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Education and Nomads of Central Asia: A case study of Pre-Soviet Kazakhstan¹

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Abstract: Central Asia has been a great Civilization since time immortal and ceaseless people thronged to this region for better survival. Urban Culture has developed smoothly and consistently, for the region got exposed to the people who were part of the great learnings and skills. The credit largely, however, for introducing this Urban Culture goes to the ‘Silk Route’ which explored not only economic incentives but also permitted people with their heterogeneous cultures irrespective of caste, creed, religion, etc. The Sakas, Parthians, Huns, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Mongols, etc gave a new hope as their appearances unleashed new skills and new quarters of knowledge. These new innovations stamped on the minds of the people of Central Asia who came across these new cultures of the different people. The religion of Islam gave filip to these learnings and therefore, promised to further widen the mental horizon of Central Asian people. The Arabs in Central Asia in 8th century AD gave a free hand to the knowledge and lots of teachers were enjoined upon to teach/disseminate Islamic knowledge in new Maktabas and Madrassa in various cities (Khwarzm, Merve, Khuttalan, Khiva, Nishapur, Bukhara,

¹ Mr Younus wani has one international publication and this effort has come to the surface as a result of joint efforts of Two Scholars.

Samarkand etc) which in due course of time earned name and fame. The wave did not recognise any border and therefore, reached to nomadic kazakistan as well if later than the oasis areas of Central Asia. kazakistan too gave in to a sort of education which was imparted with the same enthusiasm but people of this region sought it differently . It did not affect their day today life too much. The Russians used main and might to get this lot completely transferred to new culture but kazaks did not leave their age old ways of life despite the coercisive and well planed policies. Nevertheless, pre-Soviet kazaks were made to look for schools for seeking education that came as a solace to them and patronized a hope of getting rid of hard and fast rules of life of nomadism.

Keywords: Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Urban Culture, Silk Route, Arabs, Turks, Mongols, Maktabas Madrassa, etc.

The word education has its origin in the Latin word “Educatum” itself composed of two terms ‘E’ and ‘Duco’ where ‘E’ implies a progress from inward to outward while ‘Duco’ means developing or progressing. In its most liberal sense education means becoming developed and progressive from inside to outside. Education thus is the process of developing the inner abilities and power of an individual. The term is also connected with Latin ‘educere’ meaning the propulsion from the internal to external. Thus term means to educate through a change brought about by practice or usage.

It is interesting to note that long back Plato gave a meaning to education which is even now followed in the West with slight changes here and there. Plato defined education as a life long process starting

“from the first year of childhood and lasting to the very end of life”.² He used the term education in a very wide sense, which makes a man eagerly pursue ideal perfection of citizenship and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey. Thus education not only provides knowledge and skills but also inculcates values and training of instincts³.

In the middle ages Comenius declared education to be a process where by an individual develop qualities relating to religion, knowledge and morality and thereby established claim to be called a human being. Aldous Huxley said, “A perfect education is one which trains up every human being to fit into the place he or she is occupying in the social hierarchy, but without in the process destroying his or her individuality.”⁴

Al-Ghazzali (1058-111) one of the illustrious thinker of Islam, classifies knowledge into two kinds viz the intuitive knowledge and the knowledge acquired by rational effort. The intuitive knowledge leads the perdition of soul and the knowledge acquired through experience and observation leads to development of sciences⁵.

Human civilization has passed through various phases, some brighter while others darker. Darker phases saw humans not effecting a change that was required to bring about to attain the desired brightness. Humans have compartmentalized themselves on the basis of race, ethnicity, social institutions, cultural followings, rituals, customs, traditions, religions etc and accordingly looked different from each other.

² Chandra, S. S. & K Sharma, Rajendra. (2004). Principles of Education. New Delhi. p. 1.

³ Sharma, G. Ranjit. (2003). Trends in Contemporary Indian Philosophy of Education. New Delhi. p. 7.

⁴ Huxley, A. (1928). Proper Studies. London. p.136. c.f. Sharma, G. Ranjit.(2003). Trends in Contemporary Indian Philosophy of Education. New Delhi, p. 10.

⁵ Masoodi, Tariq. (2007). The Educational Philosophy of Iqbal. New Delhi, p. 45, c.f. Alvi, S.M. Ziaudian. (1998). Muslim Educational thoughts in the Middle Ages, New Delhi, p. 52.

Yet it is also a fact that all religions educate people to learn and acquire knowledge to become perfect and help others to be gainful.

Central Asia has remained a hub of civilizations where people came into contact with various ethnic groups, the Sakas, Parthians, Huns, Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Mongols, etc and therefore acquired skills that have allowed them to live rather comfortably. They also followed various religions, Manichaeism, Shamanism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Islam. All contributed to make the region rich in thought, knowledge and culture through the education that was imparted from time to time⁶.

The latest of these was that of Islam, that gives importance to education for both men and women. “A fragment of knowledge is worth than a life of hundred years” is what the Prophet of Islam has said and directed the Muslims “to acquire knowledge even though one may have to go as far away as China”⁷.

