a part of its Ladakh region. At the middle sector, both the states claim their sovereignty on various unmarked spots throughout the borders and have been

the spotlight of repeated border violation by both the forces. While both the parties up the ante and engage a series of military stand-ups in the recent past, the border disputes remain the guiding principle of the bilateral relationship.

The Issues of the Western Sector

While the issue got larger public attention in the recent past due to the repeated military stand-ups, the origin of these disputes dates back to the colonial era. The Ladakh region, which was once the part of Tibet was annexed by the Sikh army in 1841 and the subsequent signing of the Treaty of Chushul in September 1842 stipulated no transgressions principle between the Sikhs and Qing empires. Following the defeat of the Sikh Army in the Anglo-Sikh War, the British officials have taken over the state of Jammu and Kashmir, including the Ladakh region. Here for the first time, the British Empire shares a common border with China and both the parties respected the natural boundaries and taken no effort to demark the border on the map or ground till 1865. In 1865, British officials appointed a survey officer, William Johnson, to carry out a survey and draw a boundary line between British India and the Chinese Empire. After a rigorous survey, he presented the "Johnson Line" as the border, placing the entire Aksai China as a part of Kashmir. However, the proposed line was severely criticized for gross inaccuracies and reprimanded by British officials. (Raghavan 2010, p. 228) The issue had been put in cold storage till the threat of expanding of Russian empire extended till Indian borders. To draw a militarily defensible line to prevent any future Russian advancement into India, a new line was proposed by the British military officer, Sir John Ardagh along the crest of the Kun Lun Mountains. Considering various threat perception the Ardagh line was effectively a modified and a new line was drawn in 1897 merging the Johnson's survey and Ardagh recommendation. Called as the 'Johnson–Ardagh Line' or the 'Karakoram Line', the British proposed a military defensible line between India and China. (Hoffmann 1990, p. 15)

While both the lines were drawn unilaterally by British officials, that failed to impress the Chinese authority for agreement, a revised line was proposed by British India government placing the Lingzi Tang plains in India, and Aksai Chin proper in China. The boundary was prepared by the George Macartney, the British consul general at Kashgar after considering the Chinese map handed over by the Hung Ta-chen, a senior Chinese official at St. Petersburg in 1893. Making the Karakoram Mountains a natural boundary, the British government presented the Macartney-MacDonald Line to the Chinese in 1899 in 1899 with a diplomatic note by Sir Claude MacDonald (Hoffmann 1990, pp. 15-16). The Qing government did not respond to the note, speculating the British of Chinese acquiescence. Although no official boundary had ever been negotiated, China believed that this had been the accepted boundary and redrawn the China-Pakistan border based on this line in 1962 (Noorani 2010). On both occasions British authorities never demarked Western Sector, India demanding the withdrawal of the Chinese presence from Aksai the border on the ground, hence, they left the issues for further complication. Moreover, British officials had been using both the Johnson-Ardagh and the Macartney-MacDonald

lines in their maps, leaving the scope for further discord.

However, with the collapse of the central power in Chinese following the Xinhai Revolution and alarming Russian threat, the British resorted to the earlier stand and started using the Johnson Line officially. Though the claim strengthened further after the Second World War, no efforts were taken to set up border outposts and demarcation of the boundary on ground, leaving the border unmarked. In 1927, the line was adjusted again as the government of British India abandoned the Johnson line in favor of a line along with the Karakoram range further south. However, the maps were not updated and still showed the Johnson Line (Bradnock 2015, pp. 174-75). However, following the establishment of Pro-Russian leadership in Xinjiang 1933, Russia carried out several mining surveys in China. The increasing Russian footprints in neighboring China and its territorial surveys prompted the Britishers, to reopen the strategic game in the region. As a result, the British government has abandoned the Macartney-MacDonald and shifted their stand to Johnson Line by claiming the sovereignty on the whole of Aksai Chin. However, like other occasions, no measures have taken to establish border outposts and physical demarcation of the border with China. This policy was continued until the independence of India, making the Indians believe the Johnson Line as the border between India and China since 1947.

The disputes of the Middle Sector

In the middle sector, India-China shares 545 kilometers long border from Demchok to Western Nepal that runs through the borders of two Indian states, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. While three of the disputed border areas, namely Kaurik in Lahaul and Spiti valley comes under the state of Himachal Pradesh, the rest of the two, including the Bara Hoti and Nelang Valley falls under the state of Uttarakhand. Though both the countries have a different opinion and claim their sovereignty, all the disputed areas of the middle sector are now under the control of India. This sector also witnesses several Chinese invasions in the recent past. Bara Hoti, for instance, came under repeated Chinese invasion and as many as 37 border violations have been reported between 2007 and 2012 (Times of India, Apr 16, 2012). Despite the constant patrolling by India's ITBP personnel, repeated border violation Chinese force has been reported recently (Indian Express, July 28, 2016).

The Eastern Sector along McMahon Line

Among the all disputed territories between India and China, the eastern sector comprising of Arunachal Pradesh is the biggest territorial claims by China. The border is well defined by the McMahon Line and approved by Tibet as a border between India and Tibet during the Shimla agreement in 1914. China, as a party to the Shimla agreement, didn't sign the agreement. Though Chinese protest against the Indian high-level visits to Arunachal Pradesh and its claim on the easternmost part of India have increased recently, the origin of the disputes dates back to the colonial era. British India and China shared no common border in the eastern sector before 1826. After the annexation of Assam from

Burma in the Treaty of Yandabo and conquering subsequent areas during the Anglo-Burmese Wars, India gained control over the Brahmaputra basin and extended its border up to China in the eastern sector for the first time.

To demark the border between the three neighbours, Britain, China, and Tibet, a conference was organized by British authority at Shimla in 1913. At the Convention, the British government proposed the McMahon Line as the boundary line marking the Himalayas as the natural border and placing Tawang inside India. After several rounds of discussion, Tibet agreed to sign the agreement. However, Chinese representatives raised some objections to the final map and return without signing the accord (Ray 2013. pp. 216-17). However, Britain showed no seriousness to demark the border on the ground and took no step to claim their sovereignty in the border regions as the line had no serious challenge following the collapse of Chinese power in Tibet. After two decades, the Shimla Convention was first published by British Government in 1938 as a bilateral agreement followed by a detailed map by the Survey of India showing Tawang as a part of in North-East Frontier Tract (NEFT) (Ray 2007, p.203). However, the British sovereignty was hardly visible on the ground and Tawang continued to govern by Tibetan authority. Following the arrest of British botanist F. Kingdon-Ward in the tribal regions of northern Assam on the charge of unauthorized expedition into Tibetan territory, prompted the British government to send a mission to Tawang for the proclamation of British sovereignty. In April 1938, a small British force led by Captain G. S. Lightfoot arrived in Tawang and proclaimed the British authority on the region. The Tibetan government protested against the British claim and subsequently ignored Lightfoot's declaration while collecting taxes in Tawang. However, Lhasa did not object to British activity in other sectors of the McMahon Line (Raghavan 2012 pp. 17-18). Heading to no progress, Lightfoot returns to New Delhi in recommending stronger measures for the establishment of British authority over Tawang. However, due to the outbreak of World War II, the British did not pay much attention in enforcing authority in the valley. But, with the increasing Japanese surge in Asia, forcing the British to maintain a strong frontier in the region to prevent possible Japanese attack. Moreover, Britain was also concerned about the subsequent Chinese map showing not only Assam Himalayas but also areas that are 100 miles south of the agreed borderline during the Shimla convention. (Raghavan 2012 pp. 17-18) Alarmed by the adverse situation, British Indian authorities sent British civil servants and anthropologist J.P Mills to bring the tribal into British control and assert British authority in the tribal areas. With his pioneering efforts, he consolidated British influence among the tribals and able to establish several border posts from Walong at the east to DirangDzong at the west all along the McMahon Line. These border posts were guarded by Assam Rifles to prevent any kind of Chinese and possible Japanese expeditions and nullify the Tibetan influence in the region. By 1947, when the British Empire collapsed in India, Britain able to establish the Indo-Tibetan frontier as per the McMahon Line and the British sovereignty within the frontier was transferred to Independent India after 1947. After independence, India merged the North-East Frontier

Tract into the state of Assam and retained the border posts as usual. However, for better administrative management, the Indian government reorganize the hill tracts and constituted the North-East Frontier Agency (NEFA) in 1951 which was renamed as Arunachal Pradesh in 1972 and become a union territory. In 1987 Arunachal Pradesh given full statehood status and become the 24th State of Indian Union. Following the Chinese liberation in 1951 and subsequent annexation of Tibetan in 1954, the Indian sovereignty in the region was questioned by Beijing citing the Chinese rejection of the McMahon line at the Shimla Convention. For India, the Indo-Tibetan and now Indo-Chinese frontier is well demarked and the McMahon line remains the border between India and China. Both the countries failed to resolve the disputes through dialogue in 1960 and fought a war in claiming sovereignty in this area. Whoever, after a short occupation, Chinese solders decided to withdraw from this region and NEFA once again came under the Indian authority. China still claims its sovereignty over whole of Arunachal Pradesh and objects the visits of Indian Authorities into this area.

The Tibetan Uprising and the Emergence of Sino-Indian Border disputes

India China relations have been seriously damaged by the incident of militant Tibetan uprising of 1959. The revolt once again brought the age-long issue of Chinese sovereignty over Tibet into living. The uniqueness of the revolution was that it was mostly driven by armed militants and carried out by the people against the Chinese authority, while previous revolutions were mostly unarmed and state-sponsored.

The Chinese government has successfully brought back Tibet into Chinese manifold by signing the "Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet" with the Tibetan government on May 23, 1951 (Lal 2008, p. 145). It kept India at bay while signing the treaty, though Indian footprints were firmly visible in the Himalayan kingdom since the British era. Later, it successfully convinced the Indian government on its sovereignty over Tibet and got its stamp approval by signing the "Panchsheel Agreement" on 1954 which clearly states 'Tibet' as the "Tibet region of China". While signing the treaty China promised to maintain the status quo of the position of the Dalai Lama and the autonomy of Tibet which was gradually curbed by the Chinese authority and tried to impose the Chinese policies over Tibet. In protest, the anti-Chinese revolt erupted on March 10, 1959, on the capital of Tibet Lhasa (Jian 2006). The People's Liberation Army used subsequent forces to dismantle the revolution. Following the attack on Norbulingka, the summer residence of Dalai Lama, especially after March 17, 1959, when China ordered its army to crush the rebel and Tibetan authority Dalai Lama fled to India along with his mother, brother and other 80,000 fellow Tibetans and reached India on March 31, 1959 (BBC, March 31, 1959). There was a public pressure to grant political asylum to Dalai Lama and India granted the same to Dalai Lama subsequently (Smith2010, p. 240).

After the voluntary surrendering of all its traditional tights in Tibet and accepting Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, India hardly got interested to intervene in the so-called "internal matters" of China and restricted its stand just as a spectator. On the other hand,

Chinese authority was suspicious about India and was constantly alleging its involvement in the Tibetan uprising (Raghavan 2010, p.249). Chinese authority criticized India for extending its asylum to Dalai Lama and the other Tibetans and alleged Indian backing in the armed confrontation. However, India denied any involvement and made it clear that its asylum to Tibetan spiritual leader was based on humanitarian ground. Clarifying Chinese allegation on India's political interest and function of the government in exile of Tibet it stated that "Government of India..... did not recognize any separate government of Tibet and hence there is no question of Tibetan government under the Dalai Lama functioning in India" (Sali, 1998, p.78). However this assurance and clarifications did not satisfy the Chinese authority and premier Mao Zedong asked the People's Daily to criticize India. He drafted the article where he termed India as "expansionist" and alleged that India "wants ardently to grab Tibet" (Garver 2006, pp. 93-94).

The Chinese authority started criticizing India and accused of the violation of the 1951 Panchsheel agreement by granting asylum to Dalai Lama. They also accused India of pressurizing and motivating Dalai Lama to leave Tibet. Clarifying the doubt over his exile, Dalai Lama declared on April 18, 1959, that he had fled into India "of his own will and not under duress". He also made it clear that "there was a strong desire for independence on the part of the people of Tibet" and the seventeen point Agreement had been concluded under the pressure from the Chinese government". He also showed his gratitude towards the Indian government and the public for their generosity and support towards the people of Tibet and charged China for the violation of the 1951 'Seventeen Point Agreement' and gradual withdrawal of autonomous statues to Tibet (Deepak 2005, p. 207). However, as earlier China claimed that the recent statement also was full of lies and was prepared under duress (Deepak 2005, pp. 207-08). Defusing the charges, the spiritual leader issued another statement on April 22, 1959, where he clarified that "I wish to make it clear that the earlier statement issued by my authority and indicated my view and I stand by it" (Deepak 2005, p. 210).

China's Charges of Indian Involvement in Tibetan Conflict

So far, the debate in India was merely a reaction to the Tibet conflict and the sufferings of the Tibetan people due to the conflict. India did not come under any Chinese criticism directly and China did not link India with the conflict. But, on March 28, 1959, the Chinese government in its official communiqué termed the Tibetan uprising as the conflict against imperialism and alleged its base at the Kalimpong, the Indian consulate. By doing so, China indirectly alleged Indian involvement in the conflict. The communiqué also criticized the conduct of debate on Tibetan uprising in the Indian Parliament and termed the debate as to the attempt to interfere in China's internal matters. (Jain 1060, p. 85) After three days on March 31, 1959, another similar propaganda article was published in the state-run People's Daily where the Indian consulate at Kalimpong was charged as the epicentre of Tibetan conflict.

Following the constant demand from various political parties to declare the government of India's policy towards Dalai Lama and Tibetan uprising as well as to

clarify Chinese spuriousness on India's interest, Nehru presented a detailed statement in Indian Parliament on April 28, 1959. "I need not tell the house that Dalai Lama entered India entirely of his own volition. At no time had we suggested that he should come to India. We had naturally given thought to the possibility of his seeking asylum in India and when such a request came, we readily granted it." He also asked the Panchan Lama and other Chinese authorities including the Chinese ambassador to meet Dalai Lama and find some solution for the Tibetan crisis. Following the article Communist Party of India on May 12, 1959, issued a resolution on Nehru's statement over Tibet and alleged Nehru for the violation of the principles of the Panchsheel Agreement.

The Emergence of Sino-Indian Border Disputes

The "Hindi-Chini-Bhai-Bhai" spirit got a major setback during the late fifties of the twentieth century due to the increasing skepticism between India and China over Tibet. As a consequence of the Tibetan Crisis and India's political asylum to Dalai Lama, China in many times took a strong stand on various unsettled issues, including border disputes. While China had never raised the border issues during the 1954 agreement and perhaps, as Nehru said had accepted the McMahon line as the de facto border between India and China gradually denied to recognize the same after the Tibet crisis. First, it issued the map showing some eastern sectors of India as Chinese territory and subsequently raised its army's presence in these regions. India, on the other hand also increased its patrolling activities to protect its border, though both India and China had vowed for the peaceful settlement of the frontier line. At ground border forces of both, the countries tried to maintain the perceived borderline according to their assumptions. Hence, often they came front to front during the patrolling and accused each other as the violator of the borderline. Sometimes the military activities led to the small intensity armed clash between the forces like the incidents of Pangong, Migyitum, and Longju.

In an extension of its claim, Chinese forces intruded into the Indian Territory near to Pangong Lake on July 28, 1959, and arrested six Indian policemen including an officer. India soon reacted sharply to the border violation act and demanded the immediate release of its policemen. However, China denied the allegation and accused Indian forces of their incursion into Chinese territories. (White Paper I, 1959) A similar incident occurred near Migyitum on August 25, 1959, where the Chinese forces attacked an Indian army post and killed one Indian soldier and injured another three. On the very next day, what the government of India believed, the Chinese force-marched further into the Indian Territory and surround the small garrison of the Indian army at Longju on August 26, 1959. In defence the Indian forces opened firing but did not sustain longer against the large Chinese force. The Indian forces abandoned the barrack after heavy losses from the Chinese army. (White Paper II 1959) The Chinese version, however, blamed the Indian troops for its firing on Chinese troops after crossing the Chinese border. (Deepak 2005, pp. 216-18) These incidents started a series of public uproar across India and the centre of the Parliamentary debate.

Looking at the intensity of differences, Nehru wrote a series of letters to Chinese counterpart Zhou En-Lai citing various historical records, ancient maps, and provisions of agreements to reclaim the Indian stand. After a silence of about six months, Chinese premier En-Lai replied to Nehru's letter on September 8, 1959, where he raised several arguments in justifying Chinese claim over the border regions of India. En-Lai in his letter wrote that China was not a party to the treaty of 1842 and did not approve it later. Therefore there was no question of recognizing the frontier line. He made it clear that the Chinese government was not recognizing the McMahon and illegally occupied the LongjuYaxierShatze, Khinzemane and Tamaden regions of China. He also blamed the Indian forces for the Lonju incidents and argued that the deployment of a Chinese border guard at the Indian border was just to threaten India, but to prevent the Tibetan gorillas from inter into Tibet and make disturbances. (White Paper-II, 1959) The En-Lai letter to Nehru for the first time made a formal claim of 90,000 square Kilometer of the Indian Territory. Meanwhile similar border violation and subsequent clashes reported from the Kongka pass of the Aksai Chin area, where 10 Indian soldiers were killed and few were arrested by Chinese soldiers. However, the Chinese version claimed that it was the Indians who passed into the Chinese side and attacked the Chinese picket subsequently and the Chinese forces only retaliated to the attack.

Sino-Indian Dialogue on border issues

Amidst growing tensions in the border regions, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai wrote a letter to Nehru proposing to maintain status quo on the border and to ensure tranquillity at the border by withdrawing forces twenty kilometres away from both the sides of the McMahon line in the east and Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the west. He also proposed not to send a patrol party into the evacuated region to avoid any conflict, while maintaining civil administrative personnel there. At last, he suggested a meeting between the two Prime Ministers at a convenient venue to discuss and resolve the border issues. (White Paper III, 1960, p. 46) Both the suggestions were accepted by Indian and a meeting was fixed after through negotiations of the two sides to resolve the border issues. After several diplomatic commutations, the meeting was fixed on April 19, 1960 in New Delhi. Despite steep domestic pressure, Nehru decided to hold a meeting with Chinese premier Zhou Enlai on April 19, 1960, in New Delhi. Prime Minister Zhou Enlai with a huge Chinese delegation that included Foreign Minister, Chen Yi, Vice-Foreign Minister, Zhang Hanfu and Assistant Foreign Minister Zhang Qiaogun visited New Delhi to discuss and resolve the outstanding border conflict. Apart from Nehru, the Chinese Premier discussed with various political leaders such as vice-President Radhakrishnan, Defense Minister Krishna Menon, Home Minister Pandit G.B. Pant separately. The talks went on up to six days between Indian and Chinese delegation to find some interim solution that was convenient to both the parties. After 20 hours of talks between Nehru and Zhou, no such significant result came out, except the joint communiqué. The communiqué read that, the officials of the two governments would meet from June to September

alternatively at two capitals and examine, check and study all historical documents, records, accounts, maps and other study materials relevant to the boundary question on which each side relied in support of its stand, and draw up a report for submission to the two governments". The two governments also agreed to take all possible and available mechanisms to avoid the ongoing border clashes between the two armies. (Ministry of External Affairs 1960, pp. 107-08) There is no doubt that the talks failed to resolve the issue, as there were huge differences between Indian and Chinese viewpoints, besides a lack of mutual trust.

Meanwhile, the report of the on-going Sino-Indian border talks was published on February 14, 1961. As expected by most of the non-communist opposition parties, it failed to resolve the outstanding disputes. Instead of one unanimously accepted report, the whole bunch consisted of two different independent reports, each narrating the arguments of one side, followed by a short three-page joint declaration. And the Indian version of the report was contrasted with the Chinese version. The fundamental difference was surrounded to the demarcation of the frontier line. While India argued that it had been demarcated previously, China said, it had never been delimited earlier. China also refused to discuss Sino-Bhutanese and Sino-Sikkim boundaries stating that they were beyond the scope of the present discussion. On the other hand, India argued that it was treaty-bound to protect Bhutan's boundary, hence it should be discussed in the on-going talks. Even the short joint report lacked any concrete mechanism to settle the border, hence the talk could be considered as a failed attempt. The Only thing both the parties gained out of the talks was perhaps an attempt to understand each other's stand. (Ministry of External Affairs 1960, pp.1-11)

India's Forward Policy and Sino-Indian War

Despite all possible attempts to convince the Chinese leadership, China continued to occupy a large chunk of the Indian Territory and refuse to withdraw its troops back. The peaceful options such as talks and negotiation also failed to resolve the issue and there was a report of Chinese military buildups along the borders. At this juncture, India opted to use hard power to push back Chinese occupation from the occupied Indian territories, assuming that China was unlikely to launch a major operation to counter the Indian move. Popularly, known as India's "Forward Policy", the plan intended to deter further Chinese aggression and reoccupy the lost territories that India assumed to fall within its territorial jurisdiction. For the realization of the plan, the Indian government decided to create additional forward posts and cover unreachable areas along the Chinese border. In addition to this, the strength of the Indian posts was increased with the deployment of additional forces and the soldiers were asked to drive out the Chinese incursion. (Prasad 2010 pp. 273-75; Raghavan 2010 pp. 273-75) Though the operation gained success initially, it led to full-fledged war and cost heavy casualties subsequently due to improper planning and lack of logistics. The Forward Policy also became a point of Justification for China to lurch a massive attack against India that ended with a loss of a large chunk of Indian Territory to China.

By this time the Chinese authority began to object to India's forward posts and military buildups along the border regions. They also issued protest notes and ultimatums to India asking it to be prepared to face the consequences if it won't withdraw its troops from the Chinese borders. Such kind of protest note, for the first time was received by India on November 30, 1961. In this note, China suggested to call back Indian forward posts and to maintain the earlier line. (White Paper VI 1962, pp.3-5 & 15) Another similar note was presented to India on March 1, 1962, accusing India of refusing to hold talks with China while continue to march towards the Chinese territories. (White Paper VI 1962, p.18)

While the heated argument was being exchanged and the situation of the frontiers was intense, China proposed India to negotiate for a new agreement on trade and intercourse (as popularly known as Panchsheel earlier) on December 3, 1961. On December 15 government of India, in reply wrote a letter to the Chinese government showing little interest mentioning the collapse of the previous agreement due to China's unnecessary restrictions on Indian businessmen and pilgrims. (White Paper VI 1962, p.18) A few consecutive notes were exchanged between India and China. After a long exchange of notes, India, on April 11, 1962, informed that it had no objection to the proposed negotiation for a new agreement, but China had to withdraw its troops from the Indian soil. Hence in other words, it put the condition of vacation of occupied frontiers before any negotiation, on which China never agreed. Hence the proposed negotiation never happened and the old treaty of trade and intercourse lapsed on its due date of June 3, 1962.

China's All-out Invention

Looking at the intensified Chinese aggression and heavy military buildups, a high-level meeting was organized on September 9, 1962, under the Presidentship of Defence Minister, Krishna Menon. In the meeting, it was decided that the Chinese forces had to push back from the Thang La Ridge immediately at any cost and by any means. (Prasad 1992. pp. 94-95) This decision was reflected in Prime Minister Nehru's statement. While leaving for Sri Lanka on October 12, Nehru informed the press that he had ordered the army to "clear Indian territory in the NEFA". (Orton, 2010, p. 50) The government of India decided to raise new army crops, named IV Crop, under the Eastern Command on October 12, 1962, and General B.M. Kaul was appointed its Commander to evict the Chinese occupation in NEFA. A Codenamed as "Operation Leghorn" an offensive military operation, for the first time from the Indian side, was launched in Thang La Ridge and the other regions of NEFA on October 10, 1962. (Kaul 1967, pp. 355-56) There was a general assumption among the Indian leaderships that, China would not involve in large-scale offence against India, which proved wrong later. Proving Indian calculation wrong, China reacted to the Indian movement and attacked back the Indian troops on October 10, 1962. After the Indian offensive attack and loss of 77 soldiers during the military clash, China decided to punish India and lodged a massive attack in NEFA and Ladakh simultaneously on October 20, 1962. (Deepak 2005, p. 250) With the large scale Chinese attack, an

undeclared war between India and China started in the high Himalayas. The overwhelming Chinese troops easily chased out Indian attackers and within 48 hours most of the Indian posts fell down in Ladakh and NEFA. Following the catastrophic casualties, Nehru, in a broadcast to the nation on October 22, 1962, appealed the people "to be united in this great enterprise and put aside the controversies and arguments, and present a solid united front before all those who see to endanger our freedom and integrity". (Ministry of External Affairs 1963, pp. 1-20)

Following the Mao Zedong's "da da, tan tan(fight fight, talk talk)." strategy, China offered three-point ceasefire proposal to India on October 24, 1962, stating that, the border was a disputed issue and never been demarked hence, the present ceasefire line should be maintained till permanent solution been achieved. (White Paper VIII 1962, p. 1) However, on October 27, Nehru refused to accept the proposal that attempted to compel India to follow the Chinese plan of boundary settlement by taking advantage of India's weak position in the war. He replied to China that, India had no objection to any further peaceful negotiation on border disputes, provided China would pull its army back to the pre-September 8 line (White Paper VIII 1962, pp.4-5). Few consecutive notes were exchanged between India and China but it failed to reach any conclusion. Following India's refusal of the Chinese designed ceasefire proposal, China marched ahead deep into the Indian Territory and continued its brutal attack on Indian defend lines. Looking at the increased Chinese attack, a state of national emergency, for the first time in the history of India was declared by the President of India, and the emergency session of the Parliament was called on November 8 to discuss the grave situation of the country. Meanwhile, China attacked the eastern sector and captured Tawang and Walong on November 16.

