

**Intermarriage after Communism: The Impact of the Soviet Collapse on
Ethnically Mixed Families in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan**

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The Soviet Union, like many modern states with ethnically diverse populations, was preoccupied with questions of ethnic mixing. In contrast to the anti-miscegenation policies prevalent in the United States, the Soviet state celebrated mixed marriages as proof of the unbreakable “friendship of nations” and as a sign of the impending merger of its numerous nationalities into a “Soviet people.” A strongly favorable attitude toward mixed marriages first emerged in the Stalinist 1930s, when Soviet scholars challenged the widespread eugenicist notion that racial mixing led to degeneracy and pathology. This celebratory approach remained remarkably consistent until the end of the Soviet Union.¹

In 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed, and all the Central Asian republics became independent states. Proletarian internationalism was replaced by ethnonationalism in each of the former Soviet republics. Marital and family practices believed to predate the Soviet era were revived, a process some scholars have called “retraditionalization.” In this paper I investigate what has happened to mixed families—and ideas about ethnic mixing—in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan since the collapse of the USSR. My conclusions are based in part on more than 80 in-depth oral history interviews with members of ethnically mixed couples and their grown children.²

The atmosphere for mixed families as well as for Russian speakers had already begun to shift with the rise of national consciousness in the perestroika era beginning in 1985. With the rejection of communist ideology and the promotion of national identities as the basis for state power in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan after 1991, the context for ethnic mixing changed significantly. Kazakhstan has experienced a surge of ethnic Kazakh consciousness, even as the post-Soviet government seeks to ensure the peaceful coexistence of its multiethnic population. The proportion of mixed marriages has declined as the population has become more heavily Kazakh, in part because of the emigration of ethnic Russians (who tend to intermarry at higher rates than other Soviet ethnic groups). A total of 712,000 Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians left Kazakhstan between 1989 and 1995.³ Between 1989 and 2004, the Russian share of the population in Kazakhstan decreased from 37.4 percent to 27.2 percent, while the Kazakh share increased from 40.1 to 57.2 percent.⁴

Other factors besides demographic change have played a role in the declining proportion of interethnic marriages in Kazakhstan. With the resurgence of religious belief and practice in the post-Soviet era, religious identity plays a growing role in marriage decisions. Language has also become more of a stumbling block to intermarriage; the state now promotes Kazakh as the official language, and use of Russian as a lingua franca within the republic has declined.

Tajikistan has experienced similar, even more dramatic changes. A brutal civil war fought between 1992 and 1997 led to the flight of much of the non-Tajik population (mainly Russians and other Russian speakers), leaving a state that is

far more ethnically homogenous than contemporary Kazakhstan. Between 1989 and 1995, 340,000 Russians and other Slavs left Tajikistan.⁵ By 2000, Russians constituted only about 1 percent of the population, while ethnic Tajiks were 79.9 percent.⁶ Uzbeks were still the largest minority, though their proportion had decreased from 23.5% to 15.3%.⁷ Many mixed families also left in the 1990s, particularly those who were highly russified, fleeing civil war violence or simply fearing discrimination and mistreatment.⁸ Not surprisingly, given the demographic situation, the Tajik state has had a far more ethno-nationalist orientation than Kazakhstan. More recently, poverty and lagging economic development have led hundreds of thousands of Tajiks to leave home and travel as labor migrants, mostly to Russia but also to other neighboring countries.

In both countries, a new emphasis on traditionalism in marriage and family relations as part of the ethnonationalist and religious revival has made intermarriage more problematic. This is especially the case in Tajikistan, where not just arranged marriage but also marriage within the extended family or lineage, and even first-cousin marriage, is valorized. In both countries, moreover, internal divisions such as subethnic identities, regional differences, and rural-urban differences, have become more salient. The Soviet view of «mixed marriage » as a union between individuals of two Soviet defined «ethnoses» or «nationalities» is no longer sufficient, if it ever was.