In Arabia before the Islam spread illiteracy was the rule rather than the exception. The *Quraysh*, the most important tribe in Arabia, could boast of no more than seventeen men who could write at the advent of Islam. The tribes of *Awaz* and *Khazraj* did not possess more than eleven literate persons. The Prophet (PBUH), himself an *omi* -one who has not learnt reading or writing, as Qur'an says, needed the services of those who knew how to write in order to record the Quran - the revelations of God. The revelations once recorded were read out to the masses that even though were illiterate but understood the language. It was to inculcate among the people the acts of reading and writing⁸. The first among the

⁶ Krader, Lawrence. (1963). *Peoples of Central Asia*. Netherlands, p. 119.

⁷ Ahamad, Mufti .M. Mukarram. (2005). *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Vol. 2, p. 327.

⁸ The Prophet not only encouraged the reading and writing Arabic but also exhorted people to learn other languages. Zayd-Ibn-Thabit, who used to write for the Prophet, learnt to write the Jewish language at his behest. He is also said to have learnt Syriac languages because the

Quraysh to have this honour was Abd Allah ibn Sa'd ibn Sarh.⁹

The Prophet appointed teachers for teaching, reading and writing who taught in various mosques of Madina¹⁰. The dispatch of teachers was not only for the newly converted tribes but for those as well who followed Islam from the very beginning and was regular feature of the educational policy of the Prophet. The subjects of studies included besides the study of the *Qur'an* and *Hadi'th*, elementary mathematics, rudiments of medicine, astronomy, genology and phonetics¹¹. The system continued as more embraced Islam so in more mosques this type of teachings of various subjects also continued. The system became elaborate with the reign of *Umayyads* (661- 750), *Abbasides* (750-1258), Seljuk's (960-1157) etc who established separate schools called *Maktabas* and *Madrassas*.

Since Arabs reached Central Asia in the 8th century, they also brought with them their own culture and education system. Accordingly, not only mosques were built to prey and teach but also came into existence a number of *Maktabas* and *Madrassas* at various places on different occasions. Most of these were located in urban centers like Khwarzm, Merve, Khuttalan, Khiva, Nishapur, Bukhara, Samarkand etc¹².

Prophet asked him to do so; Iqbal, Afzal. (1967). *Cultures of Islam*. Lahore. p. 124.

⁹ Iqbal, Afzal. (1967). *Cultures of Islam*. Lahore. p. 123.

¹⁰ Suffah was not only school at Madina, there were about nine mosque in Madnia at the time of Prophet each of them served as a school for teaching of the Quran; Alavi, S. M. Zaudin. (1988). *Muslim Education Thoughts in Middle Ages*. New Delhi, p. 3.

¹¹ Alavi, S. M. Zaudin. (1988). *Muslim Education Thoughts in Middle Ages*. New Delhi. p. 1-2.

¹² Mirbaev, A. K.. *The Islamic Lands and their Culture*. Eds. Bosworth, C. E. & Asimov M.S. (1997). *History of Civilization of Central Asia, Vol. 4*. Part. II. UNESCO. London, p. 38.

A number of *Madrassas* became famous as well for they imparted education of varied nature and of quality, subjects like grammar, literature, poetry, calligraphy, philosophy, arithmetic, geometry, geography, history, chemistry, physics, tibb (medicine), etc were taught in many *Madrassas*¹³. It was not only to gain in worldly affairs but since Qur'an, *Hadi'th*, *fiqh*, jurisprudence etc were also taught the spiritual education was a part of total education¹⁴.

The aim of Muslim education was to make the person morally pure and spiritually upright. It was to inculcate among them source of brotherhood and piety, so that one would understand how important was to live a peaceful life. Most often the lectures provided advice as to how a person can save oneself from bad things and morally corrupt practices. Another aim of education was the extension of knowledge and propagation of Islamic principles, laws etc.

Islamic education in Central Asia was always imparted through the traditional institutions of *Maktabas*¹⁵ and *Madrassas*¹⁶ – a system that was introduced soon after the Arabs started to conquer the areas of the region. Kazakhs, however, did not receive the benefits of the Islamic education as say Uzbeks did, even though the southern areas of the land were dominated by the Islamic peoples from time to time. The main reason for it was the nomadic or semi-nomadic character of the people residing in Kazakhstan who hardly settled down. Even if some from the southern areas had the Islamic education they used to travel to the great centers of education in Uzbekistan at Samarkand or Bukhara¹⁷. This

¹³ Ahamad, Mufti M. Mukarram. (2005). *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. 2, p. 327.

¹⁴ Ahamad, Mufti M. Mukarram. . (2005). *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol. 2, p. 328.