While the Chinese attack was at its peak during the late Novembers and Indian posts were falling consecutively, China declared the unilateral ceasefire in the eastern, western and middle sectors. It also declared to withdraw its troop twenty kilometre back from the line of actual control that was maintained on November 7, 1959. The note further asked the Indian government to re-establish the consultative activities and negotiation in the future to discuss the delimitation of the ceasefire line and demilitarized zones. (Appadorai 1982, pp. 676-77)

International mediation in dispute resolution and the Colombo Proposal

Though both India and China agreed to adhere to maintain the ceasefire, neither side was able to fix the ceasefire line and demilitarization zone due to perceptual differences. Meanwhile, some Afro-Asian countries came forward to facilitate the ceasefire formula. With the prime initiative of the Ceylonese (Sri Lankan) Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, Six Afro-Asian Countries such as Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Ghana, Indonesia and United Arab Republic (Egypt) met in Colombo between December 10 to 12, 1962 to finalize a workable agreement between India and China to resolve the border disputes. At the end of the conference, a suggestive document was produced which prescribed a way out the formula for all the three disputed frontier regions. In the western sector, the document suggested, China had to withdraw its troops

20 kilometres from the ceasefire line as per the declaration, whereas, India could hold the present ceasefire line and need not withdraw its troops anyway. After the Chinese vacation, this 20-kilometre frontier region would be a demilitarized zone and would be "administrated by civilian posts of both sides to be agreed upon, without prejudice to the rights of the previous presence of both India and China in that area." In the Eastern Sector, both the countries had maintained the "Line of actual control" as the de-facto border, whereas, status quo had to be maintained in the middle sectors. A delegation led by Prime Minister Bandaranaike visited India and China to convince the countries to accept the Colombo proposal. India first did not accept the proposal and informed the Bandaranaike delegation that, it could give its reply to the proposal only after his consultation with Parliament. (Hoffmann 1990, pp. 226-28)

China's renounce of Colombo Proposal and the enduring hostility

On April 20, 1963, Zhou Enlai informed the government of India that, China would not accept the added provisions (which included the clarification wanted by India) of the Colombo Proposal as it was not part of the official report. India strongly objected to China's decision and made it clear that there should not be half acceptance of the proposal suggested by Colombo Powers. (White Paper IX, p. 10-20) Zhou's letter in rejecting the Colombo proposal drove another huge anti-Chinese public opinion. While intimating the Chinese decision to Lok Sabha on May 7, 1963, Nehru once again repeated that no further negotiation was possible, if China would not accept the Colombo proposal in total. (Lok Sabha Debates, 1963, Cols. 14195-96) While answering to the question on Chinese border violation on August 16, 1963, Nehru acknowledged that China had set up twenty-six civilian posts in the declared demilitarized zone. He also argued that China had repeatedly violated India's air space boundaries and accumulating military presence in the Tibet regions to maintain the tension alive in the border. He was afraid that China might have a greater design just to maintain tension and might in a process to invade India once again. But, he assured, India was fully prepared to handle the situation better than the past.

Chinese Nuclear Explosion and territorial reclamation of NEFA

Two years after the Sino-Indian border war, on October 16, 1964, China conducted a nuclear test at the Lop Nor nuclear testing site in the Xinjiang province and became the fifth nuclear power state on the planet. India, the forerunner of the nuclear Disarmament programme, reacted strongly to the Chinese. The newly elected prime minister approached the superpowers to guarantee security for India but failed to get a positive response. (Abraham 1998, p. 125) With the nuclear weapons in hand, Chinese leadership started threatening India over the unsettled frontier regions. Warning India, Chinese Prime Minister, Zhou Enlai stated that China had never relinquished its sovereignty over the 90000 square kilometres of territory south of McMahon line and condemned India's demand of dismantling of Chinese civilian posts across the frontier line. (The Hindustan Times, January 1, 1965)

Sino-Indian Border Skirmishes in Recent Past

Though the border dispute between India and China dates back to decades, both the countries have been engaged in several high intensive border skirmishes in the recent past. Both the forces blame others for the border violation along the frontiers in the western, eastern and middle sector. Though no large casualty was reported due to the border skirmishes, both the forces engaged in several military standoffs along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and other hotspots in middle and eastern sectors amounting to further escalation and war.

On the Line of Actual Control, for instance, China allegedly intruded into 19 km of the borderline and established a camp at Raki Nula, 30 km south of Daulat Beg Oldi on 15 April 2013. The incursion included the air space violation by Chinese military helicopters to drop supplies to the troops. However, Chinese officials denied any trespassing having taken place. Soldiers from both countries briefly set up camps on the ill-defined frontier facing each other, but the tension was defused when both sides pulled back soldiers in early May resulting in a 21 days long military standoff between the rivalry countries. (Lee 2013) Similarly, in September 2014 about 35 Chinese soldiers also reportedly entered into Indian territory and set up a camp at 30R post of Chumar valley located 300 km northeast of Ladakh. Confronted by the Indian Army, PLA refused to leave claiming the land as theirs leading to another military standoff in Ladakh. After multiple rounds of flag meetings between both the forces, China pulled back their army on the condition of some dismantling of Indian military structures, ending to 16 days long standoff. (Pandit 2014) In September 2015, Chinese and Indian troops faced off in the Burtse region of northern Ladakh after Indian troops dismantled a disputed watchtower the Chinese were building close to the mutually agreed to patrol line. (Indian Express, September 13, 2015)

Similarly, the border village of Demchok in Leh district had been the center of conflict between India and China for decades. Troops of both countries engage in two military standoffs in September 2014 and in November 2016 for the construction of irrigation canals in the village. On both occasions, the tensions were dismantled after the termination of construction work and the mutual withdrawal of troops from the region. (Singh 2016) Above all, the Doklam crisis, which occurred at the border tri-junction between India, China, and Bhutan was one of the low points of India-China relationships. Indian efforts to maintain status quo by preventing Chinese forces to build a strategic road in the disputed region led a long military standoff between Indian and Chinese forces. The repeated Chinese warning, subsequent live-fire drills in Tibet and wider media coverage make the situation worse leaving narrow scope for consensus building and negotiation. The standoff continued for 72 days both the parties withdrawn their troops from the disputed land and the status quo have maintained once again.

The Eastern Sector along the McMahon Line also remains hostile since the Sino-India war. China's claim over Arunachal Pradesh in general and Tawang, in particular, led to several small scale border skirmishes in the region. Among all border clashes, the 1987 border skirmishes are prominent, where both the countries came close to another hot war at Sumdorong Chu Valley. Soldiers of both the countries had engaged several border

clashes at various spots of the valley including, Namka Chu, Kya Pho, Yangtse, Khizemane, Asaphila, Longju, Tuting, and Fish Tail. However, both the countries maintain restraint and defused the tension after negotiations. In the recent past, several border violations by Chinese forces were reported and Chinese officials have been critical of Indian policies in the region.

India's China Policy Since the Border War

The dynamic relationship India and China remain tizzy after the 1962 border war and both the neighbours remain estranged for years before their rapprochement in the 1980s. With the collapse of the great wall of Sino-Indian hostility at the end of the Sikkim crisis, both India and China decided to move ahead to develop a normal relationship. (Deepak 2005, pp. 298-99) The process of Sino-Indian détente was started getting momentum after the non-intervention of China in the Sikkim crisis and the goodwill visit of the Chinese Table Tennis team along with the Chinese Vice-Minister Wang Bingnan. Chinese leaderships showed her interest to re-establish the normal diplomatic relationship with India. On the other hand, Foreign minister Chavan declared to send K.R. Narayan as the Indian ambassador to China. Subsequently, Chen Zhayuan was sent as the Chinese ambassador to India in September 1976 and the two Asian giants once again re-established their ambassador level diplomatic relations after 15 years. Following the invitation of Wang Bingnan, foreign minister Vajpayee visited Beijing on February 12, 1979, and called for greater Sino-Indian engagement. (Jain 2010, p. 229) Following Vajpayee's visit, the Chinese vice premier and foreign minister Huang Hua paid his return trip to India on June 25, 1981. It was the first visit by any Chinese foreign minister ever. (Beijing Review, July 13, 1891) During the visit of Huang, both the countries agreed to resume talks to resolve the long-pending border problems. There were altogether eight similar talks held between December 1981 and November 1987. Though the talk failed to resolve the outstanding issue due to subsequent rejection of each other's proposal, it opened up several new doors for both the governments to understand each other's concerns. (Lal 2008, p. 24; Vang, 2008, p. 174) Subsequently, India and China granted the status of Most Favoured Nation (MNF) to each other on 15 August 1984. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi paid his historic visit to China on December 19, 1988, and Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng visited India in December 1991 followed by Narshimarao's China visit in December 1993. (Ranganathan 1998, pp. 443-45) From 1976 to 1997 several high-level visits and diplomatic exchanges occurred, which further strung the age-old relation between India and China and put the relationship on track.

The Joint Working Group (JWG) on border disputes that were set up by the mutual agreement during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's China visit, became an effective tool in the subsequent years to reduce tension at the border and promoting peace and tranquillity at the border. The specialist group went through ten rounds of intensive negotiations from 1989 to 1997 in New Delhi and Beijing alternatively. As a result, in the eighth round of meeting in August 1995, both the countries agreed to withdraw their troops back from the Sumdorong Chu Valley to end the nine yearlong military standups. To avoid such kind of

standups in the future, both India and China decided to set up a meeting point for military officers at the Nathu La. More importantly, the 'pockets of disputes' were identified and it was decided to take utmost care to avoid any armed confrontation while patrolling. The subsequent meetings also helped to adapt the policy to boost the Confidence Building Measures (CBM) between both the armed forces and other normalization initiatives to deescalate the tensions. (Deepak 2005, pp. 349-350) To strengthen the bilateral ties further, Chinese President Jiang Zemin paid an official visit to India in 1996 and signed the CBM agreement with India. (Deepak 2005, pp. 151-53)

China also denied the allegation of the transfer of Chinese nuclear weapon technology or M-II missiles to Pakistan and clarified that it would not sell any of its advanced nuclear technologies to any of its neighbours. (Perkovich, 1999 p. 387) On the Kashmir disputes, China ruled out any third party mediation and stated that India and Pakistan had to resolve the issue bilaterally. That means, as Perkovich believed, Kashmir for China is no longer an international problem, rather a bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan now. (Perkovich, 1999 p. 387) During the Kargil war, China took a neutral stand despite Islamabad's appeal to world communities and its all-weather for support. 'Without slightest partiality to any side' Chinese leadership suggested Pakistan resolve the issue peacefully. (Deepak 2005 pp. 386-87) For Swaran Singh, China's decision to maintain complete neutrality was the result of its changing role in the post-soviet world order, but for India, it was the fruit of the yearlong normalization process. (Singh 1999 pp. 1083-94)

Cooperation and Competition

With the beginning of the 21st century, the India-China relationship has entered into a new phase of cooperation and competition. After a short episode of disturbance following the Pokhran-II Nuclear explosion, the Kargil war and the Karmapa incident, the roller-coaster relationship between India and China started improving after the visit of Indian President K.R. Narayanan to China. India's timely negotiation regarding these issues did not let the thing go wrong. China also realized the importance of friendship with India to attain its global stature and maintained a constructive dialogue with Indian leadership to resolve the outstanding issues. In addition to this, the growing interdependency and trade relations also played a significant role to promote Sino-Indian cooperation. As a result, several agreements have been signed between the two countries to improve the state of the relationship, trade, and commerce. New Delhi and Beijing also decided to extend their area of cooperation in other non-explored areas including the energy section. However, this honeymoon lasts apparently for a short period. Due to the rapid global transformation and emergence of new economic world order, both the countries found themselves just as oppose to each other in many areas and knowingly or unknowingly, they indulged in the zone of competition soon. In this background, the present chapter discusses the course of India-China relations in the twenty-first century and the outstanding issues of this defining relationship.

The terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament by Pakistan based terror organization on December 13, 2001 and subsequent India–Pakistan military stand-up put China in a difficult situation (Swamy 2011 pp. 23-26). For India, it was the time to measure the Chinese attitude vis-à-vis the growing Sino-Indian cooperation. However, China condemned the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament and perhaps, for the first time acknowledged that it was also a victim of terrorism in Xinjiang. (The Renmin Ribao, November 14, 2001) Like the Kargil crisis, this time also China maintained equal distance from the crisis and asked both the countries to uphold calm in the border. Answering to a question during his official visit to India, Chairman Li Peng stated that, like India, China views international terrorism as a big threat to its national security and offers China's cooperation to tackle the menace of international terrorism. (The Hindu, January 14, 2001) This was a new development in India-China relations, as China was a little hesitant to support India in its war on terrorism. Similarly, Chinese Premier Zhu Rongli during his visit to New Delhi also condemned the Parliament attack and assured China's full cooperation to combat terrorism. Even, both the countries agreed to establish an anti-terrorist dialogue mechanism to reduce the menace of terrorism in the region. (Cherian 2002). However, the state-run China Institute of Contemporary International Relations stated the terror attack on the Indian Parliament was inside job and was carried out by the Indian outfits. Similarly, the state-run Institute of Strategic Studies warned that, if the war broke out China would support Pakistan. (Gupta 2014, pp 383) Besides, China was the only country that opposed to the blacklisting of Pakistan linked terrorist originations (Markey 2013, p. 183).

Widening Differences and the Beginning of India China Great Game

The roller- coaster relation between India and China was gradually growing upwards since the official visit of the Indian president K.R. Narayanan. Since then, many high-level visits were conducted from both sides' subsequently including the state visit of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongli and Wen Jiabao as well as the visit of Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee to China in 2003. Meanwhile, for the first time, the total bilateral trade between New Delhi and Beijing crossed the US \$ 10 billion marks in April 2005 (Ministry of External Affairs). However, the Sino-Indian honeymoon did not last long. The growing relationship took a new turn when India decided to oppose China's inclusion into the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as an observer. Clarifying its position Indian External Affairs Ministry stated that, "India's position is that China's request along with others can be considered once the criteria and modalities for such association have been worked out." (Bhattacharya, 2005) Moreover, for India, China's entry into the SAARC, which is mostly dominated by India, would curtail its influence. (Gupta, 2014, pp. 383-85) However, with the help of its alliance partner Pakistan and the backing of Nepal and Bangladesh, China managed to get the observer status. India, on the other hand, agreed to the Chinese bid when other SAARC members agreed to grant observer status to Japan. Furthermore, China had been blocking the Russian proposal to grant observer status to India in Shanghais Cooperation Organization (SCO). Beijing

proposed the name of Pakistan as an observer and only allowed India when Russia agreed to allow Pakistan into the SCO. Similarly, China also opposed the inclusion of India into the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as a full dialogue partner. For many, this was the beginning of a "New Great Game" and the Sino- competition (Nadkarni 2010, p.188; Hauser &Kemic 2009 p.116; Sánchez-Cacicedo 2014, pp.169-70).

Similarly, the Sino-Indian competition is quite visible in the energy sector despite the existence of the bilateral energy cooperation agreement (Jiali 2010). The competition between the two Asian giants was quite visible when China decided to challenge the Indian bid for the exploration of natural gas in Myanmar and use its political contacts to outplay the Indian bid (Zhao 2012, pp.119-131). Apart from this, both the states were competing with each other in Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia in energy exploration (Bajpae 2005). Similarly, the Chinese refusal to issue a visa for the people of Arunachal Pradesh and subsequent issue of stapled visa to the Kashmiris has been one of the major bones of contention between Indian and China for a long time (The Indian Express, 2007; Luttwak, 2012, pp.78-79).

Conclusion

The relationship between India and China during the first decade of the 21st century witnessed several ups and downs. The Indian president visited China to ease the tension that erupted following India's nuclear detonation and the Karmapa incident. Since then, both the countries have taken several measures to improve their relationship and several high-level visits have exchanged. Few important agreements also have been signed between New Delhi and Beijing to facilitate the growing bilateral trade, including the agreement to open the Nathu La pass. The India-China cooperation also reached a new high when both the countries decided to go for joint bidding and to co-operate with each other in international oil exploration. However, the promises deemed low as the two countries slowly entered into competition in many areas.

During this period the attitude of the Indian Parliament towards India's China policy was mostly cooperative as well as cautious. While most of the constructive initiatives, such as the improvement of relationship and promotion of trade between India and China were appreciated by the members of the Parliament. But the matter that affects India's national interest, including the Sino-Pakistan Nuclear cooperation and the visa issues with China, has been opposed by Parliament as a whole. The Indian Parliament, at large has been encouraging greater Sino-Indian trade and economic engagement and also encouraged the opening of the Nathu La to pass for border trade. However, there was a little hesitation among the members of the Parliament about the attitude of China towards India and the growing gap between the volume of importing and exporting in the bilateral trade with China. There was overall consensus among all sections of the Parliament for greater relation with China and no political party, whether the ruling party or opposition has opposed to improving relations with China.

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Multilateralism and Security Problems in Central Asia

The Role of SCO and CSTO

Hamid Rasool

Abstract

Mankind has always been concerned about security and safety, whether it is the security of the individual, family, clan, tribe, region, nation, or the globe. So security has always remained the prime concern of any state. After the cold World War, international interdependence has forced the states to readjust their foreign policies in a multilateral context. Cooperation now has become more necessary and institutionalised. Multilateral regimes also tend to strengthen regional cooperation to play a more meaningful and proactive role in global processes. So the SCO and CSTO are two very important multilateral organisations which can act as guarantor for Central Asian States security.

After the collapse of the Soviet System the five Central Asian republics Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan have faced a disastrous scenario of security. During the last 27 years, they have been facing various security problems such as border security, ethnic problems, environmental problems, drugs trafficking, terrorism, extremism and radicalism. Commonly agreed set of norms and principles of multilateralism direct the behaviour of states to achieve a greater common good for all states and thus institutionalize multilateralism is for better international cooperation and that is good for central Asian states and their security, and this is the only solution.

In the present scenario, Central Asian states need a more robust mechanism to deal with new challenges to their traditional and non-traditional security issues. So this multilateral approach is the best in this context. To maintain the status quo in Central Asia has emerged as the main goals of SCO and CSTO. The deteriorating economic situation, rampant corruption and mass dissatisfaction, all are a source of serious social and political unrest. SCO and CSTO can act as guarantors for these projects like TAPI and energy sharing which will help in the infrastructure and human development in the region through multilateral cooperation.

Keywords

Multilateralism, Central Asian Security, SCO, CSTO, Central Asia Geopolitics, Terrorism, Multilateral Cooperation

Introduction and Theoretical Framework

Multilateralism is largely a post World War II element of U.S. foreign policy. Multilateralism is a diplomatic term that refers to cooperation among several nations. Multilateralism is defined as when three or more than three countries try to coordinate themselves for certain desired outcomes or goal then it is known as multilateralism. Robert O Keohane defines multilateralism as the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more than three states, through ad-hoc arrangement or

employing an institutional mechanism. The majority of the Central Asian states are involved in alliances in various spheres, including those set up for economic and military-political cooperation. The most active among them are the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in Central Asia and most relevant (Marcel de Haas, 2017). The global nature of multilateralism and multilateral policies are diplomatically intensive but offer the potential for great payoffs. Though half of its eight members of SCO are nuclear powers, it focuses on economic issues and non-traditional security challenges, which are present in member states in one form or the other. From boundary issues to economy and security the SCO has evolved since its inspection. The Astana meeting 2017 can prove to be important to deal with the challenge, a concerted move, and SCO members signed the Convention on Countering Extremism on 9 June 2017. SCO members have also agreed to continue cooperation against the activities of individuals and organizations linked to terrorism (Zafar, 2017). All major industrialized contender countries are trying to get a foothold in the region, bringing with them social forces to which local actors must respond. In such a complex matrix of social forces, competition and cooperation are ad hoc and multilevel (Chwee, 2005). Multilateralism has taken a complementary rather than a supplementary role to bilateralism.

What is security?

It is the nature of humankind that it is always concerned about his security and safety whether it is the security of the individual, family, clan, tribe, nation, region or the globe. Security is the pursuit of freedom from threats (Buzan's, 1991). The security studies are the core of International Relations, predominantly dealing with the issues of war and peace (Sulovic, 2010). People felt insecure whether it was in the state of nature as depicted by or in the civil society as portrayed by Locke in his *Treatise on Civil Society* or in the regime of the general will as depicted by Rousseau in his *Social Contract*. Traditionalist school of thought, define security as freedom from any objective military threat to the state survival in the international system. A nation is secure to the extent to which it is able if challenged to contain them by victory in a war (Lippmann, 1943). There are five security sectors as military, political, economic, societal and environmental (Buzan, 1983). The original definition of regional security complex (RSC) was that it is a set of states whose major security perceptions and concerns are so interlinked that their national security problems cannot reasonably be analysed or resolved apart from another. Regional security complex theory uses a blend of materialist and constructivist approaches. Post Second World War period took security as the protection of military threats from external power and emphasized the use of force as a means to resolve conflict (Buzan and Waever, 1991). Morgenthau considered that the security of the state was best achieved by the maximization of military power. Throughout the cold war period, security perspectives were based on the traditional approach, which considered the strengthening of military power as the pivot of national security. But the sources of insecurity are not

only external or the mutual competition of states but also the failure of states to provide security to citizens (Buzan, 1998).

In the context of the international system, security is about the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity (Schultze, 1973). The concept of collective security in international relations is quite old, it was sketched for instance by Immanuel Kant (1795) in his *Perpetual Peace* in the 18th century, where he proposed a league of nations that would control conflict and promote international peace among states.

Security Dynamics of Central Asia

Security threats like drug trafficking, human trafficking large scale displacements, armed insurgencies, threats of terrorism, extremism and destabilization of trade, small arms smuggling, cross border terrorism, conflict arising out of environmental degradation and rise of radical forces and ethnic conflicts are the series problems which the Central Asian States are facing. Some of the chronic threats Central Asia have inherited and some insecurity issues appeared during the transition period and some have resulted from geopolitical changes in the region. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the subsequent establishment of nation-states on ethnic lines demonstrated how aggressive Ethno religious resurgence might pose a challenge to the establishment of multi-ethnic states. Border tensions have been a salient feature of Central Asian politics due to the undemocratic regimes (Akhtar, 2010). By 2005, most of the boundary disputes with China were resolved. A large amount of the processing of opium into heroin occurs in Afghanistan. Making large quantities of heroin available in the vicinity of the Central Asian states is a big threat. The continued presence of fissile and radioactive material and the presence of Highly enriched Uranium (HEU) remains at several places in Central Asia and is a potential proliferation threat (Kassenova, 2007).

Following the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Central Asia a landlocked region has acquired geopolitical, geo-economic and geo-strategic significance. It is one of the world's earliest inhabited places and home of an ancient and highly developed civilization. Heartland theory of Sir Halford Mackinder is of great importance he postulated that "he who rules the heartland, rules Asia he who rules Asia, rules the world" (Mackinder, 1962). It is the largest landmass in the world and whosoever controls it, exercise enormous power. It is the centre of political gravity because it is enclosed more frontiers than any other region in the world there is a continuous struggle of power here. Central Asian region is the Geographical Pivot of History (Herodote, 1976).