At the same time, new forms of intermarriage have appeared as the Central Asian countries have become more open to the outside world. Citizens of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan may--and sometimes do--intermarry not just with

other former Soviet nationalities, but also with “foreigners” such as Turks, Afghans, Iranians, Chinese, Americans, and Western Europeans. (Russians, too, now qualify as “foreigners” if they are not citizens of one of the Central Asian republics.) Another change is that more Muslim women are intermarrying, not just interethnically but even interconfessionally, as they wed citizens of foreign countries. This is a striking change from both the pre-Soviet and Soviet periods, when those Central Asians who intermarried were almost exclusively male. How do all these seemingly contradictory tendencies fit together? Does anything “Soviet” remain in the marriage patterns and interethnic relations of the region?

National revival and new attitudes toward ethnic mixing

As suggested above, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have diverged rather dramatically in their post-Soviet orientation. Tajikistan has been a strongly ethnonationalist in its orientation, while Kazakhstan has seen a concerted effort by the state to downplay ethnic nationalism and create a civic identity, called «Kazakhstani,» with which all citizens can identify. The Kazakh president, faced with a mixed population with a large Russian minority, has done his best to forestall ethnic conflict by speaking of Kazakhstan as a «Eurasian» nation with a harmonious multiethnic population, which acts as a bridge between Russia and Eurasia. He proposes building a single Kazakhstani culture that will unite members of different ethnicities and religions.⁹

For some respondents, this “Kazakhstani” identity has replaced “Soviet” as a non-ethnic or supra-ethnic identity. “Kazakhstani” is a civic identity referring

to the state while “Kazakh” refers to the ethnic group; thus, one can be Kazakhstani without being ethnically Kazakh. Although Lesya Karataeva, a 39-year-old mixed Russian-Kazakh woman, is officially Kazakh like her father: “I can’t say that ethnic identity is most important for me. ...I don’t think of myself as a Kazakh, living here in Kazakhstan. And when I travel abroad I really can’t say that I feel Kazakh, you know? But Kazakhstani. Kazakhstani, that’s my identity. Yes.”¹⁰ For mixed individuals and families and for those who are neither Russian nor Kazakh, “Kazakhstani” is virtually the only identity they can fully claim, now that “Soviet” is no longer an option.

Yet there is skepticism about, and even opposition to, this “Kazakhstani” civic identity within Kazakhstan. “Ruslan Isaev” (b. 1972), a mixed Kazakh-Ukrainian man, argued that Kazakhstani identity is still in an incipient stage. “Soviet” identity was much stronger in its day than “Kazakhstani” is today.

I would not say that it doesn’t exist at all, but it’s weak. ...For example, when a Kazakh soccer team is playing, then both Kazakhs and Russians chant: “Kazakhstan! Kazakhstan!” Well, in principle, it’s a good thing, but, honestly speaking, I don’t fully believe in it, because...well, because I remember the Soviet Union. I remember that the Soviet identity was much stronger.¹¹

Kazakhstani identity is, “Ruslan” said, “rather an abstraction.” While state propaganda has powerfully put forward this Kazakhstani civic identity, “the fact of the matter is that up to two thirds of Kazakhs actively reject this. Unequivocally reject it. They don’t want it because everything that’s Kazakhstani also means

Russian language. But ‘Kazakh’ – is strictly Kazakh.”¹² In its close connection to the Russian language, “Kazakhstani” is definitely the heir of “Soviet” identity.

“Ruslan’s” skepticism is borne out by events in Kazakhstan as well as by public opinion evidence. An attempt by the Kazakh president in 2009 to pass a “national unity doctrine” through the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan (a body of presidentially appointed delegates representing different ethnic groups) provoked strong opposition from Kazakh nationalists and other opposition groups. The document envisioned Kazakhstan as a multiethnic state in which all citizens would primarily have a civic identity as Kazakhstanis. The Kazakh nationalist groups *Ult Tagdyry* (Fate of the Nation) and *Memlekettik Til* (State Language) saw it as an assault on the primacy of ethnic Kazakhs within their own country, and as proof that minorities get preferential treatment in Kazakhstan. Together with opposition parties, they proposed revisions that would recognize Kazakhs as the primary or “state-forming” nation of Kazakhstan. They also proposed making Kazakh the *de facto* state language and the *lingua franca* for all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan. The document that was ultimately adopted in 2010 was a compromise and took some of the nationalist criticisms into account, stating that Kazakhs should be “a consolidating center of unification of the nation.”¹³