¹⁵ *Maktabas are the places for the primary Islamic education.*

¹⁶ *Madrassas were secondary and higher education institutions.*

¹⁷ Olcot, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakh*. California, p. 19.

too stopped soon after the 17th century. It seems that there were not established such Islamic schools in Kazakhstan as were in other parts of the Central Asia¹⁸. The result was that when the Soviets ruled Central Asia in the early 20th century there were not many people in Kazakhstan that could read and write, even the Islamic or the Arabic script if not the Kazakh or Russian¹⁹.

In Central Asia many such institutions were built that imparted such type of education but most of these were located in the southern areas in particular in the modern Uzbekistan, Iran, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan. The northern step region lacked such facilities hence very little Islamic education reached to these areas including Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan has vast and enormous land mass but is thinly populated²⁰. It connects Europe and Asia and borders Russia in the north, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan in the south, China in the east, the Caspian Sea in the west²¹ and lies between the Altai and Tien Shan Range in the east while the Aral and Caspian seas fall in the west; thus the Kazakh land stretches 1,700 Kms from the north to south and 3,000 Kms from the east to west²² with varied relief that

¹⁸ In the southern Central Asia Maktabas and Madrassas were established at all the settlement areas in the cities like, Bukhara, Samarkand, Nishapur, Heart, Khiva, Kokhand, etc and most of these became very famous for the quality of education imparted there in at various periods as during the Samanids, Timurids; Mirbabaev, A.K.. *The Islamic Lands and their Culture*. Eds. Bosworth, C. E. & Asimov, M.S. (1997). *History of Civilization of Central Asia*. Vol. 4. Part. II. London. p. 38.

¹⁹ Hanks, Ruel R. (2005). Central Asia. ABC-CLIO. U.S.A. p. 220.

²⁰ Kazakhstan covers 1,049,150 square miles in Central Asia. The republic is the 9th largest country in terms of its area and 62nd in terms of population. The population in 2001 was 16.1 million, its density was 6.1 per square kilometer; Soucek, Svat. (2002). *A History of Inner Asia*. Cambridge, USA, p. 331.

²¹ Haggett, Peter. (2002). *Encyclopedia of World Geography*. Vol. 1, New York, P. 1910.

²² Kazakhstan. *Wikipedia, The free encyclopedia*. www.en.wikipedia.org

includes mountain ranges and deserts, its lowest point is 132m below sea level, and its highest point is over 5000m above the sea level²³.

Today Kazakhstan remains bilingual country. Kazakh is the State language but the percentage who speak Kazakh is 64% while Russian is



Map of the Republic of Kazakhstan

the language of inter ethnic communication but is more widely spoken as 95% people speak it.

This situation is of very recent times, after the Russians migrated there in large numbers. Earlier there were only Kazakhs in the area who belong to south Siberian type formed as a result of the mingling of the Central Asian Mongoloids with the ancient Caucasoid population of Kazakhstan, consequently the Mongoloid feature of Kazakhs are more

²³ The climate is continental there are great variations between seasons. The summer is hot with temperature reaching 30 degree centigrade and the winter is cold with lows of minus 5 centigrade; *Investment Guide for Kazakhstan*. OECD. 1998. p. 19.

evident than those of other people of Central Asian²⁴. The prominent religion of the country is Islam with prominence of Sunni faith of the Hanfia school of about 47% while as there are also Russian Orthodox 44%, Protestant 2% and 7% belong to other religions²⁵.

The population of Kazakhstan as in July 2009 was 15,399,437 composed of different ethnic groups, 53.4% Kazakhs, 30.0% Russian, 3.7% Ukrainian, Uzbek 2.5%, German 2.4%, 1.7% Tatar, 1.4 % Uighur and 4.9% others²⁶. As said above all these ethnic groups however, speak Russian fluently on account of seventy year rule of the Soviets and almost compulsory learning of Russian language in the schools, but those Kazakhs mostly who also speak Kazakh they read it like Russians as its script is Cyrillic like the Russian language.

1. Russian Educational Policy in Kazakhstan (Pre-Soviet era)

The semi-nomadic tribes such as Kazakhs, Kirgiz, and Mangits continued to live in the nomadic state even at the time when the Russians ruled them. They continued to live their own life style even if the Europeans were, literally speaking, ruling them. Similarly the Czarist could hardly do any thing for the Central Asians to begin with, other than impose their Imperialistic designs for their own economic benefits²⁷. It is said that the Czarist government was not interested in bringing socio-economic changes in the region or had little intention of educating the

²⁴ Wheeler, Geoffrey. (1964). *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*. London, p. 9.

²⁵ Kazakhstan. Wikipedia. *The Free Encyclopedia*. www.en.wikipedia.org

²⁶ *Nature tours to Kazakhstan*. www.Wild.natures.com

²⁷ Martin, Virginia. (2001). *Law and Custom in the Steppes*. Rutledge. London. p. 42.