All the Central Asian states are facing common security challenges like crime, corruption, drugs and terrorism (Max G. 2005). The problems of authoritarian regimes, crime, corruption, terrorism, and ethnic and civil tensions have jeopardized the security of all the new states of Central Asia. Uzbekistan faces escalating civil discontent. Ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz clashed in 1990 in the Fergana Valley. All these states are harmed by

drug and human trafficking and associated corruption and health problems (Nichol, 2009). As per the United Nations Development programme report (2003) the region suffers from significant ecological disasters and the legacies of the past. Supply cotton crops to the Soviet Union, large-scale irrigation systems were built, contributed to the degradation of the Aral Sea and Caspian Sea (Walter S. Spells). Environmental risks and social and economic development are intertwined, leading to the emergence of environmental crises that the Central Asian states are facing now.

Security Issues in Central Asia Role of Sco and Csto

SCO is the third most significant organisation after the EU and the UN. Originally designed to promote peace and stability in the region, but over the years it has become a forum for cooperation on political, economic and military matters (Roy, 2014). The formation of SCO was declared on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai as an intergovernmental multilateral platform with the inclusion of Uzbekistan in the group. Before this, it was called Shanghai Five with China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan as five members established in 1996. Presently the SCO is consisting of eight full members India, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russian, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia are the observer states. Armenia, Azerbaijan Cambodia, Nepal Sri Lanka Turkey are the dialogue partners. UN, ASEAN, CIS, Turkmenistan are the Guest attendants of SCO. On the other hand, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is a regional mutual defense alliance that consists of seven member states Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The purpose of the CSTO is a collective defence of its member states, where security for one is security for all formed on 15 May 1992. In 1992, six post-Soviet states Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan signed the Collective Security treaty in Tashkent. Treaty is also referred to as the Tashkent Pact or Tashkent Treaty. Azerbaijan and Georgia joined it in late 1993. Both SCO and CSTO are covering a large number of stakeholders who are serious about the security of the region.

SCO was formed with the signing of the treaty on deepening military trust in border regions and the treaty on the reduction of military forces in border regions. The Objectives of SCO members are to cooperate and coordinate in safeguarding and securing the region and to promote development by enhancing informed participation, contributing to policy development by stimulating local actions. The main objectives of SCO are to strengthen the relationship among member states and promotion of cooperation in political, economic, trade, scientific, technical, cultural and educational sphere as well as in energy, transportation, tourism and environmental protection involved in safeguard regional peace, security and stability. Russia energized CSTO by proposing the creation of the Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF) in February 2009, a military establishment designed to conduct anti-terrorist activities, fight transnational crime including drug trafficking and repulse external military aggression. This was done only to curb the menace of terrorism in Russia and the Central Asian States. Russian

President Vladimir Putin argued that the CSTO will counter the threats posed by drug trafficking from Afghanistan and by radical Islamic groups in Central Asia. Due to the lack of armed forces among CSTO allies, Russia delivers the majority of the troops assigned under the banner of the CSTO (Mehtiyev, 2007). However, this also means that the Kremlin in return for its security umbrella demands a certain degree of political influence on the Central Asian member states. The CSTO also has moved rapidly to promote Uzbekistan's reintegration into the security organization. Tashkent was prepared to have Uzbek forces participate in the CSTO Rapid Deployment Force (Semerikov, 2007). Meanwhile, the CSTO is striving to develop a diplomatic and political component so that the desired result and objective of its formation could be achieved.

Asian powers like Russia, China and India prefer to solve regional problems at the regional level by keeping the US at bay. China is always uneasy about the presence of the US (Blagov, 2007). It, therefore, advocates a strong and credible UN system and perceives regional security mechanisms like the SCO guided by the UN Charter, and internationally recognized norms and CSTO. Joining of India and Pakistan to SCO is very good for regional cooperation. Expansion of SCO is a good sign and Iran should also be admitted to this grouping as soon as possible as a permanent member. SCO is building roads for future connectivity. PM Modi (9 June 2017) at Asthana declaration said that SCO is a vital organisation and India is joining it for security and stability in its extended neighbourhood and to further the cooperation. South China Sea conflicts Central Asian security concerns, International terrorism and transnational terrorism all these issues illustrate the importance of an organisation like SCO.

Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) the important organ of SCO based in Tashkent, which would help in gaining vital intelligence inputs on the movement of terror outfits, drug-trafficking, cybersecurity and Public information of the region (Phunchok Stobdan June 6, 2017). The SCO is an advantageous organization for the economic development of Central Asia since it is an opportune podium for doing business, especially with China. Security remains the first driver shaping Russia's involvement in Central Asia.

Furthermore, the tasking of the CSTO has moved from classical collective defence to modern security threats, which is similar to NATO's conceptual development. President Nursultan Nazarbayev emphasized that countering threats posed by international terrorist and extremist organizations was a priority for the CSTO, as well as the situation in Afghanistan. Nazarbayev supported the idea of increasing the fighting capacity of the CSTO's Collective Rapid Reaction Forces. Kazakhstan considers the CSTO as a vital organization for its security (Tengrinews, 2015). Regular military exercises has increased considerably aimed at conventional warfare, peacekeeping, anti-narcotics, counter-terrorism, and disaster relief, also gives evidence to the fact that the CSTO has become a professional security organization to that extent, by improving the combat readiness of its armed forces, as well as by providing a security umbrella, especially for the vulnerable states Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the CSTO forms a valuable

military alliance for Central Asia (Haas, 2017). CSTO member states have little motivation to implement democratic reforms. Moreover, Russia extended its hand when some of the CSTO countries experienced financial meltdowns after the 2008 global financial crisis, when international institutions, such as the IMF, were imposing strict budgetary and reform pre-conditions before providing lending facilities to these states. CSTO has established a security relationship with Afghanistan and has moved forward with plans to establish a regional air defence system. The Afghan side is most interested in having their military and law enforcement officers trained in Russia and other CSTO member states, as well as in purchasing Russian weaponry (Blagov, 2007). Afghanistan's army and law enforcement representatives specifically stressed serious assistance in improving the border security of their state, in both technical and personnel training terms.

SCO is the best platform for the Central Asian States, the SCO has less demanding rules than the CSTO. The SCO is primarily an organization providing a platform for bilateral arrangements for its members, and thus offers a lot of liberty for the Central Asian states. CSTO is under the control of Moscow, without Beijing as a counterbalance (Haas, 2017). Moreover, Russia's military superiority in the CSTO limits the freedom of movement of the Central Asian member states. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are both militarily and economically reliant on Moscow, which further reduces the capability of fulfilling their national objectives. For that reason, Uzbek President Karimov more than once left the CSTO.

In the post 9/11 period, the SCO has gained more importance and it has intensified the process of multilateral cooperation. It will be the leading security organisation in security issues in the region because the post 9/11 developments have made countries of the region realize the mutuality of security interests (Karim, 2004). However, there is an internal division in SCO, where Uzbekistan and Tajikistan's tilt towards the US, creates constraints on the efficacy of SCO. China is the main driver of SCO and Russia has multiple interests in Central Asia. Russia wants and prefers to have multiple agreements between China and the Central Asian states where Russia is also a partner and have some stakes (Bakshi, 2002). Chinese multilateralism is a dual strategy to deal with superpowers and devise an alternative structure for its economic and strategic interests (Oliveira, 2014). China is cooperating to compete rather than racing to integrate. Whereas Russia needs China to counter the US, and Central Asia being in between two superpowers cannot antagonise two powerful neighbours to seek favour from the USA (Wu, 2008). The real purpose of the CSTO is to serve Russia's strategic interests in Europe and Central Asia, particularly to prevent CSTO members from seeking alternative national security solutions, such as forming military alliances with third parties. International organizations, journalists, civil society activists, and various other observers also agree that over time democratic reforms in the CSTO countries have stagnated (Gomtsyan, 2010).

Within the SCO, member states and observers have their agendas, based upon

national instead of common interests. For example, China is seeking Central Asian markets for the expansion of its economy and to acquire energy sources. Russia is eager to regain its leadership status within the CIS especially in Central Asia as well as that of a superpower in the international arena. Chinese multilateralism is a dual strategy to deal with superpowers and devise an alternative structure for its economic and strategic interests. China is cooperating to compete rather than racing to integrate. Whereas Russia needs China to counter the US, and Central Asia being in between two superpowers cannot antagonise two powerful neighbours to seek favor from the USA. This Political compulsion for Russia, Central Asia and China will be dealt with in this research work. And some of the Central Asian regimes consider the SCO as an instrument and especially the protection of Russia and China, as their guarantee for survival. There is sufficient literature on SCO's and CSTO's contribution and the geopolitics of the Central Asian States but the political compulsion of Central Asian States coming together under SCO and CSTO for a joined security vision and prosperous Central Asia is not highlighted much.

Expansion of SCO took place with the joining of India and Pakistan for the first time which has broadened its scope of a joint vision tackling three evils of separatism, extremism and terrorism. Russia needs China to counter the US, and Central Asia is in between two superpowers that cannot antagonise two powerful neighbours to seek favor from the USA. For the first time in 2017, the expansion of SCO took place by giving permanent membership to India and Pakistan. In between other major development took place as the formation of RATS and post 9/11 the establishment of US military bases in Central Asia are very important in this period. The process of multilateralism is very optimistic in the region. The notion that the SCO is anti-America or anti West is completely futile (Akiner and Akihiro, 2004). Akiner highlighted that Central Asian republics have become members of various organisations and that the formation of SCO should be placed in this evolutionary process instead of treating it as an isolated phenomenon. The creation of SCO is not simply the outcome of manipulation by Russia and China. It has the support of the Central Asian countries too. Regional cooperation will help in tackling extremism in the region. The threat of terrorism is severe now, Deeping unity, political, economic, humanitarian ties will help in dealing with separatism, terrorism and extremism for tackling all these issues nothing can be better than SCO and CSTO.

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CPEC and Concerns of India

Is Afghanistan a 'New' Battleground of Sino-India clash?

Javid Ahmad Dar

Abstract

Economic Corridors have emerged new models ensuring regional development and integration as well. There is a realization that South Asia despite the enormous problems it faces can become a 'Zone of Cooperation' through the revival of Ancient Silk Route. China launched the most ambitious trans-national project 'One Belt One Road' with a clear intention to emerge as a world leader in next three decades. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is all but a must project for the accomplishment, or attraction, of BRI. Established and Iron-Brotherhood of Pakistan and China, it argued here, is instrumentally important for Chinese ambition of major global power by her centenary republic celebration. This paper argues that CPEC is a critical concern for India ranging from economic; security to political. China will not displease India as is evident from her moderate stand over Kashmir Issue since 1978-79. At the same time, the 'all-weather' friendship with Pakistan is dear to Chinese interests for regional and global power politics. In the last four decades, China has, however, 'balanced' Indian concerns and Pakistan's anxiety in an 'act' of 'courting' and 'reassuring', respectively. Afghanistan opens up two-fold concerns to India –with China as becoming a major regional influence over Kabul, and also with augmentation of Pakistan's geo-strategic importance. Afghanistan has added complexity to the complex web of relations between and among India, Pakistan and China.

Keywords

One-Belt One-Road, OBOR, BRI, CPEC, China, Pakistan India, Afghanistan

Introduction: Context of Economic Corridors

South Asia is home to 33.4 percent of the world¹. It is also home to more than 50 percent world illiterates², and figures poorly on human development as none of the South Asian countries find a place in the first fifty countries. These countries inherit a shared past –British colonialism– and subsequent progress of their polities represents a peculiar diversity of political systems. The last seven decades illustrate tremendous chequered political experiences ranging from democracy, authoritarianism, monarchy to military dictatorship on the one side, and socio-political upheavals featured by pro-secessionism, pro-democracy and anti-system movements. The subcontinent also emerged as a hub for international terrorism and religious extremism including the persecution of religious and ethnic minorities. It has been featured with intense inter-state and huge intra-state crises making it a global 'Arc of Crisis'³. The post-colonial era has seen serious bi-lateral crises among south Asian countries including chiefly India and Pakistan who fought four wars in the last seven decades. The nuclear armament is all the more serious threat that can engulf

These bilateral tensions have, inter alia, hampered regional cooperation in South Asia⁴. The socio-political fragmentation within and bilateral tension without, have hurdled the development of these young economies leaving implication on the human security of almost one-fourth of the world population. The region as a whole faces peculiar challenges like 'low-skill base', 'rising (unjust) inequality in multiple dimensions', and 'rapid urbanization'⁵ and their redressal would largely depend on the political vision of the leaders of the region. Analytically, the wide-scale endemic poverty, deep inequalities, rich-poor gaps, and poor infrastructure are being linked to the 'tremendous' lack of connectivity between South Asia, South East Asia, or Central Asia and within South Asia as well, and this lack 'affects' South Asia particularly⁶. In contrast to other regions of Asia like South East Asia, the infrastructure in South Asia is 'abysmally inadequate and of poor quality'⁷ which, if addressed, can transform the 'Arc of Crisis' into a 'Zone of Cooperation'. The quality connectivity in South East Asia began with Greater Mekong Sub-region initiated by the Asian Development Bank as early as 1992 establishing three corridors like the East-West, North-South, and Southern Economic Corridors changed the economic landscape of the region ushering in the well-accelerated economic development of these states.

The concept and policy of Economic Corridors is a recent development in South Asia. With the announcement of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2013, it has almost become a buzzword that engages politicians, policymakers, academics and economists in assessing the benefits of varied nature amidst the skepticism of regional disparities and security issues. There are national and transnational economic corridors in South Asia like the Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor (India), the Amritsar Delhi Kolkata Industrial Corridor (India), the East Coast Economic Corridor (India-Bangladesh-South East Asia), the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, and the Trans-Himalayan Economic Corridor (India, Myanmar, Nepal, Tibet, China). The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is taken as a 'game-changer' with the potential to enhance the geostrategic position of Pakistan to an 'Asian Tiger'. With this background, this paper attempts to make these arguments: a) admittedly, if CPEC is accomplished in its stipulated period, it would benefit the backward regions of Pakistan and bring them out of economic periphery to sophisticated Special Economic Zones and address the issues of endemic poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment and illiteracy; b) arguably, the all-weather friend of Pakistan "China" cannot be 'spokesperson' of Pakistan's bilateral issues especially with India and would carry Islamabad and Kabul together to present herself as a 'good neighbor' and an influential global power. Both the states are instrumentally important for Chinese ambition of major global power by her centenary republic celebration; c) critically, India has had concerns ranging from economic, security to political. CPEC violates territorial sovereignty of India as it passes through Pakistan-Administered-Kashmir (PAK) which is part of the Indian Territory as per the Constitution of India. Nevertheless, PAK is a disputed area as it is neither an internationally recognized sovereign state nor is territorial part of Pakistan as per the

Constitution of Pakistan. Additionally, the expansion of CPEC to Afghanistan is puzzling to both India's interests and investment in Afghanistan. This paper also argues that India may also fetch her share of benefits in CPEC by joining it, and, thus, sketch a 'new' chapter in Sino-India relations. China will not displease India as is evident from her moderate stand over Kashmir Issue since 1978-79. At the same time, the 'all-weather' friendship with Pakistan is dear to Chinese interests for regional and global power politics. In the last four decades, China has, however, 'balanced' Indian concerns and Pakistan's anxiety in an 'act' of 'courting' and 'reassuring', respectively⁸.

China-Pakistan: 'All-Weather Friends'

A nuanced understanding of Sino-Pakistan relations requires to situate the bilateral relations of these countries in a complex web of interactions among Pakistan, China, India, USA and (former USSR) today's Russia. As this paper underlines, Afghanistan is the latest addition to this web, and Sino-Pakistan relations are entangled in the pulls, pressures, and balances of the delicate threads of this complex web. Sino-Pakistan relations are not based on any ideological commitment rather are driven by the politico-strategic ambitions of the two countries. Pakistan's 'Muslim' character and China's 'communist' image have not created barriers in developing, sustaining, and strengthening Sino-Pakistan relations. Delineating objective understanding of Sino-Pakistan friendship, a noted expert Anwar Hussain Syed wrote:

Both China and Pakistan are sensitive to the dictates of political realism: They act from considerations of vital national interests; both pursue power (military and related capabilities) as the most reliable means of countering hostile pressure in a world in which rivalries of nations persist and where the restraining role of international law and morality is still fragile⁹.

Pakistan is located at a very important geo-strategic point. For being situated between the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, India and China, it occupies an important position in the regional power structure of both South Asia and Central Asia, and also in the 'broader Indo-Pacific geopolitics'¹⁰. In its pre-1971 territorial location, Pakistan's location was geo-strategically important for China. East Pakistan was important for China's interests in Southeast Asia, and West Pakistan was the route to the Middle East. In the very first few years after establishing the People's Republic in 1949, the Chinese leadership realized 'the value of India's rival Pakistan in case of a deterioration of Sino-Indian relations'¹¹. In the first decade of their bilateral relations, the two countries were not so close for the reasons that Pakistan sided with the United States and joined US-led CENTO to 'balance' India's friendship with the former USSR. China, on the other hand, grew close to India to resist the imperialist forces and extend diplomatic support to the nations fighting colonialism. By the dawn of the 1960s, the two countries understood each other's importance for the respective national interests. China and Pakistan were 'drawn together' by the 'common' hostility towards India. During the troubling years of the 1960s, to Pakistan, including war with India, China herself being 'a developing, and a relatively

poor, people' championed the cause of Pakistan in defiance of support of superpowers to India were 'seen as acts of sacrifice, self-denial, and courage'¹². In the backdrop of this unique development in South Asia, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto underlined the mutual importance of China and Pakistan for each other's national interest for India's hostility towards both the countries had germinated a 'fundamental common concern' for them¹³. It became a factor for 'friendship', but the 'all-weather friendship' has been driven by economic, strategic and power dynamics from time to time. It must be noted that Sino-India relations have also evolved to a new level of understanding since the late-1970's, and China has had a calculated use of Pakistan in her bilateral relations with India.

One of the major achievements of Chinese diplomats is the 'balance' they have evolved in maintaining entente cordiale with Pakistan and increasing rapprochement with India. There is a visible shift from the 1980s to the 1990s that gauges this 'balance'. Earlier at the time when Chinese hostility towards India found a coincidence in Pakistan, the joint communiqué of Pakistan President Ayub Khan and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in February 1964 state that the two countries 'expressed the hope that the Kashmir dispute would be resolved in accord with the wishes of the people of Kashmir as pledged to them by the people of India and Pakistan'¹⁴. China openly supported Pakistan over her demands to resolve Kashmir by the principles of self-determination endorsed by the United Nation's Security Council. Similarly, in the backdrop of Moscow's outrage against Pakistan for latter's support to fighters of Afghanistan against USSR, the Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian said in his press conference in Islamabad:

Pakistan is China's exceptionally friendly neighbor. If there is a war and Pakistan suffers a foreign armed attack, the Chinese government and people will, of course, stand on the side of Pakistan¹⁵.

Again in 1987 when India mounted pressure on Pakistan through a four-month-long military drill, the Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang during his official visit in June 1987 to Pakistan reiterated sympathy and support to Pakistan as follows:

The Chinese government and people will, as always, firmly support the Pakistani government and people in their just cause of safeguarding national independence, upholding stated sovereignty and promoting economic development¹⁶.

China made a careful distinction between the national security of Pakistan and her position on the Kashmir Issue. By 1980s China made a gradual but subtle diplomatic shift over Kashmir. Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the then-External Affairs Minister of India, during his 1979 visit to China conveyed to China that her support to Pakistan over-application of UNSC Resolutions over Kashmir was creating 'unnecessary complications' in development of Sino-India relations¹⁷, and also contradicted the bilateral Simla Agreement between India and Pakistan which obliged the two countries to resolve all issues including Kashmir bilaterally. China responded positively and moved to a neutral position over Kashmir. Only the next year (1980), the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua, in presence of Foreign Minister of Pakistan Agha Shani, presented the neutral side of China by stating that his country 'appreciated Pakistan's efforts to seek a just settlement of the Kashmir issue in the spirit of the Simla Agreement and accordance with the relevant

United Nations resolutions¹⁸. He reached both by referring to the Simla Agreement for India and 'relevant' UN resolutions for visiting foreign ministers. It continued till April 1990. In March 1990, the External Affairs Minister of India communicated India's resentment over China's reference to UN resolutions on Kashmir to his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen during a later visit to New Delhi. China realized the importance of improving relations with India, and 'complied' with Indian concern. Since then, China dropped the mention of UNSC resolutions altogether but has consistently maintained that India and Pakistan must find a 'peaceful solution' to the vexing problem through 'negotiations', 'consultations', and 'dialogue'. It can be safely said that with the beginning of unforeseen developments in Kashmir including the emergence of widespread armed violence in the 1990s, China took a complete departure from 1960's position and was clear that 'the Kashmir issue was a bilateral matter to be solved by India and Pakistan through peaceful means'¹⁹. This shift reached its pinnacle during the Kargil War (1999) when China openly distanced itself from Pakistan's misadventure in Kargil. The Foreign Ministry of China issued an unambiguous statement:

We sincerely hope that stems from a desire to safeguard peace and stability in the South Asian region, India and Pakistan earnestly respect the Line of Control in Kashmir and seek, according to the spirit of the Lahore Declaration, a just and reasonable solution on this issue and other disputes²⁰.

Pakistan received a fact home that national securities of China and Pakistan are no longer 'identical', but China continues to support her in seeking a resolution to Kashmir issue. India grew confident in friendship with China for she received 'assurance' that Beijing did not side with Islamabad. Diplomatically, it is a win-win situation for all three countries –China, Pakistan and India. China maintains a 'balance' between rivals and friends, India gets support on the bilateral resolution of unsettled issues with Pakistan without intervention, or talk, of a third party, and Pakistan is happy to receive 'international support' over Kashmir.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Flagship of Chinese Ambition

Only five years back, China came forth with a massive transnational economic initiative that has the potential to alter the global power configuration. The revival of Ancient Silk Route under a new nomenclature Belt and Road Initiative aims to connect two-thirds of the world population amounting to almost forty percent of global GDP in One Belt to augment the economic potential, sustain development and employ by establishing Special Economic Zones along the various Economic Corridors. According to a Brief of African Development Bank, the economic corridors are not merely the means of 'transporting the goods and services', but are 'tools for stimulating social and economic development'²¹. These are also termed as instruments of 'regional integration'²² where political consensus is being thought of as an inevitable outcome of 'economic integration'. The cooperation to ease out the trade bottlenecks to improve Inter-State, or regional, trade bears a positive influence on the political understanding of 'cooperation'. The success

stories of Economic Corridors of South East Asia have led regional powers like China to believe in the efficacy of the revival of ancient Silk Route.

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping made two announcements within two months during his visits to Kazakhstan (September) and Indonesia (October). In Kazakhstan, he declared China's ambition of developing 'Land' connectivity through the Economic Corridor and Maritime Silk Road Initiative was launched in Indonesia along with Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). In November 2015, President Xi Jinping presented the comprehensive plan of, what came to be known as, 'The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)' or 'One Belt One Road (OBOR)', in the republic's 13th Five Year Plan with two essential components of Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) and Maritime Silk Road (MSR). It aims to revive and improve the ancient Silk Road with an economic agenda to make development as a mutual endeavor of the countries and regions which would be connected by it. It is also seen as an act of Chinese 'Grand Diplomacy' to bring China into a central stage of global 'soft' power²³. Some analysts suggest that it is an instrument aimed to make China a world leader by the centenary year of her 'communist' revolution²⁴. China expects that BRI would ultimately lead "One Belt One Road Era", "One Belt One Road Economy" to "Building a New Civilization²⁵". It is, nevertheless, the most ambitious international economic and diplomatic project that China has undertaken with huge risks, responsibilities, and challenges. It can be gauged from the fact that the opening ceremony was attended by the executive heads of twenty-nine states and official delegates of more than one hundred states of the world²⁶. India, the United States of America, Germany, and some European countries boycotted the BRI Summit²⁷ and did abstain from joining it so far.

China is constrained to explore the alternative linkages to ease her excessive dependence on Malacca Strait for near about 85 percent of her oil imports come through Malacca. The surplus of manufacture requires an expanded and accessible market. BRI is expected to connect 80 countries of the world, and China is looked up as an 'undisputed' leader of the Belt. Through it, China will find access into the Pacific and the Indian Ocean; and through Gwadar Port (Pakistan) Xinjiang will be more close to the Indian Ocean than to the Capital of the country. It pursues to link China with Central Asia, East Asia, Europe and Africa; and equally important is for China to connect with Economic Zones of Europe and the Asia Pacific. The entire project of BRI depends on the successful completion of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which, fairly for its potential, is called the 'flagship project' of Chinese ambitions. It is projected that China cannot afford to fail.