A poll conducted in May 2011 found Kazakhstanis generally positive about ethnic relations within their country, but not quite as enthusiastic as their president. Fifty-six percent of respondents said that interethnic relations in their area were “friendly,” while 20 percent said that there was no interaction between

ethnic groups and 11 percent saw hidden tensions. Only 8 percent supported the idea that Kazakhstan should be a state just for ethnic Kazakhs, while 28 percent said that Kazakhstan should be the central or “state-forming ethnic group.” Fifty-eight percent agreed with the president that Kazakhstan should be a unified state of all its citizens--in other words, a civic nation.¹⁴

These complex developments are reflected in views toward ethnic mixing. Despite changes in the political and social context, independent Kazakhstan is still shaped in many ways by the Soviet legacy in its approach to ethnic mixing. The concept of intermarriage—and the view of ethnicity as monovalent and immutable--remains that of the Soviet era. Multiethnicity continues to be publicly celebrated in ways reminiscent of the Soviet-era ideology of “friendship of the peoples.” Many of the positive ideas about ethnic and racial mixing from the Soviet era remain. Officials and scholars still argue that mixing is a cultural boon for society as well as biologically beneficial. Billboards and magazine advertisements, as well as occasional magazine features, commonly depict smiling multiethnic couples and families.¹⁵ Yet just as there were tensions between “Soviet” identity and individual national identities before 1991, the current Kazakhstani state’s promotion of multiethnicity and a civic identity coexists uneasily with a resurgent Kazakh ethnic identity. Negative views of ethnic mixing are expressed both privately and publicly, especially within Kazakh nationalist circles. The celebration of multiethnicity competes with a primordial view of the «ethnos» that also dates back to the Soviet era. As in many other

multiethnic societies, mixed people in Kazakhstan are particularly affected by these tensions.

A positive view of mixed marriages harkening back to the Soviet era has appeared in a variety of publications in and about independent Kazakhstan. A commentary in a Russian-language newspaper in 2005 offered a typical perspective. «Kazakhstan is a multiethnic state, and the conclusion of interethnic marriages contributes to the ethnocultural rapprochement of peoples, the maintenance of interethnic harmony and the consolidation of all ethnoses of the Republic.» This author lamented the fact that the idea of the «purity of the gene pool,» which arose in some circles after independence, has led to a decrease in the number of mixed marriages.¹⁶ The article concluded with this very Soviet-sounding assessment:

Geneticists, doctors, and psychologists agree that interethnic marriages are simply a Godsend for the genetic health of humanity. In the mixing of peoples and races a new type of homo sapiens emerges --more perfect and adapted to survival in today's complicated world.¹⁷

The “Soviet people,” it appears, has been globalized. There are many other examples of this point of view. In a 2011 article, pediatrician Tatiana Troegubova offered an even stronger endorsement of mixed marriages. She declared that children of mixed marriages were the healthiest and strongest.

The issue is that related peoples have a similar gene pool, and for getting a quality genotype it's necessary to have origins that are as diverse as possible. Thus, ideally the healthiest children come not just from interethnic but from interracial marriages.