Central Asians. An unspecified dignitary declared,” *I am not impressed by the wild dreams of philanthropists who want to civilize (ustroit) the Kirgiz (i.e. Kazakhs) to educate them and to raise them to the level of European nation. I wish from the bottom of my heart that the Kirgiz for ever remain nomad shepherds, never sow corn or have nothing to do with learning or even with craftsmanship*”.²⁸

While one can always argue that such sweeping remarks were of generalized nature without allowing the effects of change that took place in Central Asia after the Russians came there. In fact the introduction of the modern education and the efforts made for its spread by the Russians is one such tool that will show the measures were beneficial and are measurable to mark the change that it was responsible to bring about in the area. Soon after the Kazakh areas came under the suzerainty of the Russians in the Year 1731, Russians willingly encouraged the masses to acquire Islamic education through the traditional educational institutes that were opened by their support. Russians under Catherine II (1762-1796) had become convinced that the nomads of the steppes could be civilised by Muslim education rather than by any other form of the secular education²⁹. Once these schools were opened mostly in northern Kazakhstan the clergy from Khiva and Bukhara came there to educate the people. This practice continued till the Russian-Turkish war, 1787-1791, when the Bukhara clergy was replaced by the Tatars³⁰. It was not

²⁸ D. Encausse, H. Carrere. (1963). *The Peoples of Central Asia: Cultural Development*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. II. No.2. London. p. 312.

²⁹ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p.101.

³⁰ In the 18th century the propagation of Islam rapidly spread primarily from Bukhara. Since at the time of 1787-1791 the Russian–Turkish war going on in Orenberg. The Russians opposed Bukhara mullahs for the propagations because they carried ant Russian sentiments among the Kazakh nobility in favour of Ottoman Turks. Russian suggested to use Tatar mullah to engage in the education among the Kazakhs, they

left to the society alone but Russians even helped them to spread the primary institutes, Maktabas, across the country and pursue the nobility not to send their wards to Bukhara and Khiva for attaining the Islamic education³¹.

By 1820 Russians started to believe that the Tatar clergy was spreading Muslim culture along with Islam that was gaining momentum among the masses and therefore they felt that a change in the education policy was required to counter check it³². Soon after Kazakhstan became full-fledged colony of the Russians, between the years 1822 to 1848,³³ they introduced a network of Russian-Kazakh also called Russian Native schools in Kazakhstan to introduce a new mechanism of education that was new to land. In these schools Russian language and culture was taught for the first half day while for the rest of the day Islamic education of the Maktabas continued³⁴. By this process what Russians were to achieve was introduction of Russification of Kazakhs and their culture.

Along with the idea of education as an instrument of incentives and assimilations emerged in the state policy. The Russian authorities provided financial support to those parents who enrolled their children in the Russian-Kazakh schools, because the basic components of Russian

were entrusted with organizing primary spiritual schools to stop the local nobility from sending their children's in Bukhara and Khiva; Kolioshtorniy, Sergi. (2002). Russian and Kazakhstan Geopolitical Alternatives and Civilization Choice. Moscow. p. 3.

³¹ Kolioshtorniy, Sergi. (2002). Russian and Kazakhstan Geopolitical Alternatives and Civilization Choice. p. 3-4.

³² Wheeler, *Geoffrey*. (1964). *Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*. London, p. 199.

³³ The power of the Khans was abolished in Kazakhstan, the khan of the Middle Horde was deposed in 1822, the khan of Little Horde was deposed in 1824 and the Khan of the Great Horde in 1848; Akiner, Shrine. (1986). *Islamic People of the Soviet Union*. London. p. 288.

³⁴ Shah, *Abdul Hannan*. (1979). *Islam and Russia. Bangladesh*, p. 9.

colonial policy were to achieve any meaningful cultural change in the direction of Russification.³⁵

But besides that they also opened in 1844 AD a military school, called the Nepluev Military School in Omsk, where Kazakh boys were imparted military training and allowing them to acquire Russian system of education. Many from the school became so hypnotized by the education they received there that they always advocated closer ties between the Russian and Kazakh peoples, like Chokan Valikhanov (1837-1865). People like Valikhanov, Altynsarian (1841-1889), Abai Qunanbaev (1845-1904), always advocated organisation of Russian-Kazakh schools, in place of the traditional Islamic institutes, for the enlightenment of the nomads³⁶.

Whether or not the socio-cultural milieu of the people was changed by these schools, they were imparting secular as well as religious education and were certainly useful to develop pro-Russian elite who were advocating the adoption of the policies of the Russians³⁷. The curriculum in these schools was designed chiefly to train clerks and interpreters for Russian administrators in order to create a bridge between the Russian and Kazakhs for the colonial interests.³⁸ The last particular policy remained in force at least up to 1860.

In each school there were at least two teachers one for Russian and other a Kazakh for the Islamic teachings. These imparted four year teachings in two classes. Where there was two year schooling there used to be one teacher for Islamic teachings in Kazakh language in a single

³⁵ Virginia, Martin. (2001). *Law and Customs in the Steep*. Rutledge. p. 42.

³⁶ Akiner, Shrine. (1986). *Islamic people of the Soviet Union*, p. 290.