CPEC would connect geographically China's Xinjiang province with Gwadar Port of Pakistan. It is more than an Economic Corridor. It would further enhance Sino-Pakistan cooperation in areas like education, science and technology, trade, energy and defense. It is expected to bring economic development to the most backward regions of Pakistan by developing Special Economic Zones and develop effective and efficient road and railway connectivity to different provinces of Pakistan. For example, China has agreed to invest US\$11.8 billion in infrastructure projects, US\$622 million for up-

gradation of the Gwadar port, US\$1.27 billion for construction of Metro Line in Lahore and US\$6.5 billion for construction of nuclear power project in Karachi²⁸. It has already begun to work on six mega-projects in Gilgit-Baltistan. The four key areas of Chinese Investment are Energy, Roads and Railways, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and Gwadar Port. It is in this background of 'immense opportunities' CPEC opens up for Pakistan's socio-economic development and China's strategic interests, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, formerly Minister of Planning and Reform, sketched its significance:

CPEC holds regional connectivity, information network infrastructure, energy cooperation, industry and industrial parks, agricultural development and poverty alleviation, financial cooperation and livelihood development including municipal infrastructure, education, public health and people-to-people contact that will produce thousands of new projects and millions of jobs in Pakistan²⁹.

There is a geo-strategic side to it. The corridor passes through Pakistan-Administered-Kashmir (PAK) which is claimed the part of the Indian Territory as per the Constitution of India. To Pakistan, it is an 'unsettled land' for it is an internationally recognized disputed territory. Both ways, 'disputed' sovereign claims of PAK make it a politico-legal issue. PAK is a disputed area as it is neither an internationally recognized sovereign state nor is territorial part of Pakistan as per the Constitution of Pakistan. The CPEC's potential to transform Pakistan has a strategic implication on Indo-Pakistan relations. Increasing importance to Pakistan in the regional power set is directly linked to concerns of India. Additionally, the expansion of CPEC to Afghanistan is puzzling to both India's interests and investment in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: A New Battleground of Sino-India Interests

Afghanistan enjoys a geo-strategic position that attracts China for a variety of reasons. The range of China's BRI gets a huge extension through Afghanistan. Having Afghanistan with BRI, or more specifically with CPEC, China would connect with Central Asia and West Asia through an economic corridor through Kabul. It is centrally important to augment the possibility of BRI with other countries and regions including Europe. China requires a strong Pakistan to forge a grand economic, energy and trade cooperation in Central Asia, South Asia, West Asia and North Africa, and Afghanistan is strategically indispensable for Pakistan's stability and security. China serves its own global power agenda by bringing Pakistan and Afghanistan 'close' and weed out the differences. The security apprehensions over CPEC are met in the extension of CPEC to Afghanistan and also by restoring accessibility of Gwadar Port to Afghanistan. The CPEC has a great potential to transform the lives of Pashtuns living across Afghanistan and Pakistan Border, and also can reduce the chronic border problems between the two countries by bringing the border dwellers into the mainstream economic life of the respective countries. Such an understanding between the two countries would leave a positive effect on CPEC, and thus China sees more dividends in their cooperation. If Pakistan and Afghanistan re-align economic policy with China's economic expansionism

and launch a joint offensive against extremism in their respective countries, it would establish an image of China as 'influence' over a hotbed of extremism. It would strengthen China's role and embolden her image as a responsible country on the global political landscape. Against the Indian economic and political investment in Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban, such a strategic engagement of China in Afghanistan with influence over the Pak-Afghan relationship do enhance India's economic, security and political concerns.

There are two major areas of conflict of interest between China and India in Afghanistan. Firstly, India has liberated Afghanistan of the latter's dependence on Pakistan for access to the sea and maritime commerce by investing in Chabahar Port in Iran. The trilateral agreement between Iran-India-Afghanistan facilitated the move of Afghanistan's cargo traffic Karachi Port (Pakistan) to Chabahar Port (Iran). Indian investment in developing and enhancing the capacity of the Chabahar Port meant that Afghanistan was no longer dependent on Pakistan and, more importantly, Kabul found its regional 'friend' –India. The expansion of CPEC to Afghanistan would connect it with Pakistan more efficiently through railway and motorway. China intends to initiate projects to connect Peshawar (Pakistan) to Kabul (Afghanistan) through rail and road, Landi-Kotal (Pakistan) to Jalalabad (Afghanistan) and Chaman (Pakistan) to through railways. This eventually makes Gwadar Port economically attractive to Kabul. The lease agreement and the termination condition of exemption of Taxes like sales, income, federal and import, at Gwadar Port, for 23 years to Chinese companies³⁰ would benefit Afghanistan too. Additionally, the trilateral electricity transmission project considered by China to connect the energy sector over CPEC between Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan would address the energy deficiency of the three countries mainly benefitting Afghanistan to come out of energy crisis which has hampered its potential development. It destabilises India's interest in investing in Chabahar Port and undermines the strategic spirit of trilateral agreement over the Port.

Secondly, India has strategic concerns too, for instance, India has had a strategic interest to increase its presence in Kabul, and to isolate Pakistan driven by the issues of internal security. New Delhi-Kabul friendship has grown stronger in the Post-Taliban era, and the two states exhibit mutual understanding and determination to fight terrorism. Both the states believe in being the victims of terrorism and extremism; though the nature and intensity of such challenges do vary. Along with Iran, India gains access to Central Asia through Afghanistan, and cordial allying with Afghanistan gives India an added advantage in arch rivalry with Pakistan. The increasing presence of China, however, poses a challenge to India's strategic interests. In 2017, China took a lead in holding trilateral dialogue between the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Afghanistan and China³¹ China must get Pakistan and Afghanistan as good neighbours/partners along to impress Central Asia and Europe to come along with "One Belt One Road" as the future of the world economy. Reconciled Pak-Afghan tie in consonance with China's interest is a major diplomatic task for China in the region. The attraction of OBOR is contingent on the

success of CPEC, and Afghanistan is vital for it. Consequently, it has a positive impact on the geo-strategic importance of Pakistan. Pakistan's influence over the Taliban makes it important both for China and Afghanistan. Not only for CPEC, but Pakistan is also becoming increasingly important for entire OBOR that would connect more than eighty countries of Europe and Asia. Echoing this importance of Pakistan in 2012, the then-Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Liu Jian termed Pakistan as 'the fulcrum of Asia'³². This may perhaps give Pakistan leverage in Afghanistan affairs, and it would be a setback to India's interests. This opens up two-fold concerns to India –with China as becoming a major regional influence over Kabul, and also with augmentation of Pakistan's geo-strategic importance.

Conclusion

The past three decades of Sino-India relations clearly bear it out that China cannot afford to 'displease' India for the sake of her 'iron brotherhood' with Pakistan. For her own interests, Pakistan is 'dear' to her. Rather than leaving out, it interests her more to carry India along with her ambitious BRI, and through it, she would moderate US influence over the region. As the attraction of BRI is contingent on the success of CPEC which is a must-not-fail project, China must reach to India to sustain CPEC and BRI. India is important for CPEC, and CPEC has added to the strategic concerns of India in her western neighborhood. The 'unsettled' Kashmir question can put entire CPEC on the risk of failure. Hypothetically, if India takes a lead in holding 'referendum' in Jammu and Kashmir as it existed in August 1947, people 'vote in favor of accession to the Indian Union, CPEC would become obsolete overnight'³³. In the case of military adventure over PAK, the issue becomes 'serious' for China and her dream of BRI. The time-bound realization of CPEC without any 'hiccups' would eventually enhance not only the strategic importance of Pakistan but also improve Pakistan's defense capability. The involvement of China in Afghanistan will bring Pakistan to a position of influence in the triangular relationship between Pakistan, Afghanistan and China. This triangular web undermines India's role and potential influence in Kabul. India is led by a pragmatic approach as it is selectively 'reserved' against CPEC, not against Economic Corridors per se. India might see an opportunity to join the CPEC through the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and explore the possibilities of transforming Kashmir and Ladakh as Special Economic Zones (SEZs). It may lead the region from economic seclusion to the hub of international trade on a route that was the lifeline of world trade –the Ancient Silk Route.

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Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit Road in Retrospect

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Abstract:

The Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit road was one of the significant routes connecting Jammu and Kashmir with outside world till partition and more interestingly this route was synonymous with Silk Route Trade till 1947. The Partition of Indian Sub-continent into India and Pakistan and consequent division of 'Greater Kashmir' into Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) and Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) in 1947 marked the end of this particular route along with many others. Over the last few years the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit road had assumed a great deal of significance in enhancing the bilateral relations between India, Pakistan and China. A sincere effort is being made in this paper to highlight the historical and contemporary significance of Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit road. We hope that many findings in this paper would be quiet relevant to the Departments of Trade and Culture in India, Pakistan and China for building up future relations on the basis of the rich historical past, in this age of globalization and regional integration.

Keywords

Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit Road, Silk Route, Jammu & Kashmir, Revival, Trade

Introduction

The term Silk Route is coined by Ferdinand Von Richtofen, a German geographer and explorer. He refers Silk Route as interlinked trade routes across the Afro-Eurasian landmass that connected East, South, and West Asia with the Mediterranean and European world and parts of North and East Africa¹. It stretched from Xi'an across the mountainous region of Kun Lun and Tien Shan, south of the Taklamakan desert through the famous cities of Kashgar onto Samarkand, Persia, ancient Mediterranean cities of Petra and Aleppo and finally terminating in Rome². The land routes were supplemented by sea routes which extended from the Red Sea to East Africa, India, China, and Southeast Asia³. These trans-continental routes spreading over 4,000 miles (6,500 km), enabled traders to transport goods, luxuries such as silk, satin, hemp and other fine fabrics, musk, perfumes, spices, medicines, jewels, glassware, rhubarb and slaves to the markets abroad. Zhang Qian was probably the first to travel the Silk Route and procure information about Central Asia and which obviously opened up vistas for China to trade with Rome in the West. 'Greater Kashmir' or what presently constitutes Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) in India and Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) in Pakistan was connected to it through three routes. One of the routes passed through Karakoram pass into Nubra Valley of Ladakh, another route connected Gilgit with Gurez in India and the third route passed through

Muzaffarabad, Pakistan into Baramulla India along the Jhelum Valley road⁴. These routes were further supplemented by sub-routes including Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit and Poonch-Rawalakote.

Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit Route

a) *Historical Aspect*

The Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit link road was an important trans-Kashmir outlet to Central Asia. Its history is obscure due to lack of historical and archaeological evidence. However, Hashmat-ullah Khan reports that the early Aryan settlers in Gilgit and Astor were perhaps the first people to travel the said route towards Baltistan and Purig for hunting, grazing and settlement. The presence of Brokpha's or Dokpa's in the region supports this fact⁵. Logically, therefore, they must have retained their connection with their homeland under the Achaemenians (550-330) who had a vast Central Asian empire which extended upto and including Gandhara and other areas of the Indus. Consequently, Sattagydiens, Gandharians, Dadicae and the Aparytae formed essential territories of the Achaemenian Empire⁶. The Dadicae or Dardai region constituting Gilgit-Baltistan and Iskardu was famous for huge reserves of gold and gold mines⁷. As a matter of fact, the entire area along the Indus River spanning Kharmang in Ganche, Tolti and Olding on the present Indo-Pak borders abounded with large quantity of gold. The gold digging was practiced beyond Kharal and Ganganie villages as well. How for this affected the life of common man in the entire region is difficult to ascertain. However, there can be no denial to the role of the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit link road in connecting India, Pakistan, China and Central Asia in a single network hub; hence it was a significant contributor to the Grand Silk Road⁸.

The said route seems to have survived during various regimes – Alexander the Great established a vast empire in 330 B. C., however he could not extend his domain over the Gilgit region. Even his successors could not make any headway on this behalf. However, north-eastern region of Svsa (Khasa) including Chilas in Gilgit⁹ was ruled over by the Mauryan King Ashoka (273-232 B.C.)¹⁰. If the evidence from Mahabharata about the association of Kha'sas with Mauryan rule is correct, then it is certain that Chilas in Gilgit was a territorial unit of the Mauryan Empire. A. H. Dani discovered a number of inscriptions dating 5th century A.D. which suffice the domain of Khasa state extending up and including Chilas in Gilgit¹¹. Quite precisely, Buddhism reached Central Asia either across Gandhara or Chilas or other link routes. From the Central Asian side, Scythians or Sakas (1st B.C-4th century A.D) made the first appearance in Northern Areas (Gilgit) and with that the Chilas route opened up for pilgrims and caravans (moving traders)¹², with extended connections upto Taxila and its neighborhood. Such connections further strengthened under the Kushans (1st-3rd century A.D). The King Kanishka (78-101 A.D.) organized military expeditions in Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang China) while using the Chilas route as is imaginable from Kushana coins¹³ and inscriptions found in Chilas, Hunza and one at Khalatse in Ladakh. The Chilas¹⁴ and Khalatse inscription are identified

after the name of VimaKadphises whereas the Hunza inscription is styled after the name of Kanishka and his successors¹⁵. These evidences show that Kanishka's rule extended over Chilas, Hunza and even upto Ladakh. Since the said rule was characteristic of enormous trade with the Central Asia, the gold retrieved from Chilas-Ladakh-Kargil region must have been a great contributor to the wide Kushana economy¹⁶. Such a link was further upgraded for travel by the Hunas after their occupation of Kashmir (4th century A.D) till the establishment of the native rule of the Karkotas (7th century A.D). The Hunas specialized in shooting arrows from the horse back. According to A.H. Dani, 'it is exactly this type of horse riders that we begin to get from the latter half of 5th century A.D. carved on the rocks throughout the entire Northern Areas of Pakistan from Kohistan to Karakoram and from Hindukush to Ladakh and Tibet. They can be seen at Shatial, in Chilas, in Gilgit, in Hunza, in Iskardu and on many rocks and by-roads along which their horses must have bruised their backs. They made a rapid advance throughout this region and clashed not only with the earlier KadariteKusanas of this country but also extended their power right to the Tibet and China.¹⁷

The successors of the Hunas, the Karkotas best maintained their neighborhood relations with Ladakh and Northern Areas of Pakistan under its founder ruler Durlabhavardhana (627-663 A.D). In the Chinese annals of the T'ang period, Durlabhavardhana was called as Tu-Lo-Pa¹⁸, he controlled the route from China to Ki-Pin (Kabul valley)¹⁹ around 627-49 A.D. After him, native Kashmiri kings, Chandrapida (711-19 A.D) and Lalitaditya (724-760 A.D) controlled the Karakoram region and the overland caravan (moving traders) routes from India to China²⁰ with the Chinese support against the growing Arab threat²¹. In the process Lalitaditya occupied Bhautta land inhabiting Ladakhis, Tibetans and the Dards. The development of various dialects in Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit and Kashmir show a close cultural, linguistic and political affinity between the Tibetan and Dardic peoples during the reign of King Lalitaditya.

The Muslim king of Kashmir Shihab-ud-din (1354-73 A.D) also held Gilgit, Dardistan, Baltistan and Ladakh as his domain. He built a big fort in Gilgit and in all probability took recourse to Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan route for onward military adventurism into Eastern and Western Turkistan²². But on his death, Kashmir lost control over Ladakh and Baltistan. Obviously, the traffic on the Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit route took a back seat. However, with Sultan Sikander's accession to power in Kashmir (1389-1413 A.D) these territories were re-annexed to Kashmir²³. His successor, Zain-ul - Abidin (1420-1470 A.D) further tightened Kashmir's control over the Gilgit region²⁴ while using Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit route for the purpose. The said route was evenly used by the Mughals for their extended military adventurism to Northern areas²⁵. The Mughal Emperors Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (1556-1605 A.D) and Jahangir (1605-1628 A.D) pursued the same route for trade with Ladakh, Baltistan and Tibet. In his memoir, Jahangir writes that "the best quality of raw wool for the Kashmiri shawls comes from Ladakh and Tibet²⁶." Even Maharaja Gulab Singh (1846-55 A.D) made extensive use of the said trade for territorial and financial gains²⁷. His military general, Zorawar

Singh, followed the Kargil-Iskardu road along Drass River, attacked and captured Baltistan²⁸. Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1855-1885 A.D) treaded the same route in the wake of his onward policy in Northern Areas including Ladakh²⁹. Indeed because of its strategic location, the Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit route was fully functional up to 1947 and was closed only with the Partition of India in 1947.

b) *Geographical Aspect*

The Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit route contained several settlements and villages enroute to Baltistan/Gilgit, Xinjiang China and Central Asia. One of the settlements was the village Hardas situated over the left bank of the Drass River in Kargil J&K³⁰. Being fertile, the village produced fruit trees that served as an important means of livelihood to its people³¹. The road followed the Drass River and after crossing a suspension bridge³² (now HarkaBahadur Bridge) near the junction of Drass and Suru rivers, about 3 kilometers short of Kargil town, reached Kharal village located on the left bank of Drass River³³. The entire path spread over sandy alluvium, rugged blocks of talus, and on the cliff washed at the base by River. Beyond Kharal at a distance of 10 miles was a small village Ganganie again located on the left bank of Drass River³⁴. In between Kharal and Ganganie was situated the “HundermanBahu” cave. Such caves were carved out of the rocky mountains and served as caravansarais (rest houses) for the travelers. Such sarais existed along the whole Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan road at Olding, Bagicha, Tolti and Parkutta. The Aziz Munshi Central Asian Museum of Kargil contains some reminiscences of the famous caravansarai³⁵. The road after passing “HundermanBahu” cave terminated at the pretty village of Bielargo which descended to River Drass and ascended over Olding, a hamlet³⁶ situated at the point of junction of the Drass River. After traversing a small level plain surrounded by a number of giant boulders resting on the upper edge of a very steep slope, the road had a series of ascents and descents along narrow precipitous and villageless ravine. The Olding village was followed by Tarkatta valley, 7800 feet above the sea. The lower part of the valley had a deep and narrow rocky ravine made of precipices of granite which after a certain distance terminated at a ridge³⁷. After leaving Tarkatta and Gidiakso, one reached the cliff called Bagicha, a hamlet³⁸ followed by Kharmang (Kartaksha), a small village located unlike above referred villages on the right bank of the Indus River³⁹. The road from Kartaksha to Tolti was situated on the right bank of the Indus. But some travellers opted for the left bank road to avoid the labour of crossing the Indus and re-crossing it again and again. From Kartaksha onwards was a road to Khapalu on the Shyok River. On it was the village Tolti on a stony ridge having a fatiguing ascent of more than 1,500 feet above the river. Beyond this ridge, the road abruptly descended amid precipitous rocks and a few villages scattered at intervals on the northern bank⁴⁰.

Ahead of Tolti was Parkuta on the left bank of Indus, a large village at an altitude of 7,870 feet⁴¹. The entire road between Tolti to Parkuta was characteristic of densely populated villages abounding with vegetation. However, on reaching village Urdi the cultivation contracted due to unfavorable soil composition⁴², nevertheless the road from

Parkuta to Gol is combined both of arable land and rocky cliffs⁴³. Near the village Gol the Leh-Iskardu road was connected with the Srinagar-Iskardu road⁴⁴ containing ups and downs along the Indus River.

Beyond Gol was situated village Kepchang, on the left bank of Indus and the whole road was entirely barren. Infact, Kepchang was only four miles away from Iskardu along a road that ran parallel to southern sector of the river and that housed few villages and hamlets. The Village Iskardu is situated on the left bank of Indus and is 113 miles from Kirkitchu in Kargil. It had a fort and about one hundred and fifty houses scattered towards the south of the river⁴⁵, stood on an alluvial plateau 150 feet above the sandy waste and was approached by long avenues of poplars⁴⁶. It was one of the richest valleys of Baltistan region⁴⁷. Iskardu held a very strategic location towards Ladakh in India on one side and Yarkand region in Xinjiang China on the other⁴⁸. There were two link roads between Iskardu and Gilgit⁴⁹, one via Astor and other through Rondu, both connected with Karakoram highway. The Astor Route along the Indus Valley was the direct route between Iskardu and Gilgit. Ahead of Stokehum, was the village Astor, on the remnant of an alluvial plateau, at a height of some 500 feet above the main river. This place used to be the seat of a Dard Raja, now a cantonment of Maharaja's troops the chief station for the Gilgit brigade⁵⁰.

Next to Astor were the villages of Harcho, Chikdas and Darkin, the latter was a reputed sight of archaeological importance. At Chikdas Astor River was crossed by a bridge towards Mushkin, a large forest area and thence Rondu village on foot. From here the road reached to Doian and further down into the Indus valley, it finally reached HattuPir about five miles away from Ramghat Bridge on ShaitanNala. Ramghat held great importance as it was the early line of communication between Gilgit and Astor though under the Sikhs (1819-46), the road followed the right bank of Astor River till it reached Bunji, then to Jaglot and finally Gilgit⁵¹.

c) *Economic Dynamics*

Kashmir was a junction where most of the ancient trade routes converged for various pursuits. Notwithstanding geographical and national boundaries, such connections thrived over the centuries together⁵² over various routes and sub-routes. One of the most frequently used route from Kashmir was the Kargil-Iskardu. Kargil was equidistant from Kashmir, Baltistan and Ladakh (Leh) hence it was named as Kar-kil meaning equal distance, which later on transformed into Kargil, a contributor to the grand Silk Route connecting India through J&K⁵³. Iskardu and Gilgit was equally an important link between Kashmir and India on the one hand and Xinjiang China and Central Asia on the other⁵⁴. It was as such a bustling centre for trade and commerce⁵⁵ besides a facilitator to the spread of Islam in Kashmir. Both regions, one each in J&K and PAK were intimately connected with each other across Karakoram and in that the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit and other trans-surface trade routes had a great role in shaping the life of the peoples settled along both sides of the Karakoram Mountains. Any disruption to such a trade had devastating effect on the concerned people evidenced by the decline of Kashmir's trade

with Western Central Asia being outcome of its occupation by Soviets in 1930⁵⁶ and that of the Tibetan region by the Chinese around the same period⁵⁷. This eventually caused considerable dislocation to the economy of Ladakh and Kargil.

Most of the people in Kargil acted as porters, though many of them, if not all, offered their horses for transportation of goods from one place to other. A horse in the process turned as a symbol of their social elevation because each head of pony earned around Rs. 800 per-month to its owner⁵⁸. However, in the event of economic disruption following decline in trade, the demand for labour and transport automatically declined. In that event they reverted to ploughing of the arable land which however, being stony, sandy and unfertile yielded only a single crop in a year. Because of agricultural insufficiency, the people of Kargil travelled long distance on foot to Kashmir and Iskardu in search of food and other necessities of life. During the process of outmigration few Baltis from Kharmang migrated and settled in Kargil before 1947 in a Mohalla presently known as “Balti Bazaar.” The bulk of them established shops in Kargil to make a living. However, their economy was badly affected due to Indo-Pak and Indo-Chinese wars in 1960s and 1970s.

The horses and ponies were in a way useful contributor to the economic sustenance and transportation. Usually the goods were lifted on the strong, well-patient, and sure-footed-beasts enduring all sorts of hardships⁵⁹. At least one-half of the Ladakhi ponies were imported from Yarkand⁶⁰, for transportation of goods into Central Asia⁶¹. However, the entire process registered a slight shock after the discovery of Sea Route⁶² and the political instability following Partition of Indian sub-continent and the eruption of rigid borders after 1947. Kashmir in itself had no direct access to the sea routes; it had nevertheless substantial trans-surface connections with Central Asian and Chinese world, which sequentially boosted her trade volume despite occasional periods of discomfort and decline. However, data about Kashmir and Central Asia trade volume is available from 1907-08 whence the quantum of imports from Central Asia was estimated at 1891 mounds⁶³ of goods worth the value of Rs. 18071 for whole valley embodying different routes. Despite the fact that merchandise entering Kashmir and vice versa were properly registered at several toll posts⁶⁴, the share of Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit route to the whole trade structure is difficult to determine in view of limited resource material.

d) *Commodity Structure*

Like other routes, the Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit road was round the year traversed by the caravans for transportation of goods between India and Central Asia over Kashmir via Kargil, Iskardu, Gilgit⁶⁵. The trade was of a varied nature and depended on law of supply and demand. However, the chief articles of trade remained unchanged for centuries together. In fact the legendary gold mines of the Mount Kailash, the world famous pashm (raw wool) of Changthang, the Chinese silk, tea, salt, borax and spices passing through the brittle tracks of Kargil, pre-empted many rulers to occupy Kargil for economic benefits, political leverage and regional influence. Kashmir imported a certain quantity of stone and jade, textile fabric, gunny bags, corals, turquoise, silver, steel and

iron utensils from Central Asia across the said route⁶⁶. The presence of remains of turquoise, bridal jewelry, hookahs of different types and shapes, silk, brocade clothes, caps and boots of distinct size, shape and value and pots and horse saddles in a privately owned Central Asian Museum at Kargil⁶⁷, give insights into commodity structure of the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit route. To be precise numerous caravans carrying exotic merchandise like silk, brocade, carpets, felts, tea, poppy, ivory and so forth halted at Kargil for their onward movement to China, Tibet, Yarkand and Kashmir. The traditional bazaars on the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit route were always housed by rarities from the neighboring countries, and such bazaars were functional even sometime after the closure of borders due to Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Chinese wars in 1960s and 1970s. In fact, Kargil was the epicenter of the aforesaid trade and the most preferred route by the Punjabis or lalas of Hoshiarpur for transportation of various commodities from India to Central Asia and these included the silk, saddles, boots, carpets, salt, wool, medicines, spices, cotton clothes, muslin, indigo, soaps, mirrors, combs⁶⁸.