Troegubova went on to make the impressive but historically dubious argument that Hitler's Third Reich would have died out from its own lack of genetic diversity had it not been defeated in war. As she put it, Germany would ultimately have been "a nation of pale, blue-eyed melancholics." As further evidence, the doctor went on to point out all the Hollywood stars who are perfect human specimens—and of mixed ethnicity; Harrison Ford (Irish-Jewish), Halle Berry (Afro-British), Keanu Reeves (a bit of everything). Even Elvis Presley, she noted, had Cherokee blood. Psychologically, the doctor maintained, such children may grow up "between" two cultures or may be "in" two cultures simultaneously. Yet children are only traumatized if one parent is alienated from his culture or if the status of the parents is unequal—something rare in Kazakhstan, where even in rural areas, she argued, there is mutual respect between ethnic groups.¹⁸

So far, this all sounds more like agitprop than empirically supported data. The Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan tried to give the official blessing of intermarriage a more scientific underpinning in 2014, when it initiated a study of mixed families. The results, published in 2015, were framed in a way reminiscent of Soviet times. The obsession with showing rising rates of ethnic mixing, no matter what the data actually say, seems particularly familiar.¹⁹ Karaganda sociologist Angela Indzhigolian, who reported on the results of the study, maintained that the drop in mixed marriages after the Soviet collapse had been temporary, and that mixed marriages were again on the rise in the 2000s.²⁰ Her data, however, were not entirely convincing. Indzhigolian provided figures that

revealed growth in the absolute number of mixed marriages, but not in their proportion of all marriages, and noted that Kazakhs and Russians were the groups with the highest absolute numbers of mixed marriages. (Since Kazakhs and Russians are by far the largest ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, this doesn't tell us much.)²¹ Indzhigolian wrote, "The growth of interethnic marriages in Kazakhstan fits into the common global tendency toward globalization of social-demographic processes and the 'erasure' of traditional sharp boundaries between ethnoconfessional groups."²² In her words, once again, the creation of a "Soviet nation" has been replaced by a globalization of humanity through interethnic marriage. Indzhigolian attributed the allegedly high rates of mixed marriage in Kazakhstan to the continuing influence of the Soviet past on citizens' consciousness, the ethnic diversity of the country, the low level of religiosity, and the high level of ethnic tolerance in among the country's main ethnic groups.²³ Her article, and indeed the study itself, appears to be explicitly aimed at countering the arguments of people who stress the problems, risks, and difficulties of interethnic marriage.

And in fact, far more negative assessments of ethnic mixing can be--and have been-- expressed in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. In interviews, members of mixed couples and families describe hostile new attitudes toward ethnic intermarriage in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Marina Abdrahmanova, daughter of a Kazakh father and Russian mother, noted a new emphasis on «ethnic purity» among some segments of society.

I would say that the official attitude is calm, so to speak. It's more likely that social and nationalist organizations would bring up this issue than state

institutions. ... they don't discuss marriage per se, but the purity of the nation – yes. It does happen. Especially if you read non-governmental newspapers and publications, this question is often raised there.²⁴

«Ruslan Isaev», a Kazakh-Ukrainian man, went further to note that many Kazakhs are against mixed marriage. «If it's a Kazakh woman, then [Kazakhs are] against it. Categorically against it. If it's a man, then by and large they are also against it because in our daily reality the children wouldn't be Kazakh anyway. As a rule.“ “Ruslan” was referring to the fact that children of a Russian mother are often Russian by language, culture, and sentiment, even if they are officially registered as Kazakhs according to their father's nationality.²⁵

Valentina Geiger, a German woman married to Tatar since 1977, noted that the opposition to mixed marriage has to do with the increased emphasis on nationality in the post-Soviet period. “Right now, first of all, many families don't want mixed marriages, neither in Kazakh, nor in Russian, nor in German families.” Asked why, she explained, “Well, because there is this national division that is ongoing. Before, as I already said, we didn't have anything like that, there wasn't a division of any kind-- that you're Kazakh, you're Russian, and you're Uzbek! We were all children of the Union! But now nationality stands at the forefront for everyone.”²⁶

“Maira Ahmetova” agreed that attitudes toward ethnic mixing have changed. “It seems to me that it has changed a little, of course. Nowadays, after all... well, friendship is still friendship, it still exists. However, everyone is gravitating to his/her own. Each nation gives priority and benefit to its own.”²⁷ Nikolai Hon, a Korean man married to a mixed Korean-Russian woman, noted that relations

among different ethnic groups are more distant now. «In my purely personal opinion, [a process] of self-isolation is happening.” Whereas the students he teaches used to be more “internationally minded,” today he notices them huddling together in groups by nationality. «Kurulai Zhemsekbaeva,» a Kazakh woman married to a Korean, agrees that things have become more difficult for mixed families in the post-Soviet period.