³⁷ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 101

³⁸ E. Bacon, Elizabeth. (1966). *Central Asia under Russian rule*. London, p. 101.

class. Mostly boys from such a school would join the four year school³⁹. Such schools were opened in each of the *uzed* (district) of all the *oblasts* (provinces) by 1867. All the teachers were provided by the government and even the text books to the students were given by the government. It was not so in respect of the Islamic schools, *Madrassas* and *Maktabas*, those were run by the people themselves in the localities⁴⁰.

Soon after the Governor General N A Kryzhanovski of Orenberg (1865-1881) came to rule a new policy of education was implemented. The Governor General found that the Islamic schools had grown very well as Kazakh boys used to get education in the *Maktabas* and *Madrassas* from the Tatars and Bashkirs. The first thing the Governor did was to impose an order in 1867 that henceforth the Tatars and Bashkirs can no more enroll Kazakhs in their schools. Second he directed all Russian-Kazakh schools to teach Christianity to all the students including the Muslim Kazakhs who so far used to abstain from these classes. Thirdly he imposed a special tax on the population of the Kazakhstan for the maintaince of the Russian Native schools. Further by 1870 Islamic schools were asked to introduce Russian education, as imparted in the Russian schools, so that they can easily join the Russian Native schools for further education and that too quite easily.

Besides, the colonial rulers introduced large number of Agricultural schools in 1877 in Kazakhstan. These schools were opened on a wider scale and agriculture training was given to Kazakh children. These were boarding schools and the students were required to wear Russian dresses as well as to eat Russian foods meaning thereby Russianisation of culture

³⁹ Dowler, Wayne. (2001) *Classroom and Empire*. Canada. p. 7.

⁴⁰ Zenkovsky A, Serge. (1960). *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia*. Cambridge. p. 64.

was introduced at gross root level⁴¹. These were opened mainly to suit multipronged colonial interests. For one it allowed at the wider scale the cultivation of cotton across the Central Asia for the industrial processing in Russia. Secondly by this introduction they allowed the people to abandon nomadism as well as reduce the percentage of the age old traditions of animal rearing. In its place was encouraged the settlements to emerge, where they started to settle immigrant Russians who occupied the pasture lands for agriculture.

Even though all measures were taken by Russians to spread Christianity through the medium of education⁴² yet at the end of the 19th century, however, the Czarist religious policy changed rapidly and already aimed at reducing Islamic influence in favour of Christianity and Russian education. The Czarist Steppe Regulations of 1891 permitted only one Mullah for each province and prohibited pious foundations (waqf) in the Oral, Torgai, Aqmola, Semei and Zhetisu provinces and the foundation of mosques and Maktabas were subject to the supervision of the Russian Governor⁴³.

All these steps of Russia were of great consequences changing the face of the Kazakhs. They had taken steps, one by one, that made them to look European rather than Asian. For the purpose schools as well as the students enrollment was gaining momentum day by day. For example in 1890 in Turgai oblast there were 22 Russian-Kazakh schools with 708 boys and 127 girls enrolled where as there were 8 Russian schools with

⁴¹ Martin, *Virginia*. (2001). *Law and Customs in the Steppe*. Rutledge. London. P. 42.

⁴² Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999) *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1, London. p. 5.

⁴³ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1997). The National liberation Movement of the Kazakh Intelligentsia at the beginning of the 20th Century. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 16. No. 4. London. p. 490.

358 students⁴⁴. As compared to this in 1897 there were 71 Russian–Kazakh schools in Turgi province with 2000 pupil⁴⁵ where as in 1905 there were 128 Russian-Kazakh schools as against only 135 Muslim Maktabas in whole of Kazakhstan.

Hence in Kazakhstan the number of Turkish students in Russian educational institutions was by far higher than in the Muslim institutions and Kazakhstan became the only Muslim or Turkic region of Russia in which the impact of Islamic culture was drastically overshadowed by Russian. A decree of October 19, 1906 demanded that Muslim schools henceforth be conducted in the native tongue rather than in Tatar and that the teacher be of the same nationality as their students, as a result Kazakh language with Arabic script began to emerge replacing the Tatar⁴⁶.

In primary schools the children learned for the first three years in the Kazakh language using the Arabic alphabets. As the schooling years were raised from three to five years the next years saw the children reading in Russian language subjects like national history, arithmetic, geography, orthography and biology. This was implemented from 1902-1913 and were known two class primary schools. These were taught by two teachers; one catering first three years and the next for other two years.⁴⁷ After 1913 the primary schools were divided into two types; city schools and steppe schools the later called Aul (village) school, teaching at the village level were to proceed in Kazakh language for first three years and later two years were conducted in Russian as before but in the

⁴⁴ Sabol, Stevin. (2003). *Russian Colonization and the Genesis of the Kazakh National Consciousness*. Moscow. p. 61.

⁴⁵ Hugh Watson, Seton. (1967). *The Russian Empire, 1801-1917*. London. p. 505.

⁴⁶ Zenkovsky A, Serge. (1960). *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia*. p. 64-65.