The commodity structure of the above route included other sorts of agricultural produce⁶⁹ and to that effect Iskardu abounded with wood and orchards plentiful in grapes, melons, plums, apples, pears, mulberries and apricots of peculiar excellence especially when dried. Hardas village was famous for its apricots (Chuli) of which the plant seeds were imported from Iskardu⁷⁰. Apricots coloured with sulphur were exported to foreign countries like Kuwait and Dubai and former Soviet Union. They were processed for medicine to cure cancerous patients; hence, it had a great market demand⁷¹. Even large quantities of dried apricots were exported to Kashmir from Baltistan⁷². To quote E.F. Knight: "During my progress through Baltistan, was presented with apricot and mulberries in profusion at every halting place. Large groves of apricots surround every hamlet in this province, and the dried fruit is the principle export, the kabana (apricot) of Baltistan being famous in the entire neighboring region⁷³."

e) Trade Interdependence

The human civilizations had interdependence in diverse contours. Economic relationships among various societies were mainly determined by the law of supply and demand and political stability in a given space. The inherent human tendency was to monopolize and exploit economic resources for their own benefit. Accordingly, the exchange of goods was an integral part of people's social life in Kashmir and elsewhere. Different villages towns and cities were as such connected with Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit route to sustain regional interdependence and exchange commodities as per need and surplus.

The Hunza men sold peaches and apples in the bazaars of Gilgit⁷⁴. Furthermore, Gilgit alone produced woolen cloth and that too for self-consumption. Nevertheless, it had pre-eminence for being an important commercial centre on way from Kashmir to Kargil, Yarkand and Kashgar⁷⁵. Its Nagar town had practically no outlet except down the river Indus to Gilgit. With impassable mountains towards east and Great Rakapushi Range towards south, Nagar was dependent on Gilgit for weapons, cotton cloth, salt,

sugar etc; mostly produced in India and Turkestan⁷⁶. Large number of fine quality of flocks and herds were annually reared in Tangir and Darel for sale in the neighboring valleys⁷⁷. Some traders brought goods from Kashmir and the Punjab for sale in lieu of gold dust from Astor⁷⁸. Different villages around Bunji enroute to Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit sold their local produce in major towns of Gilgit to make their living⁷⁹.

Ladakh had no specialty nonetheless it had a strategic location for trade between Kashmir, India and Central Asia. A part of imports from India to Kashmir was meant for onward transmission to Central Asia via Ladakh or Gilgit. Likewise, the imports from various parts of Central Asia were transacted to India and Kashmir via Gilgit, Ladakh and Kargil. The shawl industry of Kashmir in particular depended upon the supply of wool not only from Ladakh and Tibet but also from Central Asia⁸⁰. Its dependence on Yarkand for the purpose was by an established convention and any violation thereof, was punishable with confiscation of the commodity⁸¹. Kashmir also exported ornamented shoes, tobacco, and saffron to Ladakh, Central Asia and China for trade⁸². It is interesting to note that Ladakh produced a special type of goat whose undercoat was woven to produce a Kashmiri pashmina⁸³. Salt was largely exported to Iskardu and in less degree to Kashmir and was exchanged for tobacco, grain, fruits and ponies⁸⁴. Tea was imported from China, Khotan, Ladakh, and British India⁸⁵. The goods exported from Kashmir to Central Asia were mostly luxurious and included saffron, shawls, carpets, cannabis, opium, bheng⁸⁶, clarified butter⁸⁷, and spices⁸⁸. The volume and range of silk exports was not that extensive as that of shawls⁸⁹: The latter had tremendous market in Persia and Russia.

f) Merchant Community

Trade and commerce was conducted on a large scale by a heterogeneous, community of merchants from different regions and ethnic backgrounds⁹⁰ the Russians British, Indian, Chinese (Manchus, Khitai, Tunganis)⁹¹, Badakshanis, Afghans, Kashmiris, Kanjuts, Baltis, Khokhandis, Bukharans, Kazakhs, Mongols, Armenians⁹², Iranians, Shirvanis, Tartars, Hindus and Central Asian Jews (of whom there was a large colony in Kokand)⁹³. Besides, there were the Yarkandis, Argons⁹⁴, Hindus from Kullu and Hoshiarpur and Muslims from Purig⁹⁵.

The merchant community that conducted trade between India and Central Asia across Kashmir, Kargil, Iskardu, Ladakh and Gilgit and Eastern Turkestan, was broadly fragmented into two groups, the “Andijanese⁹⁶” or “Kashmiris.⁹⁷” The Andijanese were those who traded at Kashgar which in first quarter of the 19th century was a bigger city than Bukhara and the Kashmiris were those who traded at Yarkand⁹⁸. The Andijanese also operated at Kokand, Tashkent and Bukhara though their role was considerably smaller at Tibet, Ladakh, Baltistan, Afghanistan and the Pamir countries where Badakshanis, Afghans, Baltis, Tibetans and Hindus, if not Jews or Russian Tartars, were certainly predominant⁹⁹. The Kokandis, Bukharans, Badakshanis and Kashmiris had trade cooperation with the *Begs*¹⁰⁰ (local chiefs) in Atishahr region. Since Kashmir bordered closely with Central Asia, its capital city, Srinagar, was the hub of trading activity for the Turkish, Tibetan, Ladakhi, Balti, Indian and Kashmiri merchants. These traders had rest

houses as well as religious Shrines in Kashmir. The community of Kashmiri merchants brought pashm (raw wool) to Srinagar, though a few Chinese and Tibetan¹⁰¹ traders termed Bakals who were also involved in the said trade¹⁰².

The ruling class to a certain extent had a good share in the trade structure of the region. The governor of Khotan traded in saffron, Kiryana, Kemkhabb and white silk¹⁰³. The Ladakh trade was exclusively conducted by the Urghuns in accordance with old custom; hence was not taxed as compared to the Kulu men and other merchants. They made advance payments to their agents for shawl wool, and at times held their own flocks of shawl-goat sheep which they grazed through the Tibetan herdsmen. The Kashmir looms mostly derived their wool supplies from this source¹⁰⁴. On the other hand, the Rajas or chieftains of Hunza, Yasin and Chitral, directly sold lots of slaves who had been held by them during war or loot to the Badakshan traders, and these slaves were of different ethnic backgrounds, the Gilgitis, Dards, Dogras, the Punjabis and Pathans. It is worth mentioning that one of the sources of survival of the aforementioned Rajas was derived from the periodic loot and plunder of the traders doing business on the Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit and other route. It was in this backdrop that Maharaja of Kashmir once sent a military expedition to punish the Raja of Yasin for having looted Kashmiri traders and their horses on way from Badakshan and Yasin to Kashmir¹⁰⁵. Whereas the Afghan governors dealt in with shawl trade¹⁰⁶, Maharaja of Kashmir held trade monopoly in food grains¹⁰⁷ shawls and pashm (raw wool) in the personal capacity. The Kashmiri merchants settled in Ladakh were obliged to provide a share from their earnings to the Maharaja from the trade of shawl wool in Chang-thang region. The long distance traders conducted their business through a number of service men employed for driving ponies and camels and loading and unloading necessary loads at different halting places. The Shammas, bold and enterprising as they were, under took long distances deep into Western Tibet and Gertse, which usually measured 700 kilometres covered in 11 months and 2 days from their residence in the Indus valley. They also made regular trading expeditions to Iskardu, Kargil and Srinagar, to them therefore, trade especially in pashm (raw wool) and salt was virtually a fulltime occupation¹⁰⁸.

g) State Policy

The state was by and large well disposed to promoting trade and commerce for boosting economy¹⁰⁹. Regardless of the border and other disputes, it largely offered safeguards to the traders and merchants through a number of measures¹¹⁰. Since the state consumed big chunk of Central Asian goods, it was therefore, seriously concerned about the fluctuating prices of goods in Indo-Central Asian trade¹¹¹. The state despite limited financial resources stimulated trade and commerce by constructing roads and bridges in different parts including Dardistan and Ladakh. Ladakh already linked with Kashmir by roads, was further hooked with Gilgit Agency through a road from Bunji to Iskardu built in 1893-94. In 1914 a new trade route from Leh to the Karakoram Pass was opened for traffic¹¹². Among the 26 passes¹¹³, Zojila (11,300 ft) was largely preferred by the traders for

onward connection with the most important trade routes one moving over to Kargil and onwards to Iskardu, Ladakh, Samarkand, Khutlan and Kashgar.

The state offered protection and encouraged local traders to go for export trade, and provided them tax exemption on exports. In 1891-92, the Kashmir Darbar (Dogras) provided incentives to the Kaliwal Indus valley men for trade between Kashmir and the Punjab. In 1885, Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1829-1885 A.D) of Kashmir, through a parwana (farman) exempted the traders from payment of octroi duties in Gilgit, though the unscrupulous officials unlawfully realized the same and forced the traders to sell their goods at lower prices than fixed by the Dogras. The merchants were evenly charged Rs 1.80 on each load of Indian or Kashmir merchandise at Gilgit. This was besides Rs 1.80 and Rs 1.00 charged per-load of exports in Yasin, Chitral, Hunza and Nagar respectively. In 1891-92, the merchants complained through the political agent to the state government against the aforesaid exactions of the state officials. As a deterrent, the Dogras appointed a Naib Wazir at Gilgit to ensure fair price of local produce and prevent under-rate sale of goods. The realization of aforesaid octroi duty on imports from Kashmir and India was reduced to Rs. 1.0.0 of course for a particular year. However, tax levied by the Puniyal Raja of Gakuch was left un-disturbed¹¹⁴. Similarly, the local governor of Rudok and Jungpen exempted the Kullu traders from the duties on the goods for their personal use¹¹⁵.

Likewise, the State patronage was visible in the construction of countless rest houses or sarais (rest-houses) in the far off and nearby villages towns and cities for the comfort and stay of general and caravan traders. In fact, sarais were an apparent sign of good government¹¹⁶. Kargil, centrally located for trade towards Iskardu, Suru Valley, Leh and Srinagar had a big sarai and a trade depot in the form of an inn where goods flowing in from different directions changed hands. Their structure being the same across the Srinagar-Iskardu-Gilgit and Leh-Iskardu routes, the sarais characterized an inn-cum-warehouse with rooms on the upper storey for accommodation of the merchants and storerooms in the ground floor besides pasturage for the horses¹¹⁷. The Baltis and the Kashmiri traders wearing regular dandies in long jackets and turbans stayed at Kargil sarai with their caravans of pack-horses. The sarais constructed at other major halting places contained provisions of food and forage for the horses looked after by an officer called British Joint Commissioner in Ladakh¹¹⁸. For the convenience of the Central Asian traders, Kashmir government built two sarais¹¹⁹ in Srinagar¹²⁰.

However, the passage of caravans hardly had a smooth sailing in the face of the organized robbers. For safety, the state as well as traders at times if not always, brokered deals with marauders or robbers. In some cases, the caravans were directly given protection by the state army. Despite this, while treading Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit and other routes they did not escape and in that event frequent raids from Kanjuties, the inhabitants of Hunza and Nagar, the State took recourse to military action¹²¹ to protect Kashmir-India-Central Asian traders at large.

h) Tax Structure

There was no uniform and well organized tariff or tax structure on imports and

exports before 1846. Like in Central Asia¹²² the right to trade on various routes was framed out in Ladakh. Thus, the tax on shops, brokers and traders in Ladakh was framed out to the tune of Rs 3,840 a year¹²³. In Gilgit, each incoming trader paid a duty (Masool) of one roll of cloth each load or two percent of live stock or the equivalent thereto in other goods. Money payments were made in gold-dust, a strong unit of payment. A special man called Burro was appointed to collect the dues¹²⁴. Like Ladakh nearly everything was brought under taxation. The usual method was to make all products a state monopoly and to farm out their monopoly to some contractor. Silk, saffron, violets, various kinds of forest products, hemp, tobacco, water-nuts and paper formed the subject of state monopoly¹²⁵. Accordingly each contractor paid fixed amount to the government against the duties collected from above products¹²⁶.

However, during the 19th-20th century a proper tax system was evolved not only in Central Asia¹²⁷ but in Jammu and Kashmir also. The Europeans were charged as much as 20% of the import duty on the value of their goods as compared to 5% charged from Hindu merchants and only 21/2% from the Muslim traders, thereby giving tough competition to the European traders in the trade structure of the region. The following table shows the rate of customs duty at the custom post of Zojila pass on the commodities imported from and exported to Central Asia:

Table-5¹²⁸

Imports from Central Asia into Kashmir and India

| Quantity in local units of Weight | Rate of custom duties | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| | Rs | Annas | Paisa |
| Per <i>maund</i> of white coloured shawl wool (<i>pashm</i>) | 15 | - | - |
| Per <i>maund</i> of black coloured shawl wool (<i>pashm</i>) | 12 | 8 | 2 |
| Per <i>trak</i> ¹²⁹ of wool | - | 4 | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of borax and sulphur | - | 6 | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of jade | 3 | - | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of crystal | 1 | 8 | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of dry fruits | 1 | 12 | - |
| Four and half <i>seer</i> ¹³⁰ of green tea | 4 | - | - |
| Four and half <i>seer</i> of black tea | 2 | - | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of fannelkhatan | - | 8 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of tea khatan | 1 | - | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of Zadoary | - | 8 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of YarkandiCorintha | 2 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of Momiren China | 3 | 8 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of rhubarb China (rawand) | 4 | 8 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of soda earth | 5 | - | 2 |
| Per <i>tola</i> ¹³¹ of gold dust | 1 | - | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> ¹³² of wollen sheets (Loi) | 6 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of <i>pashmina</i> sheets (Loi) | 7 | 8 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of TibetanPattu | 8 | 3 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of Tibetan Shawl | 1 | - | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of <i>pashmina</i> pattu | 1 | - | - |

| | | | |
|--|----|---|---|
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of Linen cloth of khatan | 2 | - | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of woolen cloth (Zangos) | 9 | 5 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of white woolen felts | 10 | 6 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of white <i>pashmina</i> felts | 1 | - | - |
| Per Sheep | 4 | - | - |
| Per rosary | 11 | 8 | - |
| Per String of pears | 12 | 8 | - |
| Per china cup | 13 | 3 | - |

Exports from Hindustan and Kashmir into Central Asia

| | | | |
|---|----|---|---|
| Per <i>trak</i> of bazazi (cotton, piece goods) | 6 | - | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of tabbacco | 14 | 5 | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of iron | 15 | 6 | - |
| Per <i>trak</i> of edible oil, clarified butter and butter | 16 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of blue indigo | 17 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of looking glass | 18 | 1 | 2 |
| Per <i>seer</i> of small cardamomas | 19 | 1 | 2 |
| Per <i>seer</i> of sugar | 20 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of almonds | 21 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of spices (turmeric, peepers, ginger, anise) | 22 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of tin and salammoniac | 23 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of kashmiri snuff | 24 | 1 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of pashawari snuff | 25 | - | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of cutlery (maniari) | 26 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of shalls (nakus) | 27 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of saffron (Ist. quality) | 28 | 8 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of zarda saffron (second quality) | 29 | 5 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of opium | 30 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of shoes | 31 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of shoe- slipper | 32 | 1 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of cream leathered shoes | 33 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>seer</i> of socks | 34 | 2 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of embroidered cloth | 1 | - | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of kimkhab | 4 | - | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of colouredpattu and coloured woolen sheets (loi) | 35 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of other skin | 36 | 4 | - |
| Per <i>tha'an</i> of European chintz | 37 | 1 | - |
| Per shawl | 2 | - | - |
| Per sword | 38 | 1 | 2 |
| Per musket | 39 | 8 | - |
| Per simple comb | 40 | - | 2 |
| Per coloured and designed comb | 41 | 1 | - |
| Per wooden box | - | 1 | - |
| Per quire of paper | - | 1 | - |

The above table reveals the contrasting figures of rates of duty on imports and exports. While the imports from Central Asia were predominated by non-agricultural products, level of taxes levied thereon was more and especially on wool imports from Ladakh and Central Asian countries. The shawl industry being lucrative enough, its manufacturing was dependent upon the supply of shawl wool from Central Asia¹³³. Realizing its importance, the State earned an annual revenue of thirty five lakhs of rupees from the said industry¹³⁴. On the contrary, the export mostly comprising of agricultural products of Kashmir had relatively less range of duties payable at the Zojila customs post. Precisely for this reason, the state revenue on imports was higher than the exports notwithstanding the greater bulk in the latter case¹³⁵. The highest range of revenue on exports amounted to Rs. 17,902 in 1909-10 and the whole lot of exports weighed 578 maunds in 1922-23¹³⁶.

The taxes imposed on the exports via Zojila pass onwards to Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit or Ladakh routes did not only include the goods produced in Kashmir but also those from different parts of India. To boost the trade along these Kargil-bound routes from Kashmir, the State government revised its taxation policy from time to time. A considerable income was thus generated from customs and octroi levied on the import-export trade¹³⁷.

Conclusion

The Kargil-Iskardu-Baltistan-Gilgit route has been an important outlet for Kashmir to Central Asia. It was on a junction where most of the ancient trade routes converged for different pursuits. Constituting a difficult geographical terrain, connections thrived over the centuries together¹³⁸ on this route. The route was an important contributor to the grand Silk Route connecting India through J&K to Iskardu¹³⁹, Gilgit and then onwards to Xinjiang China and further to Central Asia¹⁴⁰. The route passed through bustling Centres of trade and commerce¹⁴¹ besides proving to be a facilitator in the spread of various faiths in the region. Kargil-Iskardu-Gilgit along with many other trans-surface trade routes had a great role in shaping the life of the people settled along the two sides of the Karakoram Mountains and any disruption to such a trade had devastating effect on the people.

Notes & References

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15. See Dani, op. cit. (note 11).
16. See Dani, op. cit. (note 6).
17. See Dani, op. cit. (note 16)
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55. See Rizvi, op. cit. (note 32).
56. The whole of Central Asia had come under the establishment of Soviet power by 1930.
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63. A unit of weight equal to 37 kg/82 lb.
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86. See Bates, op. cit. (note 83).
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- also had an advantage in the trade with the Kazakhs, and the people of Ili and Tarbagatai regions:
The Cambridge History of China, Vol. X.
92. H.W. Bellow, *Kashmir and Kashgar: A Narrative of the Journey of the Embassy to Kashgar (1873-74)*(Delhi, 1989).
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 94. They were the descendant of Muslim traders of Yarkand and Kashgar and the local Ladakhi women with whom the former married and lived, during prolonged winters when the Karakoram pass would remain closed due to heavy snowfall. Mutah qualifies a man to marry with a lady of his choice for a stipulated period of time which varied between few hours to 100 years. The practice of Mutah obtained in Arabia as a process of ecological adaptation. The arid or semi-arid situation that existed in Arabia also existed in Kargil: See Rizvi, op. cit. (note 32). Drew believes that the Arghaun race developed due to the intermarriage of Kashmiri merchants with women of Ladakh: See Drew, op. cit. (note 53).
 95. See Arora, op. cit. (note 35).
 96. Andijan being the name of a city and of a region in the Farghana Valley area under Kokand's control.
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 117. See Rizvi, op. cit. (note 105).
 118. See Nazaroff, op. cit. (note 86).
 119. Kaksarai and Safa Kadalsarai were halting points for some of the caravans from Kargil, Leh as well as Yarkand.
 120. See Bamzai, op. cit. (note 31).
 121. Ataliq Ghazi sent punitive expedition against the plunderers of Hunza and Nagar in the Kanjut Valley, to punish them for their plundering tendencies and incessant and intricate difficulties they caused to the traders on the Yarkand-Kashmir route. Most of them including their chief were seized as slaves. Colonel Durand brought them to their knees and posted a British Commissioner to ensure smooth passage of caravans along the route in 20th century: See Knight, op. cit. (note 46).
 122. During 17th -18th century one such trade route connected the Sinkiang region with Kabul. The

right to trade on it was auctioned to the highest bidder against a lump sum amount paid to the King:
C. Wessels, *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia (1603-1721)* (New Delhi, 1921).

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127. See Cambridge History of China, *op. cit.* (note 96).
128. Dastural-amal-i-Kashmir, f. 117: See Dar, *op. cit.* (note 129).
129. One-sixteenth of a kharwar was designated as trak.
130. A unit of weight equal to one kilogram.
131. A unit of weight equal to 180 grains troy weight or 11.7 grams.
132. One roll of cloth.
133. See Bates, *op. cit.* (note 83).
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Revisiting the Archaeology of an Early Historic City

A Case Study of Semthan, Kashmir

Abdul Rashid Lone

Abstract

This paper primarily assesses the links between the Central Asian regions and Kashmir during the early historic period. Archaeology and textual sources are critically analysed to guess the magnitude of relations both regions shared during the time period under study. The Kushana and Indo-Greek sources speak of the paramount importance of these regions and the relations between the two. Semthan, an early historic site in Kashmir, is focus of the study. NBPW, Indo-Greek and Kushana remains were found at the site during the course of excavations. Besides from explorations, carried at the site by the author, many archaeological evidences of these ruling dynasties were found. Semthan survived as an urban hub and main trading post of these ruling powers in Kashmir.

Keywords

Kashmir, Archaeology, Early Historic Period, Kushanas, Indo-Greeks, Semthan, Archaeological Surveys

Introduction

There is considerable amount of source material available in Sanskrit, Pali, Arabic and Persian, in addition to the archaeological evidences, which throw a flood of light on the millennia old socio-cultural and economic relations between Central Asia and South Asia. At times, major portions of these regions formed a part of one political entity e.g. under the Kushana rulers and Mughal empire. Similarities, commonness and affinities between these regions could be visualized from many perspectives.

The cultural interaction between these regions could have been possible only through land routes. The most important highway connecting South Asia, including India and Kashmir, with the Central Asia, West Asia and East Asia was the Silk Road. Right from ancient and medieval times Kashmir was connected with these vast and distant land masses by a large network of main and conjunctive roads connecting Central Asia with India and China on the one hand and Europe and West Asia on the other (Ahmad, 1986:3). The Indian subcontinent was integrated into a long-distance trade network during the early historic period (third century BCE to fourth century CE) that linked the economic spheres of the Roman Mediterranean, the East African coast and South-East Asia (Smith, 2000:75). From early times, Kashmir was hooked to its Central Asian neighbourhood through regional, cultural, economic and political integration (Kaw, 2010).

The most important Empires among them, of which we have ample literary and archaeological evidences, were Indo-Greeks and Kushana rulers. The Kushana Empire was the dominant power of the Central Asia and Northern India from the 1st to 4th

century CE (Bracey, 2012:117). The imprint of their rule in Kashmir was brought to light by the excavations at many places which confirmed not only the coming of these ruling powers to Kashmir but a great deal else related to the nature of their rule.

Excavations at Semthan

An archeological discovery in this regard was the excavation at Semthan (33° 48' 202" N, 75° 05' 477" E) an early historic archaeological site in Bijbihara, Anantnag district in Kashmir. The site is located on the top of the loess karewa formation deposited by an ancient lake, at an altitude of 1646 masl on the left bank of the Jhelum river.

The credit for noticing the archaeological potential of Semthan for the first time goes to Georg Buhler (1837-1898) a renowned Indologist. In his detailed report of a tour in search of sanskrit manuscripts made in Kaśmîr, Rajputana and Central India which appeared in 1887 Buhler wrote:

I have only to mention one site which has escaped them (Cunningham and Cowie), as well as all other Kaśmîr travelers. This is the mound of Châkhdhar or Chakradhara, about a mile west from Bijbrör, the ancient Vijayēsvara . . . It is utterly destitute of vestiges of ruins. Nevertheless it once bore a town and an important fortress . . . Its identity with the old Chakradhara would be proved by the great number of ancient Kaśmirian, Scythian, and Kâbulî coins which are every year disinterred on the mound . . . more, and especially more valuable silver and gold coins, used to be found there. I recommend the place to the attention of archaeologists and numismatists (Buhler, 1877:18).

The archaeological material at Semthan and its correlations with the textual evidences of the Rajatarangini, which mentions present Semthan plateau as Chakradhara was first made by M. A. Stein in his translation of the text basing the identification on the closeness of Semthan to Bijbihara in geographic terms and the narration of the historic events by Kalhana involving both Chakradhara and also the Vijayesvara in close vicinity to each other (Stein, 1900:i.38,fn).

The archaeological remains in the shape of rubble and pebble stones, fired bricks, miniature terracotta figurines, pottery etc. can be seen scattered in huge quantities on the whole area presently bound by the Jhelum river on the east and north, by the Semthan village on the west and by new colony Bijbihara on the south. The whole area approximately 90 to 100 hectares with a perimeter of around 3.5 kilometres is dotted by pottery and other cultural materials. The most prominent archaeological features of site are a series of high and low archaeological mounds dotting this whole landscape. These mounds are locally known as Chakhdhar (1646 masl), Rajma Teng (1622 masl), Sona Khut (1595 masl) and Shushrum Nag (1612 masl).

The first systematic archaeological excavations at Semthan were conducted by R. S. Bisht of the Archaeological Survey of India who reported its results in Indian Archaeology- A Review 1980-81 (Mitra, 1983:21-24; 107-108; pl. XI, XII, XIII, IX). Here, for the first time, the actual cultural sequence at the site was confirmed. The excavators reached up to the natural soil at a depth of 10.2 metres (Gaur, 1987:327-337). A total of 35 successive floor levels were encountered which reflected six periods of cultural

occupation, ranging from the pre-NBP period up to the medieval times without any break (Gaur, 1987:329). From the references of these excavations the following cultural sequence of the occupation levels could be made (Gaur, 1987:327-337; Shali, 1993:111-121, 143, 214).

Period I- 'pre-NBP'; c. 700-500 BCE

Period II- 'NBPW'; c. 500-200 BCE

Period III- 'Indo-Greeks'; c. 200 BCE-1 CE

Period IV- 'Kushana-Huna'; c. 1 CE- 5th century CE

Period V- 'Hindu'; c. 5th century CE-13th century CE

Period VI- 'Late Medieval'; (post 13th century CE) onwards.

Semthan is the only archaeological site in Kashmir Valley from where Northern Black Polished Ware and Indo-Greek culture is reported from the stratified layers, though coins of some of the Indo-Greek rulers were explored throughout the Kashmir Valley (Lone, 2016:72). Excavations at the site, bridges the gap, in a manner of speaking, between the end of the megalithic phases of Gufkral and Burzahom and the beginning of the early historic period of Kashmir. The Site Catchment Analysis and systematic intensive archaeological surveys carried out at Semthan also brought to light the pottery traditions of Kushanas and Indo-Greeks in addition to coins, terracotta figurines etc. (Lone, 2019:90-104) These types of surveys provide data to enhance the understanding of local and regional economic patterns of the early historic period which in turn illustrates the social links maintained across landscapes (Smith, 2000:75).

The Indo-Greeks and Kushanas were the people who came from Central Asia and ruled India and Kashmir for some time. The above mentioned archaeological occupation layers at Semthan of these two ruling powers are briefly discussed in the following pages. The third phase of occupation at Semthan is termed as the Indo-Greek period. It commences from 200 BCE and continues up to the beginning of the first century of the Common Era. The occupational level at Semthan of this period is only 40 centimeters thick, marked by a series of successive floor levels. This period revealed well developed and sophisticated pottery unknown to Period I and Period II. This is a distinguished pottery of very thin fabric having a slip ranging from bright red to orange (Mitra, 1983:21) and pink (Shali, 2001:128; Gaur, 1987:331) in colour. It was characterized by the frequent use of functional devices like pinched lip, spout, handle and ring or pedestal base (Shali, 2001:128). The prominent shapes include goblets, earthen thali (pans) (Mitra, 1983:21; Agrawal, 1998:80) bowls (Agrawal, 1998:80) vases with out-turned and internally thickened rims and vessels with high necks (Shali, 1993:120).

Another significant discovery of this period is a potsherd with an inscription in five letters engraved below the rim portion or the neck of the pot on the external side [Mitra, 1983: Pl.XIII (A); Shali, 2001:128; 1993:120]. The inscription mentions 'dhamorai' or 'dharmo rajai', probably referring to Menander who visited Kashmir during this period (Shali, 1993:120). Shali dated this inscription to first century BCE, however, Lahiri (1992:270) places this inscription to 2nd century BCE. Besides, a small clay seal

depicting an Indo-Greek deity was also recovered from this level (Mittra, 1983:21). The excavators have identified this deity with the Greek god-Apollo (Gaur, 1987:331; Shali, 2001:128).

The most important discovery of this period are Indo-Greek coins (Mittra, 1983:21). These coins were collected from surface explorations at the site. Among the surface collections, coins of Menander were prominent besides that of copper issues of the rulers of Indo-Scythians and Indo-Parthians like Azis, Azilises and Abdages (Shali, 1993:120). A large number of terracotta human figurines also come from this level. Prominent among them is a human head with a serene facial expression (Shali, 1993:120). Period IV of occupation at Semthan has been labelled as 'Kushana-Huna' period having a cultural occupation of around five centuries starting from the beginning of the Common Era and continuing up to fifth century CE. This label is slightly problematic as it creates a lot of confusion in the minds of readers to distinguish between the two cultures. The preliminary excavation report does not make it clear where the Kushana phase of activity ends and at which point the occupation level of the Huna period begins. However, a reference is made to an early phase of occupation belonging to the Kushana period and last phase possessing cultural traits of Huna period. The excavators seem to have reached this distinction on the basis of variations in ceramic production. A radiocarbon date provided by a charcoal sample recovered from layer number 23 gives a date of 1780 ± 130 (170 CE) (Joshi, 1993:146). This phase of occupation is the most important period of activity at the site, as the occupational level is more than four meters thick, continuing from layer number 14 to 24 (Gaur, 1987:331, 329).

The Kushana-Huna period of occupation is directly resting on the cultural debris of the Indo-Greek period and has presented far more reliable data than the previous levels regarding the different phases of activity at the site. The pottery of this phase witnessed the continuation of the typology of the earlier periods with new additions (Mittra, 1983:21). Besides, two distinct phases of pottery production were also noticed in this period. The first series belonging to the Kushana period and the other is of the Huna lineage.

Phase I: The evidence of the Kushana pottery is strikingly significant in this phase. The fabric of this lot ranges from coarse to fine red ware and a distinct coarse grey ware (Gaur, 1987:331). The ingredients are profusely used in the medium or coarse wares (Shali, 1993:121). The fine red ware is coated with red slip (Shali, 2001:149). The shapes include bowls with incurved rims, vases with long vertical neck, inkpot like lids (Gaur, 1987:331), lid-cum-dish—internally hollow with out turned rims, jars of dull red ware with out-curved horizontally splayed out rims with a deep profile, pots with spherical body (Shali, 1993:121,122) and round base, wide mouthed incense burners and small wine cups (Shali, 2001:149). The decorations on some sherds are simple and varied from applique, incised to stamped designs (Shali, 1993:122).

The prominent antiquities of this period include

1. Beads made of terracotta, semiprecious stone (Mittra, 1983:23), bone, shell (Shali, 1993:122) and crystalline quartz (Gaur, 1987:333; Agrawal, 1998: 83),
2. Terracotta balls and wheels,

3. Clay seals and sealings bearing legends in Brahmi and Kharoshti scripts (Mittra, 1983:21; Shali, 1993:122). Seals were also collected from the ground survey (Mittra, 1983:22-23);
4. Copper and silver coins of Kushana rulers (Shali, 1993:122),
5. Large number of terracotta figurines (Mittra, 1983:21, pl. XII) of humans, animals and other miscellaneous objects, usually made out of single mould.
6. Copper and iron objects (Mittra, 1983:23).

This period also revealed the nature of the structural activity of Kushana period in Kashmir Valley of which parallels are found within and outside its geographical boundaries such as Gandhara (Shah 2013). The most interesting feature of the building activity was exposure of mud brick, rubble and diaper-pebble walls (Gaur, 1987:331) with associated floor levels—a significant representative of building activity of the Kushana period in Kashmir. Floors were paved with rubble stones. Terracotta brick tiles with faint motifs of a cross within a circle were also noticed (Gaur, 1987:331).

Phase II: The excavations had distinguished a separate phase of activity on the basis of structural and ceramic remains. This phase is generally known as the 'post Kushan' period or Huna period. There is a perceptible change visible in the settlement patterning during this phase. The structures include buildings of rubble stones without any mortar or cementing material (Shali, 1993:122). This change in structural activity, in the post Kushana period, in occupational deposits from diaper-rubble to rubble style of constructions was also seen at Harwan (Kak, 1933:105-111). The floors at Semthan were paved with small sized rubble stones (Shali, 1993:122).

The ceramics of this phase are also different from the previous phase of activity. Pottery is represented by bright red slipped ware (Gaur, 1987:331). The main shapes encountered are bowls having tapering sides and footed bases, variety of goblets with round bases (Shali, 2001:150) water vessels, basins with out-turned, internally thickened and sharpened rims (Shali, 1993:122) miniature and huge storage pots with spherical body and round bases and some moulded pottery (Gaur, 1987:331). This phase also yielded some terracotta figurines both of animals and humans (Shali, 1993:122). Prominent one is a terracotta human face that has some parallels in its style to the sculptures of the Gupta period of north Indian plains (Gaur, 1987:331). Besides, top most levels of this period yielded some coins of the Huna rulers (Gaur, 1987:331).

Since a range of materials pertaining to the Kushan period was found in the course of recent fieldwork, it would be useful to look at this phase in detail. Kushan period in Kashmir is distinctively known for its terracotta art (Shah 2014). The valley under prosperous rule of Kushan kings has seen growth of an independent school of art. Instead of stone as a popular material for the artists of Kushana period in the Indian subcontinent especially those related to the Gandhara school of art (Singh, 2009:462), the artists in Kashmir preferred clay as a popular medium of exhibiting their artistic flavours (Bandey, 2011:152). This is attested by the recovery of a large number of terracotta tiles (from a number of Buddhist/Kushana period sites) as also figurines of humans and animals (Gaur,

2002:368) as well as beads, skin rubbers, seals and miscellaneous objects. These art forms especially terracotta figurines bear Hellenistic influence. Gandhara school of art flourished between 1st and 5th century CE, it continued till 7th century CE in parts of Kashmir and Afghanistan (Singh, 2009:462). That is probably the reason behind the recovery of these terracotta figurines showing Hellenistic influence as exhibited from the excavations. The 'antiquity register' of year 1982 season of excavations lists the maximum number of these figurines from Period V at Semthan (Lone, 2016a:326).

The terracotta art flourished at Semthan as a major craft during the early historic period is also borne out by excavations at the site (Gaur, 2002). The antiquity register of year 1982 excavation lists a total number of 138 antiquities found during excavations at the site. Majority of them were found in proper contexts. Only a few of them are labeled as 'surface collection'. Out of 138 antiquities, 41 are terracotta objects including miniature figurines of humans and animals, beads, wheels, rings, seals, gamesmen, spout, pendant and skin rubber. Terracotta figurines of animals and human beings depict some Hellenistic influence in their execution and subject matter. The human figurines mostly female are 10 out of 41 followed by animal figurines which are 9 in total (Lone, 2016a:327).

The evidence is further authenticated by surface explorations at the site recently. Out of total number of 49 objects of different materials recovered, 23 are of terracotta. Among them, 11 are animal figurines, 10 are human figurines, one terracotta bead and one unidentified object. Moreover, 11 stamped terracotta pottery bases of bowls were also recovered (Lone, 2016a:255).

From the examination of material culture recovered from Semthan, one can argue that Kashmir developed at that stage an indigenous school of art in which terracotta or clay was already in vogue as a medium of artistic expression when it came under Kushan rule. The evidence seems favourable and convincing here. The early historic period in Kashmir was already set in a stage of urbanism before its conquest by Kushan Empire. There existed a local school of art of which expressions were mostly articulated in terracotta. The Hellenistic features were only an addition to these figurines by the artists who came from the Gandharan territories because of change in political power and patronage. The evidence is conclusive also in case of terracotta tiles. These tiles too exhibit a sense of evolution, in terms of surface treatment, from simple and plain tiles to most profusely decorated tiles at Harwan, Hutmura and Semthan. The argument that Taxila received this technique of making and paving their courtyards by terracotta tiles from Kashmir (Bandey, 1992:9) holds ground here. The evidence suggests that the relations between the Kashmir and Gandhara strengthened manifold after the conquest of Kashmir. As Gandhara region was ruled by foreign powers, the intermingling of these cultures in Kashmir resulted in such art forms having both regional manifestations and foreign influences (Shah 2017: 24). Such variations of influence in Semthan terracottas were also noticed by Siudmak (2013:32-57).

Lastly, Semthan excavations also provided evidences of sericulture and plane or chinar trees. From Period V, the remains of moras alba (white mulberry tree) and platanus

orientalis (plane or chinar tree) were recovered. *Moras alba* was cultivated in ancient China. It has no indigenous origin in India. Chinese silk technology reached as far west as Palmyra during Han Period, as 'one piece of silk, woven using Chinese technology,' was recovered at Palmyra (Liu, 2010:30-1). Semthan has produced earliest archaeological evidence of silk worm rearing or sericulture industry in Kashmir. Though its date of introduction is still a debate (Lone et al., 1993:155) its discovery in the archeological record at Semthan and subsequent scientific analysis suggests that it was introduced in Kashmir by the early medieval period. However, some scholars deny the presence of sericulture industry in India before the medieval times (Habib, 2008:8). Among other 'woolen textiles' found at Palmyra 'cashmere was definitely a product of Kashmir or some other high-land region in Central Asia' (Liu, 2010:30-31). The introduction of *platanus orientalis* in the Kashmir Valley, during this period is also noteworthy (Lone et al., 1990:389-391). It looks that Kashmiri products travelled as far as Roman world. 'The Romans used costus, bdellium, lyceum, and nard as spices, dyes, and medicines, and all came from plants grown in the high mountains of Kashmir and in the Himalayas' (Liu, 2010:38).

Conclusion

In conclusion, one can say that the archaeological evidences at Semthan are of tremendous value to study the history and archaeology of Kashmir region. The area has played a significant role throughout its history in different socio-religious, cultural and trading networks and has emerged as one of the successful and leading urban centres in the early historic period of Kashmir. The Rajatarangini is witness to the emergence of this place as a historic township. Two important cultures such as Northern Black Polished Ware and Indo-Greek culture are only reported from this place. Moreover, the systematic survey and Site Catchment Analysis, carried out at the site has added to its importance (Lone, 2019:90-104). However, little is known at present about the prehistory and early historic periods of this township.

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Astronomical Interpretation of a Palaeolithic Rock Carving Found at Sopore, Kashmir

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Abstract

We analyse a rock carving found in Bomai-Sopore, north of Kashmir, first reported by Yattoo (2005) and later described by him (2005; 2012; 2013). The details of the carving and comparison with the geographical features of the region show how several components of it agree with the local geophysical morphology. An interpretation of the carving based on comet shower and astronomy seems a very likely one for which some tests are to be conducted to check this interpretation.

Keywords

Archaeoastronomy, Bomai, Meteor, Rock Carving, Palaeolithic

Introduction

People in the past have used stone carvings and rock paintings to express themselves as well as to record their impressions of the real world, particularly from the Upper Palaeolithic times which generally speaking began around 40,000 years before present with the emergence of the Homo sapiens. There are certain situations when the art was also found in the late stages of the Middle Palaeolithic period also (Bednarik 1993: 37-38). Most of the times these are said to have been made to show the heightened passion of humans in search of food as mostly these have representations of hunting scenes. Amongst these are also found the symbols of sun or moon – the celestial bodies as in the carving in Kashmir. A stone carving found in Burzahom, Kashmir depicting a hunting scene has recently been interpreted as a recording of Supernova that happened about 7000 years before present (Joglekar et al., 2011). In the present paper, we suggest that the stone carving found in Sopore, Kashmir has likely astronomical origin. Considering that both the stone carvings (Burzahom and Bomai) were found within a distance of 70 km and, therefore, are indicative of a tradition of recording astronomical events in the region, even though both the events took place thousands of years from each other.

Stone carving

The rock carving was found near Bomai in Sopore area of Kashmir, about 70 km north east of Srinagar. Yattoo (2005; 2013) describes that the carving has multiple concentric circles distributed all over the scene which also has animal and human figures, including some masked ones (Figure 1 (a) and 1 (b)). The carving on the face of a mountain, at a height of 1664 masl and located at a place which overlooks the famous Wular Lake in its north east. The engraved area on the rock measures 1x1 meter and its left top points to the north west direction.



Figure 1(a) A stone carving at Sopore. The top left marks the North West direction.

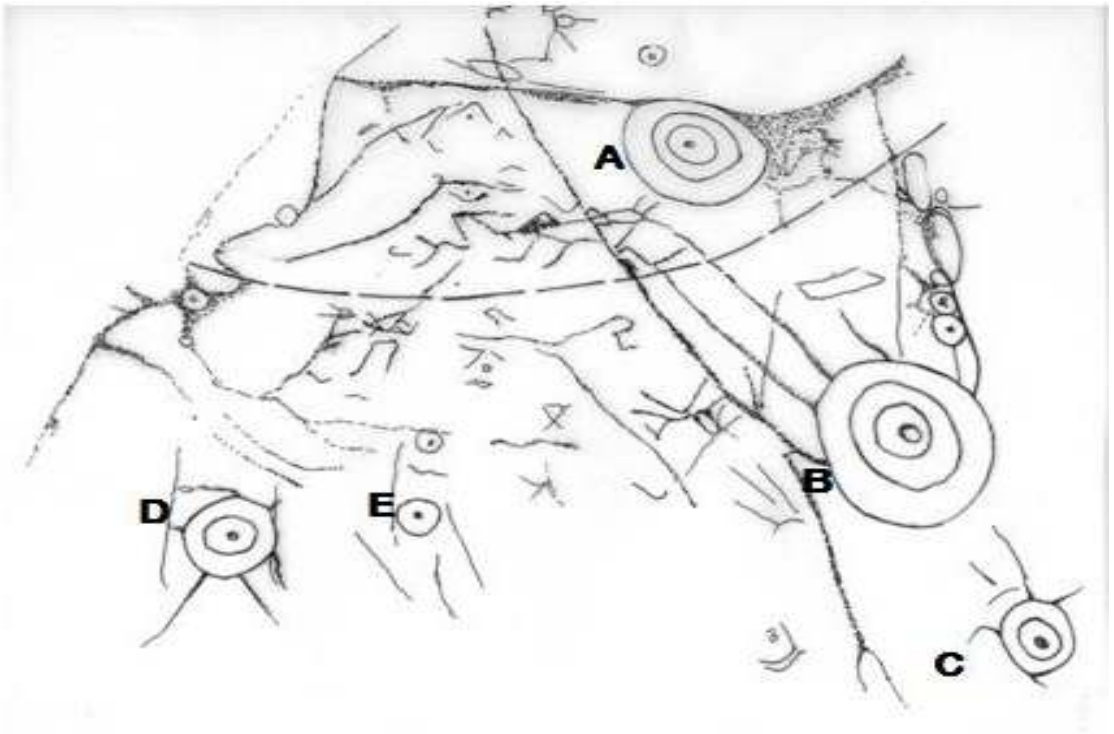


Figure 1 (b) Sketch of the rock carving by Mumtaz Yattoo, having 4 major circles marked A to D while E marks 2 smaller circles.



Figure 1(c): Superposition of the impression of the carving (1b) on the original stone carving (1a).

Given the studies conducted recently on the Burzahom carving (Joglekar et al., 2011) the scene portrayed on the Bomai, Sopore carving depicts an astronomical event. In that case the total scene depicts a comet impact sequence. There are several reasons to suggest this to be the case. We would like to emphasize that while the carving itself has been scaled; the relative size and location of all the components of it have been left unaltered. We list the reasons below:

- 1) There are multiple circles, all of concentric nature. This is typical of how bright objects are shown in stone carvings. In such carvings, the size of the circle is indicative of its brightness.
- 2) The circles are not drawn in any specific geometric or other pattern and appear random. The distributions of the size of circle also do not admit of any obvious pattern.
- 3) The largest circle (circle B in figure 1 b) has lines emanating from it only in one direction. (A close look at the stone carving indicates that the solo line shown in the sketch in opposite direction seems incorrect). Two other circles (C and D in figure 1 b) have only small lines in random directions. The number of lines coming out is small and seems to change directions. The lines for C seem to come from the same direction to that of B while those on D seem to come from either side. We suggest that this is an indication of the movement of the object or a light streak.

- 4) The rock carving is on the mountain and could not have moved since its make. Artefacts surrounding the site have been dated to the Upper Palaeolithic period and the region was also inhabited during the Neolithic period dated around 5,000 BP (Yattoo 2014; Spate et al 2017; Betts et al 2019).
- 5) The manner of location of the rock indicates that the objects originate in the sky in the North West direction and fall towards South East direction. The first, second and fourth largest rings are collinear in this direction. Two lines are drawn around the D and E rings. We assume that these lines indicate their path of motion. If so, all the paths seem to meet at the top of the rock.
- 6) The two horizontal lines on the carving coincides the line of flow of Jehlum River and the upper line coincides with the edge of mountain range from which the valley begins.
- 7) The location D most appropriately corresponds to the Nilenag, which is the source of River Dood Ganga located in the west of Srinagar. Nag in Kashmiri means a large or small spring and the larger ones are the sources of rivers like Verinag for river Jhelum, likewise Sheshnag for river Lidder. Such large nags are lake like as Sheshnag is a large water body forming a trough like formation as is the case with Nilenag.

The map is not a geographical map of lakes since there is no lake on the location of the circle marked D in figure 1b and the broken mountain seen in that region could not have been known to the ancients.

The carving is on a mountain close to the Sopor town. The whole region is in a foot-shaped plateau (figure 2). The height of various mountains at the edge of the plateau varies. The North West end of the plateau has an altitude of about 3000 m while the peaks on the South East are about 3500 meters. The valley of Kashmir is about 1700 meters above mean sea level and its length is 152 km and the width is about 40 km.

The astronomical observations reveal that the carving is that of a meteor shower that was witnessed some time between the Upper Palaeolithic and the Neolithic periods in the area (40,000 and 5,000 BP), and the artist/s must have found this spectacular astronomical event to record it on the rock. They would have found that a single piece of meteor splintered into several small pieces as it entered the atmosphere. The bigger pieces could have landed in full and, if so, these would have created crater pits and lakes. On the other hand, the carving cannot be a geographical map of the region since it requires a great leap of imagination (or access to a good map) to realise the complexity of the geography, which runs well over the horizon and is not visible from a single vantage point. Also, the relative geographical spread of the lakes is not directly related to the sizes of the circles but seems to correspond to the depth of a lake, a measure not available to the artists of the deep past. The event recorded seems to be significant since:

- 1) It is the only rock carving found in the area otherwise very rich in Palaeolithic and Neolithic sites.
- 2) The location of the rock is such as to indicate the backdrop of the seat of a 'high priest' with space for the 'subjects' at a lower level from which the carving would be clearly visible over the head of the a priest of normal height.



Figure 2 indicating Sopore town in Srinagar valley where the stone was found. Picture courtesy Google Earth.

In fact the morphology of the valley shows that there are located three lakes in the immediate vicinity of Sopore (figure 3a). These are the Wular Lake, which is the largest fresh water lake in the region and can be taken to have arisen from the topmost circle (A in figure 1 b). The second circle, (B in figure 1 b) would have formed the Mansbal Lake and the third circle (C in figure 1 b) could have formed the Dal Lake. Circle D in figure 1 b has no corresponding lake and it is possible that this rock hit a mountain and did not cause a lake formation. We suggest that being an example of early human rock carving, the sketch is not to scale. The human figures, therefore, are indicative of human presence and some shapes like an apparent crossroad to the West of rings B may be indicative of a human habitation. In figure 3b we superpose the carving of stone carving (1a) on the geography of the region.

The geographical location of the three lakes and their physical feature indicate that only the Mansbal Lake was formed because of the deep impact of the comet, while the rest of the lakes were formed because of the lesser impact of the splinters, as is revealed by the physiography given below and topography of the lakes given in the table.