⁴⁷ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alsha*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1. London, p. 20.

district schools all the five years were conducted in the Russian language. After completing this sort of primary school the Kazakhs were able to continue their studies both at the Muslim as well as Russian institutions in Kazakhstan and Russia respectively⁴⁸.

2. System of Education in Kazakhstan (Delivery OF Education System) during Czars

Given the historical account of the education in Kazakhstan we have been told that Kazakhstan was poor in the medieval education. As there were hardly any institutions established in the land, many number of students who were interested in receiving Islamic education had to go to the other places in the Central Asia for their attainments. Whatever Russian aims may have been they were the first to encourage Kazakhs to establish Islamic institutions⁴⁹.

Once these institutes, like a Maktaba, were opened their teachers came from Central Asian regions, first from Bukhara and Khiva and then from Tatar area. Accordingly they introduced the age old system of the education in these schools. With this came curriculum, the methods, the way of conducting the Maktaba from there. Accordingly at the age of six normally a child in Central Asia was sent to a *Maktaba* that was generally established in a mosque of a locality or near by in a separate space.

The teacher was called Mullah (generally Priest), and were foreigners for the reason already said. The method of teaching was

⁴⁸ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1. London. p. 17-20.

⁴⁹ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 101.

universal in Central Asia, the students would sit in a circle to be taught in a group or one by one. The teaching in Maktaba was based on Bukharan scholastic texts (*qudia*) written in Arabic, Persian, Chaghaty and the medium of instruction was Arabic as well as one of the Turkish language Tatar, Uzbek or Turkish⁵⁰. Generally there were four year duration of a Maktaba education⁵¹ but it depended upon the capability of a students to learn the basic things from a teacher. But for some who took more time to learn, the duration extended for 1-2 further years. Mostly boys, the students, were introduced to the Arabic alphabets and the phonetics of the language and for that the teacher first taught the alphabets aloud as alif, be, te, se, and then students imitated him to repeat the alphabets in order to show how to pronounce them⁵². Much attention was paid towards the correctness of reading so that student was able to read perfectly what ever he was taught⁵³. After learning the alphabets the students learned their composition of the words and thereafter were introduced to selected verses of the Quran⁵⁴.

The second year reading was primarily to lead to read the Quran. Accordingly students were prepared to read the last chapter of the holly Book and memorize the last seven, to be called Haftyak⁵⁵. Those

⁵⁰ Yemekanova, M, Galina. (2002). *Russia and Islam*. Macmillan. p. 74.

⁵¹ *Kazakhstan-History*. www.education-stateuniversity.com/pages/759/

⁵² Khalid, Adeeb. (1998). *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reforms, Jadidism in Central Asia*. London, p. 22.

⁵³ Bandey, A. Aijaz & Khan, Gul Imtiyaz. (2006). *Traditional Education in Afghanistan*. The Journal of Central Asian Studies. Vol. XVI. No. 1. Srinagar. p. 120.

⁵⁴ Roudik L, Peter. (2007). *Central Asian Republics*. London, p. 62.

⁵⁵ A compilation of selected short verses from the *Qur'an given at the end*. Usually one seventh of *Qur'an* called *Haftyak* those who memorized the *Haftyak* were known as *Kitabkhan*. Some of the students also completed the reading of the after the *Haftyak* proceeded to read and memorized *Chilhadiith* (forty popular saying of Prophet); Khalid, Adeeb. (1998). *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reforms, Jadidism in Cen-*

who memorized these suras were called Kitabkhwan. But no attempt was made to understand them with the result that the pupil leaving the Maktaba after a period of four to six year was unable to write or read whatever they had learned⁵⁶. The teacher was recruited from among the clergy and some of them could only read but not write. The power of teacher over pupil was almost unlimited. Usually a school was attended by about a dozen children but the teacher did not receive a regular salary instead as supported by gifts from parents in the form of weekly donation of food and money in addition the teacher received gifts of cloths when a child finished his book⁵⁷.

In Uzbekistan, like many other Muslim communities, there were established large number of such primary schools and almost each locality had one. However in Kazakhstan we do not know exactly how many of these schools were established and, what was the type of growth there of these schools.

Schberbian reported in 1886 that in Kazakhstan there were 1,657 Mullah Teacher in the 10 Oblasts surveyed and that there were 7,688 students in the Maktabas of Akmolinsk, Semipaltinsk, Uraliska⁵⁸. The Soviet historian T.Tuzhibaev estimated that in the year 1889 in the inner Horde 2,000 children were enrolled in Maktabas⁵⁹. What the figures suggest is that a good number of these schools were established throughout the country. If we assume, and that too accurately that there was

tral Asia. London. p. 23.

⁵⁶ Encausse D & Carrere H. (1963). *The Peoples of Central Asia: Cultural Development*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. II., No. 2. London. p. 312.

⁵⁷ Roudik L, Peter. (2007). *History of the Central Asian Republics, America*. p. 63.

⁵⁸ Kolioshtorniy, Sergi. (2002). *Russian and Kazakhstan: Geopolitical Alternative and Civilization Choice*. P. 1.

⁵⁹ Frank J, Allen. (2001). *Muslim institutions in the Imperial Russia*, Brill, Netherlands, p. 295.

one teacher always for one Islamic school as was always the case there in other parts of the Islamic communities and states, then there were at least 1657 schools in the ten provinces of Kazakhstan in 1886. What the figure also suggests is that there were on an average 165 schools in each province and about 45 children attending during that year in each school. All this shows how rapidly Islamic education spread in Kazakhstan within a very short span of time.

After educating from the primary schools the Kazakh children could continue their education only at the Tatar and Uzbek Madrassas, as these were not available in Kazakhstan.⁶⁰ Most of them joined the Tatar Madrassas in the late 19th century when the Khan of Kazan married his daughter to the Khan of Kazakh and persuaded him to send a number of young Kazakhs to study in the Madrassas of Isterlitamaq and Isterlibagh at his expenses in the north Russia. Many Kazakhs went there for studying Islamic Sciences in the village of Isterlibagh for several decades⁶¹.

Troitsk town on the edge of the Russia, situated close to Kazakh steppes, was an ideal location for the Kazakhs, Bashkirs, Tatars to study after 1787-1791 when the nobility stopped sending their children for *Madrassa* education in Bukhara, Khiva, Kokhanda⁶². In the nineteenth century the Khan of the Kokhand Khanate studied in this south of the Kazakh district and he built *Madrassa* and implanted the Muslim education.⁶³ The most famous Madrassas where Kazakh students got

⁶⁰ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1. p. 18.

⁶¹ Change. *Duke University*. p. 124.

⁶² Kolioshtorniy, Sergi. (2002). *Russian and Kazakhstan Geopolitical Alternatives and Civilization Choice*. p. 3.

⁶³ Pankrotov. A. M, (1948). *A History of the USSR*, Moscow. p. 170.

education were Galiyeh, in the city of Ufa, the Khaseniyeh, in the city of Orynbor and the Rasuliyeh in the Troitsk. In the 1913 about 10,000 Kazakh students were studying in the Madrassas of Troitsk, Semei, Qarqaraly, Orsk and Qyzylzhar to point out how well they had taken Islamic education⁶⁴.

Duration in the *Madrassa* study was for 3-4 years. These were mostly held at the mosques⁶⁵ while of some of the Madrassas had a separate building close to large mosques but belonged to mosque. However only the privileged minority were able to study in Madrassa because the students had to pay for their study as no Madrassas received any grant from Government⁶⁶. The Madrassas were mainly founded by wealthy person's who provided financial support to the teachers and the schools. In certain cases students and faculty received stipends from waqf, while the supervisors and teachers were appointed by the local ruler and Sheikh-ul-Islam were responsible for supervision of these Madrassas⁶⁷.

These religious schools produced graduates able to read and understand religious books as well as to assimilate the ideas of the Muslim thinkers from outside the steppes.⁶⁸ In these Madrassas students were trained in Muslim clergy and specialists in the Islamic laws concerning marriage, divorce, and inheritance besides the Shariat laws and theology they were taught history, mathematics, astronomy, and poetry.

⁶⁴ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1. London, 1999. p. 18.

⁶⁵ *Kazakhstan-History*. www.education.Stateuniversity.com/Pages/759/

⁶⁶ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18.No. 1. p. 18.

⁶⁷ Lapidus, Iran Marvin. (2002). *A History of Islamic Societies*. London, p. 684.

⁶⁸ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 104.

At the end of the 19th century scientific education was also introduced in the Madrassas.⁶⁹ The Kazakhs studying at the Muslim Madrassa used Tatar, Arabic, Persian and Uzbek languages.

In a *Madsassa* the teaching was carried on one to one basis, each student one after other would come with his book and receive his lesson for the day. The teacher frequently taught by lectures which were memorized and some times written down after wards by the students⁷⁰.

Madrassa system however failed to maintain its importance once Russian-Kazakh schools and Russian Altynsarin schools were opened. The new schools introduced Cyrillic alphabets with the result a dual language scripts were creating troubles to the students in the Kazakh. In the new schools Russian teacher taught modern education while the Muslim teacher taught about local language, culture, and Islamic education.⁷¹

The Russian schools were free of charge as they received government support in the form of special school taxes. Therefore they had well trained teachers besides provided reading materials.⁷² In addition to what was envisaged, the government in the late 19th and earl 20th century attempted to westernize the Kazakh education system by introducing network of Russian Schools. Created with the intention to encourage the Kazakhs to study Russian language, history and culture besides other general subjects like math, sciences, geography etc. Russian primary schools were two types namely City schools and

⁶⁹ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 109.

⁷⁰ Bandey, A. Aijaz & Khan, Gul Imtiyaz. (2006). *Traditional Education in Afghanistan*. The Journal of Central Asian Studies. Vol. XVI. No. 1, Srinagar. p. 112.