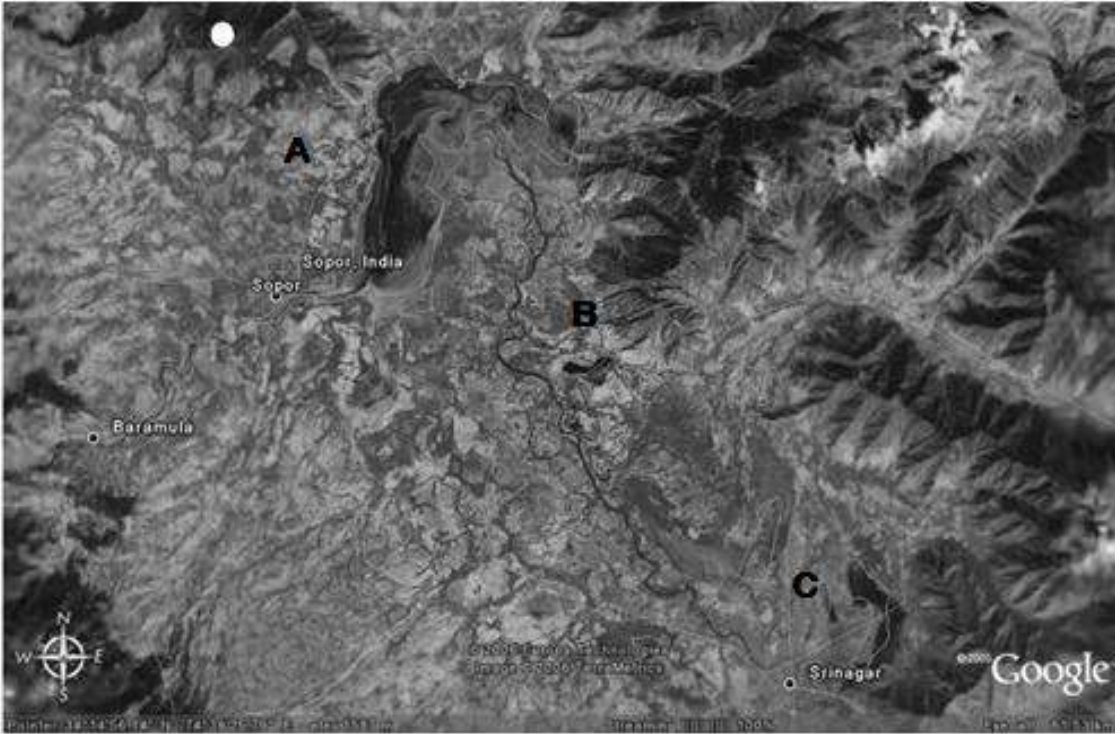


Figure 3a: Location of various lakes in the region. The largest Wular Lake is at the top. To the South East of it is the boomerang shaped Mansbal Lake. Close to Srinagar is the Dal Lake. All three are roughly collinear towards South East from the location of the stone, which is roughly on the hill on the top left region of the figure. The yellow circle on the top marks the location of the stone.

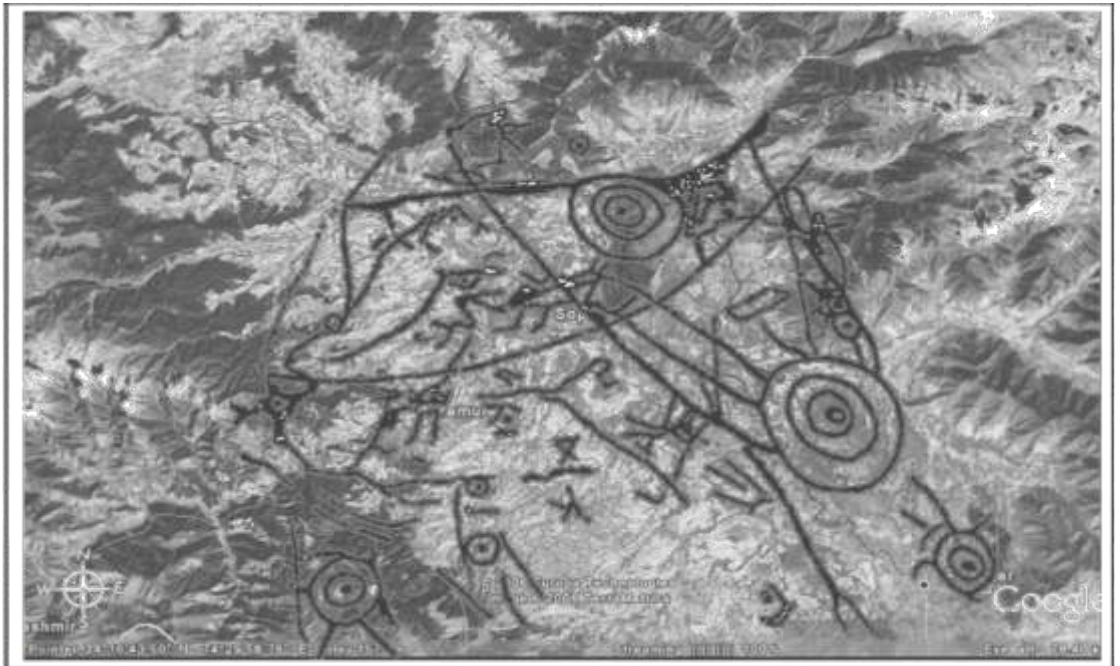


Figure 3b: Drawing of stone carving (figure 1b) superposed on the geographical layout of the region (figure 3a)

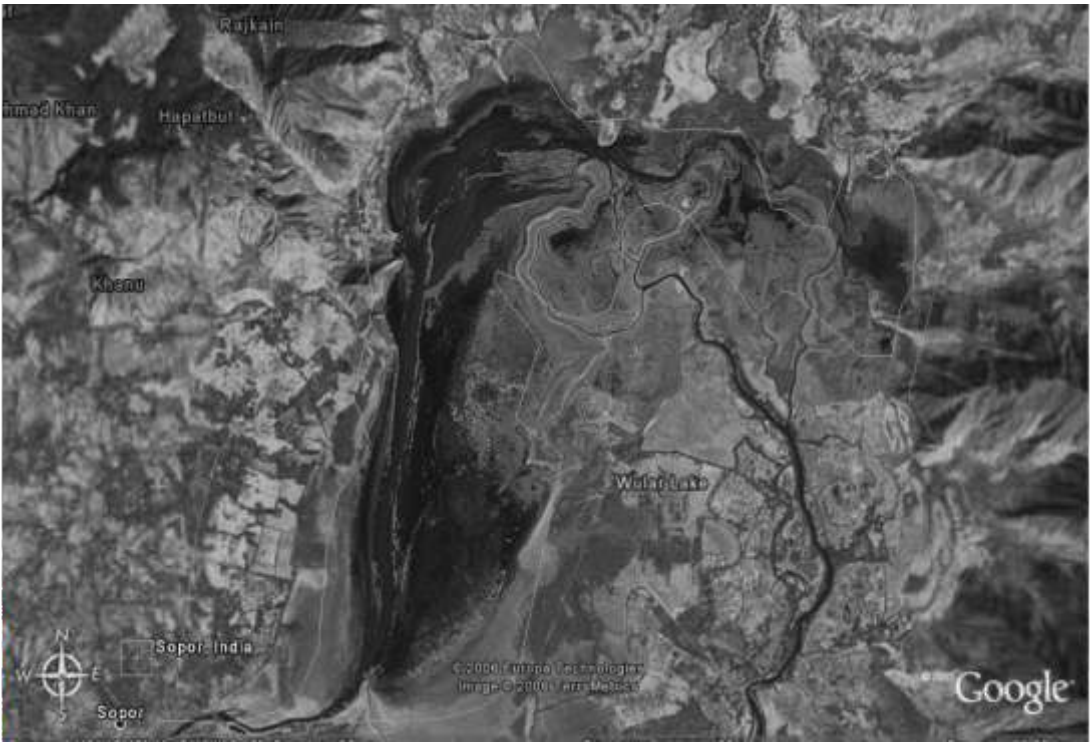


Figure 4: Wular Lake. The lake is very shallow and shows no mounts anywhere.



Figure 5 a. Top view of the Mansbal Lake. The dark colour indicates that it is a deep lake.



Figure 5 b. Mansbal Lake from the North West direction. A small mount formed in the South East of the lake is clearly visible.



Figure 6: Dal Lake and other lakes in its vicinity. The rock carving from North East direction indicates possible mount for the formation of Dal Lake. There are two small hills closer to Dal Lake but not very clear in the carving called Hari Parbat and Karala Sangari

Table 1: Lakes in the Srinagar valley

| Lake | Depth of lake meters max | Height of the mount (in meters) | Location | Comments |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Wular | 3.65 | No associated mountain | | lake is too shallow |
| Mansbal | 13 | 250 | South East 1.1 km away from point of steepest gradient | The hillock-Ahtung is used for limestone extraction. The eastern part is mainly mountainous and towards the north is an elevated plateau known as 'Karewa' consisting of lacustrine, fluvialite and loessic deposits. |
| Dal - Nugin | 6 | 100 | South East 1.67 km away from point of steepest gradient | The Dal lake comprises five basins and a myriad of inter-connecting channels. |
| Dal – (Bod) Hazratbal | 3.75 | | | About 4 km from the periphery of the entire Dal Lake conglomerate and South East from it, in the semicircular form is a mountain with a maximum height of 1.2 km from the lake. The mountain stands quite distinct from the general mountain range in the area. This may well be the towering mountain caused by the collective impact of several meteoritic pieces. |
| Dal – Gagrabal | 2.5 | 200 | South East 1.94 km away from the centre | |
| Dal – Lokut dal | 3 | 110 | South East 1.34 km away from centre Hill name is Karala Sangari | |
| Lonar lake | 35 | 100 | South East 0.6 km away from centre | The impact origin of this crater is clearly demonstrated by the presence of plagioclase that has been either converted into maskelynite or contains planar deformation features. Only shock metamorphism caused by a hypervelocity impact could either have transformed plagioclase into maskelynite or created PDFs in it. The impact origin of Lonar Crater is further substantiated by the presence of shatter cones; impact deformation of basalt layers comprising its rim; shocked breccia inside the crater Age 52,000 ± 6000 years. |

The physiography and geophysical situation of the lakes indicates that:

- 1) The whole Kashmir region extending from North of Sopore to South of Srinagar is in a foot shaped valley which is flatter at the narrow end North West of Sopore and sharply peaked south east of Srinagar.
- 2) The three main lakes in the valley are in straight line in South East direction
- 3) Mansbal is the deepest lake and it has a pronounced peak of a meteor impact. This indicates that the largest stone (circle B in figure 1b) fell in Mansbal.
- 4) Dal and Wular are very shallow lakes and Wular seems to have two shallow lakes connected together. It has no clearly rising impact mountain. If such mountains had formed, it may have been dissolved since they must have been too small.
- 5) Dal is formed of 3 lakes of which the northern most Bod Dal is the deepest. For Dal Lake, Hari Parbat and the Karala Sangari are consistent with the impact direction. Alternately, the huge mountain behind the lake itself could be the mount created by the meteor. The first two mounts seem to have acceptable height and correct direction.
- 6) In none of the cases are there the three mountains in the opposite direction.
- 7) There are several small water bodies, all consistent with multiple fragments especially the fragments E shown in figure 1b.
- 8) If the assumptions made here are correct, then the top hooded character in figure 1b roughly marks the site of the stone relative to the lakes.
- 9) The horizontal curved line could indicate the river running from the Wular Lake to the West.
- 10) Morphology of the region around Baramulla is consistent with a meteor hitting the mountains at Baramulla. The area where Jehlum leaves from the Valley (marked Azad Kashmir in figure 2) the mountains, the rocks and soils are loose and are very ductile. They differ in this respect with other mountains. The mountains are famous quarrying sites particularly the soil of these mountains for levelling roads, etc.
- 11) We disregard the possibility that this is a geographical map by the fact that the circles D in figure 1b does not correspond to a lake but a destroyed mountain, a fact that the ancient artists could not have known.

All this seems consistent with the impact crater idea. What is not consistent is that there is no lake or pronounced impact area corresponding to the circle D in the bottom left in the carving.

In order to verify this, the following things need to be done:

- 1) Confirm that all the three lakes were formed at the same time, most probably around 30,000 + 10,000 BC, but relatively within 1 year of each other and after the Prehistoric Valley Lake was drained around 85,000 years ago that was c. 1.2 kms deep.
- 2) The angle of the lake cone and its height to distance of the deepest part of the lake should be the same within errors.
- 3) If the cones of the lake shape are extrapolated back, they should roughly meet in a point.

- 4) The relative angular separation of the various lake angles should be similar to the angles of separation of the circles on stones.
- 5) It may also be useful to study soil samples from the proposed mountains and the lake beds. The lakebed will have different composition than other parts of the valley.
- 6) If the meteor D in figure 1 b hit a mountain then there should be some signs of it. A mountain of loose rocks or at least some loose rock on mountains surrounding the place where we suspect the fourth piece had hit the ground should be present. These rocks will have a different morphology from the mountain itself indicating that they were thrown there later rather than being a part of the original mountain.

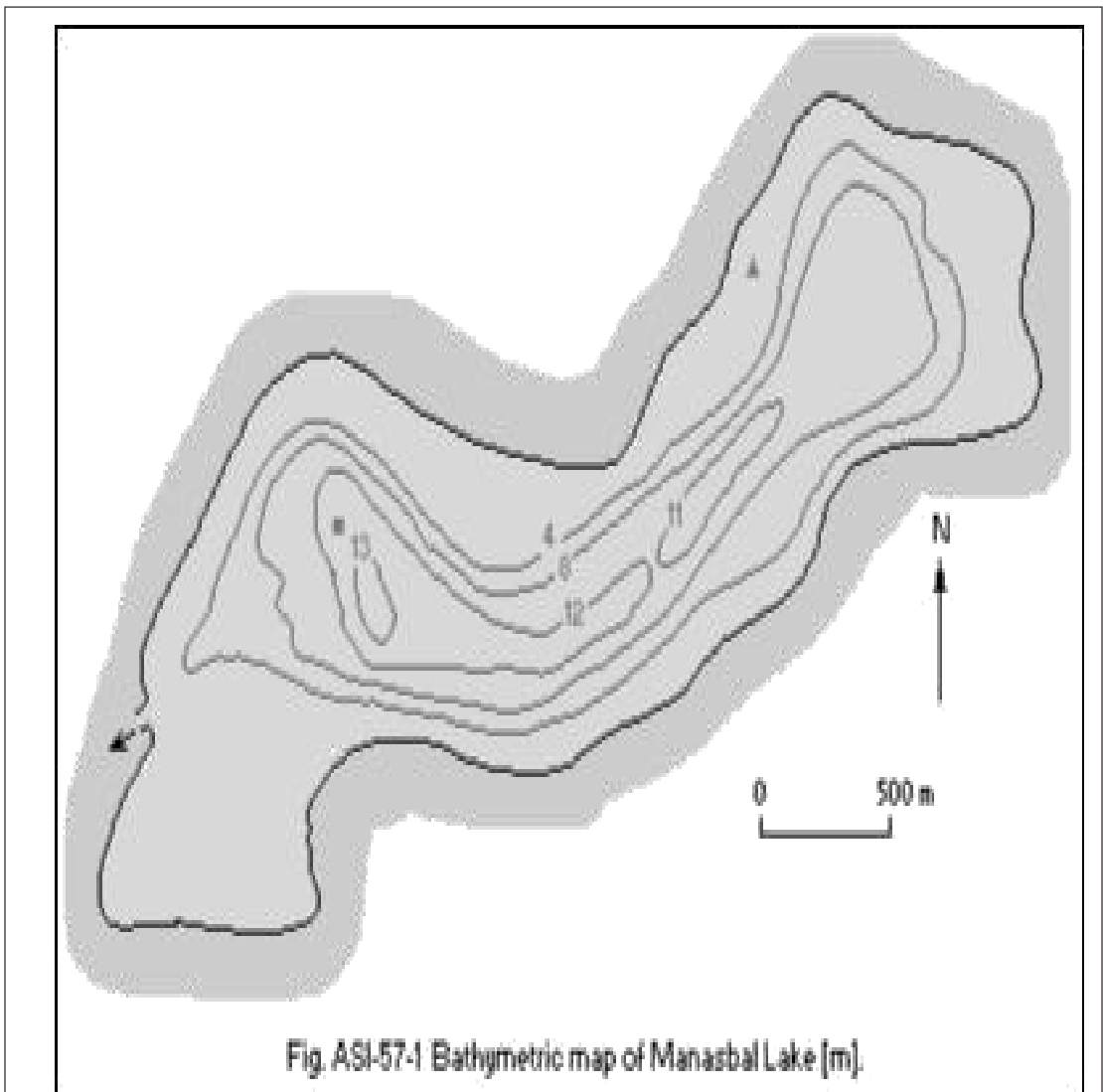


Figure 7: Bathymetric map of Manasbal Lake. <http://www.ilec.or.jp/database/asi/asi57-01.gif>

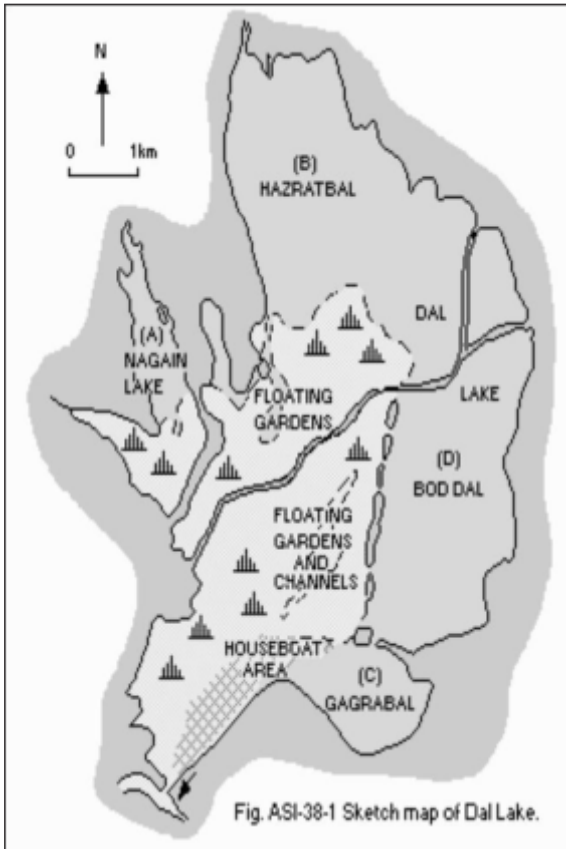


Figure 8a: Sketch map of Dal Lake along with its constituent lakes. Available at: <http://www.ilec.or.jp/database/asi/asi38-01.gif>

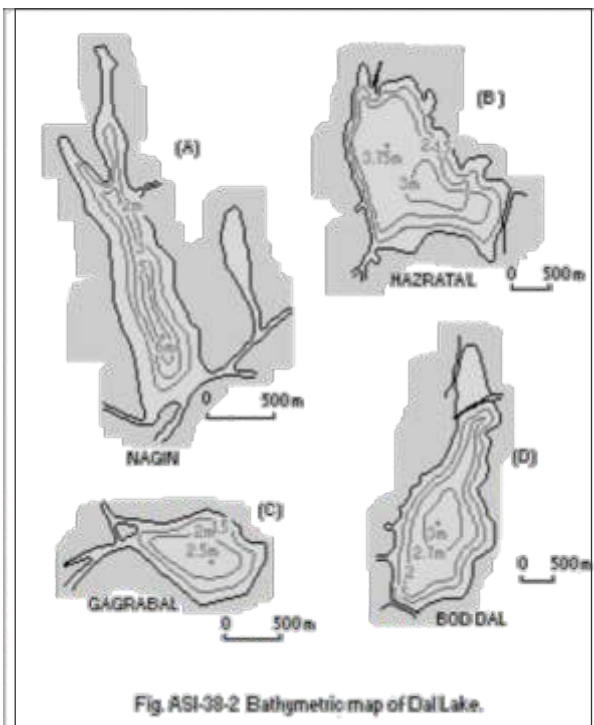


Figure 8b: Bathymetric map of Dal Lake and its constituents. Available at: <http://www.ilec.or.jp/database/asi/asi38-02.gif>

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Framing Archaeological Context and Landscape, Jehlum Basin, Baramulla, Jammu & Kashmir

Mohammad Ajmal Shah

Abstract

The Baramulla region figures in ancient literary texts as one of the major hubs of cultural activity. The area in the past had numerous routes connecting Kashmir valley to the outside world. Jehlum being one of the main transportation routes connected major towns of Kashmir valley with this region. The landscape has a deep imprint on the cultural heritage of the Kashmir valley. The rise and decline of many towns from the Kushan period till the 13th century AD can still be seen dotted in the landscape around the peripheries of this zone. These structures are mostly located around the banks of the Jehlum basin and have represented Kashmir's cultural identity through the vicissitudes of time. This paper makes an attempt to frame archaeological sites within the cultural landscape of Baramulla of which the imprints are still visible in the form of structural evidence as well as folklore.

Keywords

Landscape, Archaeology, Jehlum, Baramulla, Kashmir

Introduction

Baramulla district comprises the north western part of the Kashmir valley and is bounded by Kupwara and Bandipora districts in north-west and north-east and Srinagar and Budgam districts in east and south-east. The lofty Pir panjal ranges separate it from Jammu region in south and south-west. Baramulla district holds significant importance as the lake waters of Satisar (a legend of historical importance recorded in ancient manuscripts and travelogues) drained from this place leading to the origin and formation of Kashmir valley, (Beal 1884/1906, Kanji 1924, Khuihami 1954, Stein 1961, Kumari 1968/1973, Agrawal 2011). This legend has been scientifically observed (Vigne 1842, Austin 1861, Drew 1875, Lydekker 1878, 1883, Middlemiss 1911, 1924, Grilinton 1928, De Terra and Paterson 1939, Wadia 1934, 1944, Farooqi and Desai 1974, Bhatt 1975, Roy 1975, and Williams and Royce, 1982), and found to be accurate having great bearing on historical, archaeological, geographical and geological past of Kashmir. It has been observed that due to the certain geological changes, the depression was caused in between the Himalayan and Pir Panjal mountain ranges (De Terra and Paterson 1939, Agrawal 1985). Furthermore, due to frequent tectonic movements certain environmental changes occurred altering the drainage pattern and causing the huge lake formation. Drew (1875) estimates, at one period of its existence this lake must have reached a level nearly 2,000 feet above the present level of the valley. It was due to the desiccation process that the sediments left over formed the pattern of the karewas and were used as habitation purposes starting at least from Neolithic till historical times. During the early centuries of the Christian era, Baramulla district emerged as a township mentioned by Kalhana (Stein

1961) and Hieun Tsang (Beal 1884/1906) as well as recorded through archaeological excavations (ASIAR 1915-16: 62; ASIAR 1916-17: 12-13, Mani 2000). The physical landscape of Baramulla has shaped the cultural beginnings in the region, impacting people, their identity, heritage and culture. It is against this backdrop the present paper discusses briefly the Palaeolithic and Neolithic implications in the area and the settlement patterns during the early historic times till the Karkotta period. These are further analysed in relation to the changing patterns of the landscape due to the frequent earthquakes and floods in the region and the majors taken during such natural calamities around the Jehlum basin. Above all, it will be argued that the city of Kanishkapur built by Kushan king Kanishka is located in Baramulla, Kashmir rather than in Peshawar, Pakistan as identified by some scholars.

The Landscape and Archaeology

The history of the Baramulla region starts with the description of the above mentioned legend in many ancient texts of the valley. The modern Baramulla town lies on the both banks of the river Jehlum, while as the ancient town known as Varahmul stood on the left bank only, at least since early historic times, when the town of Huskapur was built by Huvishka- a Kushan King. The name Varahmul is derived from ancient Tirtha of Visnu Adi-Varaha, which Stein (1961, II: 482-83) locates in west of Baramulla, on the basis of description in Nilamatapurana and Rajatarangini. Kalhana also refers Varahmul as Varahaksetra (Stein 1961, I: 251, 253). We are here not confined to town only but will refer to modern district of Baramulla, its environs, foundations and vicissitudes through time till 10th century AD.