⁷¹ Shah, *Abdul Hannan*. (1979). *Islam and Russia*. p. 9.

⁷² Kendirbaeve, Glunar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1, London. p. 18.

Steppe schools, the steppe schools are also called aul schools. Russian agricultural schools for both boys and girls in these schools. In 1913 there were 267 aul schools in the Russian system in Kazakhstan. The percentage of Kazakh students reached 60-70% in Russian schools⁷³. However Kazakhs preferred to send their children's to the Kazakh schools for they feared would lose their mother tongue and become Russified.⁷⁴ Russian authorities even offered financial incentives to those parents who would enroll their children in these schools with a monthly grant of 20-25 roubles.⁷⁵

3. Consequences of Czar Education in Kazakhstan:

There were profound changes in the traditional foundation of Kazakh society after the arrival of Russians in the region. Before the coming of the Russians education of any kind was virtually unknown in the Kazakh Steppes.⁷⁶ Traditionally Kazakh culture was rooted in the nomadic way of life and had as such remained conservative in nature. The advent of the Russians opened the door to the new ideas and opportunities of a developed Western society. The first to change their outlook was the nobility and well to do families who accepted the change in the out look rather quickly. Accordingly the majority of Kazakh elite received an excellent education in St-Petersburg and in many Kazakh-

⁷³ Jaan, Ivan, & George. (1971). *Modernization and Diversity in Soviet Education*. Praeger Publisher. UK. p. 101.

⁷⁴ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 105.

⁷⁵ Kendirbaeva, Gulnar. (1999). *We are Children of Alash*. Central Asian Survey. Vol. 18. No. 1. P. 18.

⁷⁶ Wheeler, Geoffrey. (1964). *Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*. p. 199.

Russian schools that were opened in 1841 A.D in the Steppes.

After the opening of various types of schools and experimenting with the education policies number of general schools of all types increased in Kazakhstan and its spread was achieved. By 1914-1915 there were more than two thousand primary schools in Kazakhstan. This was a big achievement as compared to other Central Asian states in the region; for example in Uzbekistan there were 160, in Turkmenistan only 58, in Tajikistan just 10 schools existed where as in Kyrgyz it was 107 in 1915⁷⁷. In addition to it there were eight small teachers Seminaries with a combined attendance of students⁷⁸.

Several of the individuals educated in the schools came to prominence in the steppes. Most famous of them was Choqan Valikhannu (1837-1865) who was the first secular and one of the first Kazakh to be educated in Russia. Among the published articles and notable works of the Valkhanov is Kirghga, about Kirghiz nomad camp. Another was Ibray Altynsiryyn who developed a school system in Turgi provinces and devised Kazakh alphabets based in Cyrillic and translated Russian literature in Kazakh language. Third great intellect of the 19th century was Abay Qunabay (1845-1911) who was educated in a Muslim *Madrasa* in Semipalatinsk where after he studied in Russian schools.⁷⁹ These first grade intellectuals founded Kazakh Secular School System and became administrators of these schools. Altynsaryyn became inspector of school for the Turgi Oblast in 1867 AD. He was also the author of first

⁷⁷ Szekei, Beah, Beatrice. (1978). *The Development of the Soviet School in Nationality Districts*. Soviet Education. vol. XX. No.3. New York. p. 43.

⁷⁸ Panchi, F. G. (1975). *Teachers education in USSR Historical developments and current trends*. Soviet Education. Vol. XIX. No. 9-10. July-Aug. Moscow. p. 6.

⁷⁹ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 106.

Kazakh grammar and first Russian-Kazakh Dictionary⁸⁰

Both secular and religious education gave the Kazakhs new means for communicating to one another as well as with the Russians who were now finally in Government.⁸¹ So much was impact of new education adoption that in 1897, Turgay Oblast only could boast to have 71 schools with 2,000 pupils of whom 52 were girls but by 1913 the steppe region had 157 Russian native schools with 77,454 students.⁸²

As a result of all this there were profound changes in traditional foundation of the Kazakh society. One progressive phenomenon was the development of women education which was likewise totally absent in Kazakhstan. It was by the efforts of Altynasorin that a college for women was opened in Irgiz in 1887 AD. The women education reached about 5 percent and male education reached 14 percent in Kazakhstan during the Czar period. However in spite of all these efforts taken by the Russians and Kazakhs together education never became a universal phenomenon in the 19th century in the Kazakh steppes. It was the Kazakh elite who was the most Russified of the Central Asian elites but the rest attached to the traditional forms of its own culture⁸³.

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⁸⁰ Bacon E, *Elizabeth*. (1966). *Central Asia under Russian Rule*. London. p. 101.

⁸¹ Olcott, Martha Brill. (1995). *The Kazakhs*. p. 110.

⁸² Wheeler, Geoffrey (1964). *Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*. p. 199.

⁸³ Parrot, Bruce & Koren, *Dawisha*. (1964). *The international Politics of Eurasia*. London. p. 214

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