Many Prehistoric archaeological sites have been reported from Baramulla and Bandipora districts (See, Map.1). The discovery of the site depicting rock art at Bomai Sopore in Baramulla district on the North-Western shore of the Wullar Lake has shown that the region came under habitation during the Palaeolithic period (Bandey 2003, 2009, Yattoo 2005, Iqbal et al., 2008, 2009). At another nearby site Palaeolithic tools have been discovered in caves around the northern ridge of the Manasbal Lake in Ganderbal district (Bandey 1997, 2009). Two polished stone axes of the Neolithic period were discovered during an exploration at Turukpora (now in Bandipora district). These axes were abnormally long (51-52cms), polished, ground pecked and have unifacially levelled cutting edges (IAR 1984-85: 23-24). Recently, the discovery of a cave at upper reaches of Turukpora facing the Northern shore of the Wullar Lake, with decorated walls of hand prints and hand stencils (Fig. 1), could be one of the important sites in the region¹ (Shah 2012).2004: 142, Mani 2008: 236), which pre-dates Burzahom 2881 BCE, (Poshell 1993: 20) and Gufkral 2347 BCE, (Poshell 1993: 31) aceramic levels. This dating of the aceramic levels² at Kanisapur has even speculated that people inhabited Burzahom and Gufkral have migrated from north-west Kashmir to central and further to south-eastern part of Kashmir valley. With this fresh data from the north and north-west Kashmir, it becomes plausible to infer that the earliest migrations into the Kashmir valley had started from this region and eventually populated the whole Kashmir valley, which is true even in

the early historic times when Saka, Scythian and Kushan migrations took place through the routes of northern Kashmir³, once used by Palaeolithic and Neolithic peoples of Central Asian Steppes (Dikshit¹⁹⁸², Neelis²⁰⁰⁷). After the end of the Neolithic period at Kanispur no continuity of the cultural settlements of megalithic period has been reported. The cultural period which succeeds the Neolithic period at Kanispur is the early historic burned charcoal layer calibrated to ⁷⁶²⁻⁴⁰⁰ BCE (Mani²⁰⁰⁴: 143), on which the Kushan settlement came up after few centuries. Thus hiatus marks the absence of the megalithic culture⁴ in the north and north-western Kashmir reasons remaining to be obscure due to the nominal scientific work. One reason which must be understood is the probable rise of the water level due to the blockage of the river Jehlum between the end of the Neolithic period till at least ⁸⁰⁰ BCE. This recurring phenomena of ecological disaster has been given due place in many ancient literary works of Kashmir as well. The earthquake of the 9th century AD caused heavy floods which resulted in an extensive dredging operations and the shifting course of river Jehlum during King Avantivarman's rule (⁸⁶⁵⁻⁸⁸³ AD) in Kashmir. It has been estimated that flood waters would have taken two years to fill the entire valley till Anantnag district in South Kashmir according to the 20th century discharge statistics (Bilham and Bali²⁰¹³). Similar event occurred in 1885, which triggered landslides in the lower Jehlum area beyond Baramulla causing the blockade on the ancient cart road but did not dam the Jehlum (Jones¹⁸⁸⁵), probably due to low magnitude of the earthquake. During the devastating 8 October 2005, earthquake in the area of which the epicentre was at Muzaffarabad (now in Pakistan), ancient gorge through which the Jehlum passes was almost filled by the huge boulders and the debris of the mountains causing the half choking of the river canal, helps us to understand the ancient events of the much larger magnitude which could have exactly caused the water to push back and fill the whole valley floor looking like a vast lake⁵. This phenomena occurred frequently can be explained through the spatial distribution of the habitation sites across Kashmir valley, as very few sites have been located on the valley floor from Palaeolithic till the 10th - 11th c. AD. For this period the Karewas (raised plateaus of stratified deposits formed of beds of fine-grained sand, loam and blue sandy clay with gravel conglomerate) were the main areas of human habitation can be understood by the archaeological discoveries on these raised plateau sites.

During the early historic period (Indo-Greek, Sakas, Scythians) the ancient vast lake under which Kashmir was submerged for a long time was not fully desiccated⁶ till the arrival of the Kushans can be gleaned by the fact that they continued to occupy the karewa



Map.1: Important prehistoric sites in Baramulla and Bandipora districts.



Fig.1: Hand print on the cave wall at Turukpora, Bandipora.

land once inhabited by the Neolithic people as borne out by excavations at Kanispur, Ushkur (Huin) and Semthan. The spatial distribution of all these sites along the river Jehlum and its tributaries has grown considerably with time. From the Neolithic period till the Early Historic times the growth of human settlements along the river Jehlum is an established fact. There are only 43 reported sites of Neolithic period in Kashmir valley, while as during the Kushan period Baramulla alone has almost 50 sites (See, Map.2).



Map.2: Location of the Kushan sites in Baramulla and Bandipora districts.



Map.3: Google image showing the Karewa stretch from Kanispur to Ushkur, with important archaeological sites.

Kushans entered Kashmir through the northern route of Gilgit via Gurez valley in Bandipora district. The coins of Kujala Kadphises found in Turukpora in Bandipora further establish this fact (IAR 1984-85: 144). It was from here that Kushans moved towards Baramulla district as it connected them with the rich and prosperous regions of Gandhara and Mathura. It was on this route Hazara, Taxila and other Kushan sites were located. Kalhana (RT, I: 168-169) mentions four important towns built by Kushan kings in Kashmir valley. He credits Huska with Huskapura, Juska with Juskapura and Jayasvamipura and Kanishka with Kanishkapura. Among these towns Huskapur and Kanishkapur were confirmed through archaeological investigations on the left bank of the Jehlum on Karewa deposits stretching from the modern Kanispur till modern Ushkur or Wushkur in Baramulla town (Map.3). This Karewa known as Rajteng in Kanispur is nearly 100 meter in height from the surrounding ground level. The excavation at the site has revealed an extensive Kushan settlement spanning from 1st – 4th c. AD, at different locations on the Karewa (Mani 2000). Around the Karewa are located many Neolithic, Kushan and late historical sites. Towards the south-east of the Karewa and about 5 kilometres from Kanispur is located another town of Huskapur (modern Wushkur) built by Huska as mentioned in Rajatarangini. Further south-east from Ushkur Karewa are located important ancient settlements of Huin (Kushan and Neolithic), Malpore, and Fatehgarh, which has revealed Kushan pottery and artefacts belonging to later periods. The only present structure at Ushkur is a stupa (Fig.2)



Fig.2: Stupa built by Lalitaditya at Wushkur, Baramulla, 8th century AD.

built during Lalitaditya's period. Ushkur was a flourishing town during Kushan times owing to its location on the principle trade route (see, Kak 1933). Hieun Tsang stayed at Ushkur for a night after entering stone gates and visited many viharas and monasteries in and around Ushkur (Beal 1888: 68).

Among other two cities founded by Juska and mentioned by Kalhana one has been located by Cunnigham (1924: 116) at Zukur in Srinagar (without any significant archaeological remains of the Kushan period), while as the other city of Jayasvamipura has not been identified. It seems reasonable to search for these towns within the vicinity of other two towns (Kaniskapur and Uskur) in Baramulla rather than in Srinagar, which has revealed very few sites of the Kushan period. Within the Kashmir valley Kushans spread from Baramulla district to Central and Southern Kashmir can be understood through the study of the material culture. The only site of Harwan in Srinagar district has revealed the developed phase of Kushan period. Same can be said about the Kushan sites in South Kashmir on Jehlum River or its tributary (Lidder River) in Pahalgam (Shah and B. R. Mani 2013). All these sites have provided evidence of developed phase of terracotta tiles than found in the Baramulla district, makes them of late date. It again confirms the similar migration pattern within the Kashmir valley during the Kushan period as found from the dated samples from Neolithic Kanisapur in comparison with Burzahom and Gufkral.

The absence of Kushan sites from the confluence of the river Jehlum with river Sindh at Shadipore in Bandipora district till it meets Wullar lake has given rise to an interesting hypothesis. The fact is that from Shadipore, Jehlum was flowing towards the west direction around the peripheries of Parihaspora in Pattan and further moving towards Baramulla district in south-west direction till the Avantivarman's period. This was the reason the most important towns like Pratapapura (modern Tapar in Pattan, built by Pratapaditya II-650- 700 AD?) and Parihaspora (Fig.3) and other important sites flourished on the then basin of the river Jehlum during the Karkotta period. The early historic pottery of the Kushan period has also been recovered from the present Karewa of Parihaspora suggesting that the site was first occupied during the Kushan period⁷, must have been situated on the Jehlum basin⁸. Due to the frequent floods in Kashmir the



Fig.3: Stupa at Parihaspora built by Lalitaditya, 8th century AD.



Map.4: Important town sites in Baramulla in relation with old (approx) and new course of river Jehlum (100 AD to 1000 AD).

dredging operations were started in the river Jehlum during the Avantivarman's rule causing the shift in the course of river from Parihaspora to modern Shadipore- a stretch of three miles. Hence, the land around Parihaspora lost its importance resulting in the decline of the town founded by king Lalitadityya⁹ (699-736 AD), while as the another town emerged on the river Jehlum in and around Sumbal, which Kalhana refers as Andarkot¹⁰ founded during the time of king Jayapida (751-782 AD) (for location see, Map.4). It is noteworthy that Kalhana (Stein 1961, I: 195) gives Lalitadityya credit for managing the flooded areas around Wullar, is an important reference, which has not been given due attention by scholars. Kalhana even mentions that after the Jayapida's rule the country was again submerged due to the disastrous floods (Stein 1961, I: 195), explains that between the reigns of Jayapida and Avantivarman (782-855 AD), Kashmir was again subject to heavy floods. Jayapida's own reign was not spared from the floods can be deduced from a verse of Kalhana (Stein 1961, I: 167), when he mentions about the filling of the vast lake for the foundation of his new town at Andarkot. It seems owing to the frequent floods in the area, which could have even engulfed capital town of Parihaspora, Jayapida founded his town on a much raised plateau at Andarkot. Otherwise it does not make sense for a ruler like Jayapida to establish a new town (Fig. 4) within the vicinity of his grandfather's great town of Parihaspora (Map.5), which he inherited. The reason for the



Fig.4: Architectural fragments at Andarkot founded by Jayapida, 8th century AD.



Map.5: Google map showing different structures at town of Parihaspora.

establishment of a new town is the reference of Kalhana (Stein 1961, I: 158) to Vajraditya (son of Lalitadityya), who withdrew from Parihaspora many foundations (endowments), might have contributed to the decline of the town. Kalhana (Stein 1961, I: 206-207) alludes to the fact, that building material from Parihaspora was taken away for the foundations of a new town of Samkarapura by Samkaravarman (883-902 AD), which he refers has lost appellation and to be known as Pattana (the town), in the later part of history (Stein 1961, I: 213). The Shankaragaurisvara (Fig. 5) and Sugandesha temples at Pattan are the remnants of the town of king Samkaravarman in Baramulla district.

There is no reference in Nilamatapurana¹¹ for Kashmir being subject to famines, but Kalhana mentions severe famines did often visit the valley. Despite of no direct reference to famines in Nilamatapurana, one can relate many verses that actually mention famines and floods. In one instance (Kumari 1968, I: 127), Kashyapa requests Vitasta (Jhelum) to flow within the limits of the bed prepared by means of plough, otherwise valley will turn into a lake, gives the idea that inundations were



Fig.5: Temples of Shankaragaurisvara built by Shankaravarman at Pattan, Baramulla.

disastrous and very well known. These verses clearly indicate that some sorts of measures were taken to regulate the course of Vitasta (Jhelum) in order to flow peacefully, of which the date cannot be ascertained. The need for such activity would have risen only if the inundations would have been of much devastation in Kashmir. In another place it is also mentioned that people of Kashmir should observe the rites prescribed by Nila, in case not so, the country will suffer from natural calamities¹² (Kumari 1968, I: 127-128). Although the dredging operations of Suyya must have been of some respite, which according to Kalhana gave fresh life to the people. The measures taken by Suyya were not enough to wipe out the dangers of floods from Kashmir valley has been clearly demonstrated by Kalhana (Stein 1961, I: 221), while he mentions the horrible consequences that prevailed due to floods and famines which revisited the valley during the time of king Partha (906-921 AD). Kalhan credits Suyya as a founder of the town Suyyapur (modern Sopore in Baramulla), at a place where Jhelum leaves the Wullar Lake (Stein 1961, I: 201).

Kanishkapur of Kanishka

Kanishkapur of Kalhan's Rajatarangini, was first identified by Cunningham (1924: 114-115) with Kampur, situated 10 miles to the south of Srinagar on the high road leading to the Pir Panjal pass. This identification was rejected by Stein (1961, II: 482, 42), as he mentions the place has no ancient ruins and is really called 'Khampur', on the road from Srinagar to Shopian. This is quite true in archaeological perspective; the area around Shopian till the foothills of Pir Panjal has not revealed any Kushan site so far. Stein identified Kanispur (Baramulla) with Kanishkapur of Kalhana¹³ on the basis of an old glossator of the Rajatarangini. He mentions, "There are no conspicuous remains above ground at Kanispur, but ancient coins and carved stones are occasionally extracted from an old mound near the village" (Stein 1961, II: 482). Local traditions support this assumption also as people still talk about the king Kanishka, who founded the city at Kanispur or held the great religious assembly there. The archaeological evidence at the

site (Mani 2000) as well as in Baramulla district (where many Kushan sites have been reported) gives weight to this identification of Kanishkapur of Rajatarangini with Kanisapur village rather than to Kampur of Cunningham.

On the basis of the casket inscription found at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri in Peshawar (Pakistan) and the words inscribed on it, includes, “Kanishkapure-nagare”, Mukherjee (1964: 62, 1966: 110-111) identified Kanishkapur of Rajatarangini as Purushapur or Peshawar (see, Dobbins 1971). As the casket seems to have been found in situ and in the vicinity of Peshawar, Mukherjee (1964: 62) concludes, that Kanishkapura must have been one of the old names of Purushapur or Peshawar. Mirashi (1966: 109) has strongly objected to the interpretation made by Mukherjee. He says that Kanishkapura of Kalhana is certainly in Kashmir and not in Punjab. Besides he argues that if Kanishkapura was the old name of Purushapura, it looks strange that it occurs nowhere else as everywhere the old name of Kanishka's capital occurs as Purushapura. Besides, Mukherjee's argument, that Kalhana does not specify that Kanishkapura was founded within the geographical limits of Kashmir and could have been anywhere within the limits of Kanishka's empire, which included Kashmir, is highly vague statement. One can argue that if it could have been anywhere, why not in Kashmir? We have a strong reason to believe that Kalhana was only talking about Kashmir and not of the neighbouring regions, when he mentions (Stein 1961, I: 31) about Kushan kings, that the land of Kasmir (Kashmir) was under the possession of the Buddhists. Besides, Kalhan's mention of Hushkapur a city built by Hushka (Huvishka, a Kushan king) has been identified by archaeologists in Baramulla district. It is clear that Kalhana's verses (Stein 1961, I: 30-31) clearly mentions the Kushan rule in Kashmir only and not of the neighbouring region. As Kashmir was a part of Gandhara, Bandey (1992: 16) has rightly put it that, “Even if it is believed that Kanishkapura nagare was founded in Gandhara, Kashmir also had town of the name built by Kanishka, wherefrom stamped terracotta tiles were found” (Fig.6).

Though excavations at Kanishkapur have confirmed the Kushan levels, but it is not clear whether Kanishka I or II was the founder of this town?

The interesting observation made by Rosenfield (1967: 260) about the stupa at Shah-ji-ki-Dheri is that the reliquary was not a foundation deposit but was added afterwards, when inner skeleton of the chamber was already constructed. He mentions that the stupa was several times renovated after fires and other disasters. So reliquary may have been inserted at the time of one of the renovations. We have a reason to believe that the reliquary was shifted from the original place of Kanishkapur nagare



Fig. 6: Tile pavement (Reconstruction) of Kushan period from Kanisapur, Baramulla.

to the same place of Shah-ji-ki-Dheri, where it has been found during excavations. The possible working hypothesis is that the reliquary can be associated with Kanishkapur in Kashmir from where it might have been transferred during the time of the later invasions and may have been re-deposited in stupa at Shah-Ji-Ki-Dheri, same as the king of Pataliputra surrendered to his conqueror Kanishka, a priceless relic, the begging bowl of Buddha to relieve himself of heavy ransom of 900,000 pieces of gold (Rosenfield 1967: 32). Although it is a working hypothesis, further archaeological work at Kanispur in Baramulla district holds the key for such assumptions.

Concluding Remarks

The importance of Baramulla district in the cultural and geographical history of Kashmir has been established in the above discussion. It was due to the desiccation process through the gorge, that Kashmir valley owes its roots of origin and subsequent formation to Baramulla. Due to the natural processes, mostly earthquakes and floods, Baramulla many at times altered the geological and geographical settings of Kashmir valley. Be it a place of the earliest human habitation through migrations or the strategic position along the ancient routes, Baramulla has been changing landscape of cultural transmissions over the pre and proto-historic periods, where many important towns rose, flourished and decayed. This has been supported by the archaeological discoveries from time to time, attesting to the foundations of the towns like Ushkur, Kanispur, Pratapapur, Parihaspura, Samkarapura, Andarkot and Suyyapur. Many towns mentioned in literary sources are yet to be identified. The ancient route of Baramulla linked Kashmir valley with Gandhara (Taxila and Hazara) and Mathura regions and through this route entered a famous traveller Hieuntsang and it was known to Alberuni (Sachau 1910: 207) as well. While as another route through Gurez valley has witnessed cultural transmissions of which the evidence is available from the Neolithic period onwards. This route was particularly used by the Chinese pilgrims. The association of the people with historical landscape can be still traced in many parts of the valley. The story of king Kanishka, who held the fourth Buddhist council¹⁴ at Kanispur, is still alive among people there. The name of king Kanishka appears in Kanispur, Baramulla as a name of the commercial unit of cement products (Fig.7) establishes and recognises his association with the place and the people. The name of Kanishka is still used in many present foundations of educational and industrial importance. The old name of Baramulla as Varahamulla (after the legend that Varaha helped to made gorge open at Baramulla) is still used in Kashmiri language with a slight variation as Varmul. These historic associations with the landscape have not changed yet; neither will it cease to happen so. The fact is that, these associations of mythological and historical significance are the foundations or origins of the Kashmiri culture in pure sense.



Fig.7: Modern Sign board bearing name of Kanishka at Kanispur, Baramulla.

Notes

1. The date of Kashmir Neolithic can go back to 7000 BC, if the much potential site of Turukpora in Bandipora is excavated. Hand stencil is the oldest art dated back to 30,000 years in Australia and Europe (Jacobs 1998). Jacobs, J.Q. 1998. *The Dawn of Prehistoric Rock Art* (Source): <http://www.jqjacobs.net/rock-art/dawn.html> The earliest cave site in Baramulla has been reported by De Terra (1942) at Imselwar with *Sus Scrofa* (pig) remains, more frequently reported from Chinese and West Asian Neolithic sites. Imselwar is located near the Palaeolithic site of Bomai in Sopore (See Map.1). The important new discovery of Kashmir Neolithic has come from west of Baramulla from Haril in a Shahnagri cave in 2013, where stone implements same as Burzahom has been reported (pers. comm. with Tahir Mansoor).
2. Aceramic Neolithic levels were reported from Kuladur, Pyathpathur, Huin, Malapur, Bhatchak in Baramulla on the youngest loess palaeosol, but has not been dated (See, Pant et al. 1982).
3. Chinese travelers, Fa-hein (399 A.D), Chemong (400 A.D), Fa-yong (420 A.D), Song-yun (518 A.D) and Ou-Kong (759 A.D) came to Kashmir through this route (Shali 1993: 122-123). A hoard of copper coins of Kujula Kadphises was also found at Turukpora.
4. The absence of the Mesolithic and megalithic sites in North Kashmir region has been understood on the basis of the harsh climatic conditions in the area (See, Ray and A. K. Ghosh 1986). The explorations in the higher altitudes may reveal some archaeological data of these periods as the low lying lands were occupied by water. As it has been already suggested that the lake formation and desiccation was a recurring feature of Kashmir ecology and environment, it is possible to trace the volume of the lake during the different geologic or tectonic events, which were the main cause of the formation of the lake. We must refer here to the ancient works of the historical nature in Kashmir, which mentions the earthquake and submerged valley floor up to the Wullar lake. The date for this event though uncertain has been placed as 1250 BC, on the basis of literary sources. Whatever could be the date it corresponds to the last human activity seen through the material culture in the area explaining the vast gap between the Neolithic and the early historic cultural activity in north and north-west Kashmir from Kanispor excavations (thus showing the absence of megalithic culture). The first process of desiccation has been dated to 85,000 BP. (See, Agrawal, D. P. 1992).
5. Similar story has been mentioned by Kalhana (Stein 1961: 198, v. 88-89), where the rocks which had rolled down from the mountains lining both river beds had compressed the Vitasta (Jehlum) and made its waters turn backwards. This place has been identified by Stein near Khadniyar, the rocky gorge below Baramulla. During the Avantivarman's reign his engineer Suyya constructed stone walls on both banks of the river for protection.
6. Above discussion has made it clear that there can be more approaches to the study. The author does not deem it necessary to uphold the old view of the single event of formation and desiccation of Kashmir valley. In fact, it is clear that this event could have occurred several times in the past.
7. The final destruction of Parihaspora has been attributed by Abul-Fazal to Sikander Butshikan on the basis of the copper plate inscription found from Parihaspora predicting the destruction of the site by Sikander after 1100 years of its foundation. While as the town was founded only six hundred and fifty years before Sikander's time. Sir Aurel Stein considers it as a weak historical chronology of the author of the copper plate. But we may have another approach to the study. Abul Fazal might have got the information from the reliable sources about the time elapsed since the Parihaspora was found. If the copper plate and the information provided by Abul Fazl are to be trusted the date of the foundation of Parihaspora goes back roughly 200 -300 AD; the time of the Kushan's. This premise can be justified on the basis of the foundations laid by Lalitaditya at the site of Ushkur, once founded by the Kushan king Huvishka.
8. Jehlum (Veth to Kashmiri's, See Lawrence 1895: 17-18) has been the main route of communication and transportation during the early historic period till recent times. It passes through the centre of the valley connecting all the important towns. The main feature of the Kushan sites in Kashmir valley is that they are located mostly on the karewas near the catchment area of Jehlum river, making connectivity easier. The feature, more or less, could be seen till 1947, in Kashmir when river Jehlum was one of the main communication routes which linked south with

north Kashmir, a stretch of more than 120 kms. The importance of river traffic in Kashmir may be estimated from the fact that the number of boatman engaged in it was about 33,870 according to 1891 census.

9. Of course the town took a steady decline. Kalhana mentions about the invasions of the later ruler Samkaravarman (883-902 AD) who transported building materials of Parihaspora for construction of new town and temples at nearby site Pattan (Stein 1961: iv, 161). It was during the time of Uccala (1101 AD) that the Rajavihara at Parihaspora was subsequently burn down. Harsa (1089-1101 AD) also contributed to the further defacement of Parihaspora by carrying away the famous silver statue of Visnu from the temple of Parihasakesava. The final destruction has been attributed by Abul-Fazal to Sikander Butshikan. The later invasions could have been the reason that the town was completely deserted. But the role of shifting course of the river Jehlum cannot be ruled out as one of the causes if not an immediate cause.
10. Jayapida who laid the foundation of Andarkot on the karewa of Sumbal, was the grandson of Lalitaditya.
11. The verse 18 of Nilmatapurana, “unconquerable by the enemy-kingdoms, ignorant of the fears born of them, rich in cows, horses, elephants etc, it is devoid of the fear of famines” (See, Kumari, V. 1973, II: 5).
12. Many types of natural calamities and there effects have been mentioned by Kalhana. The reference (RT, II: 17-26) to untimely heavy snowfall in the month of July-August at some time in 5th c., AD, during the time of king Tunjina I, when the fields were covered with autumn crops, such as rice, being just in the process of ripening, caused a great famine. During the Avantivarman’s rule due to the floods famine again struck the valley, when one Khari of rice was sold at ten hundred and fifty Dinnaras (RT, V: 71).
13. Except the reference from Kalhana’s Rajatarangini, there is no other mention of the name Kanishkapur, a town built by a Kushan king Kanishka. Hieun Tsang (631 AD) has mentioned Ushkur and other places of importance but does not mention Kanishkapur, located hardly 5kms from Ushkur. After staying for a night at Ushkur, Hieun Tsang might have traversed the same route via Kanispor to reach to the capital city of Srinagar. One can assume that during the visit of Hieun Tsang, Kanispor (ancient Kanishkapur) might had felt to decadence or had remained a small centre of activity, which could not catch the eye of a traveller and pilgrim like Hieun Tsang.
14. There has been lot of controversy about the fourth Buddhist council held in Kashmir. Many scholars have suggested different locations in Kashmir as the venue of the fourth Buddhist council (See, Hassnain 1973: 22). There has been no substantial archaeological evidence which could confirm this historical event.

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