It was just easier back then, it seems. There was one language then, with no clear national divisions, no determined religious holidays; everything was uniform, so to speak... Today, everyone wants to return back to his/her roots, revive their traditions; it seems to me that it complicates the relationship in interethnic families. ²⁸

Several respondents also noted that the younger generation today has much more awareness of ethnicity and feels free to express prejudice against «half-breeds.» «Kurulai,» a teacher, sees very different attitudes among her own students from what she experienced growing up as a Soviet child. Though she went to school with a diverse group of children, no one placed any emphasis on nationality.

I cannot recall someone telling me – “You’re Kazakh”-- we would never say that. But now, I hear this in school frequently. ...they don’t say it to me, rather the children say it to each other, amongst themselves: “You’re slant-eyed”, “you’re Korean”, “you’re Kazakh”!²⁹

Irina Klimenko, a Russian-Armenian woman and also a teacher, described the social ostracism of an ethnically mixed child in the school she works in in southern Kazakhstan.

So, my school is mostly Kazakh speaking... even in a Russian-language class, there are primarily Uzbeks, Kurds, and Kazakhs.... I had a case once. There was a boy in my class who had a Russian mother and Kazakh father... He was still called a half-breed, although, in principle, he was registered as a Kazakh. His appearance was one hundred percent Kazakh; you wouldn't be able to say that there was something Russian. And he was so sensitive about it—that he was called a half-breed! And that Kazakhs don't invite him into their environment, even though he is fluent in the language, and Russians basically don't invite him into their environment ... And given the background of my school I can say that it's getting worse.³⁰

In Tajikistan, there has been even more vociferous nationalism and overt hostility to mixed marriages. Nationalists object to mixed marriage because it allegedly sullies the purity of the nation, while families often object to intermarriage because it may bring about a weakening of kinship ties. Moreover, ethnically mixed marriages are typically love matches, violating the principle of marriages arranged by the family.³¹

In 2011, the Tajik parliament confirmed changes in the family law, making it harder for foreigners to marry Tajiks. In the previous five years, Tajik lawmakers noted, Tajiks had concluded more than 2,500 marriages with foreign citizens. The vice-minister of justice claimed that the frequent ill-treatment of Tajik citizens in these marriages was the motivation for the new law. Foreigners who wish to marry a Tajik citizen have to sign a formal marriage contract, must live at least one year on the territory of Tajikistan (even if they meet their future spouse outside the country), and must provide the spouse with a home registered in his or her name.³² Today it is more often women marrying foreigners, mainly from Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey and Russia. Critics of the measure pointed out that marriages to foreigners are taking place partly due to

the gender imbalance in society, related to the labor migration. (More than 800,000 Tajiks are working abroad, mostly men and mostly in Russia.) Requiring foreigners to live in Tajikistan for a year and buy a home there before marrying a Tajik citizen, these critics noted, is unrealistic.³³

Tajik politicians have tried to win support through opposition to mixed marriage, suggesting that such a position is politically popular. A female deputy of the lower house of the Tajik parliament, Saodat Amirshoeva, declared in an interview that she opposed the marriage of Tajik women to «unbelievers» -- namely, citizens of other nations such as Russians, Chinese and others. Such marriages destroy the gene pool of the nation, she said.³⁴ Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon, meeting with a group of young people, also urged the girls to marry Tajiks. Even the venerable Tajik Academic Rahim Masov has also expressed his desire to see limitations on international marriages.³⁵

In both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, these negative attitudes extend to the rejection of mixed people as potential marriage partners. Svetlana Hassenova (b. 1966), a Russian-Ukrainian woman married to a Kazakh, noted that there has been prejudice against her daughter, Katya, as a potential bride. «My close girlfriend, my classmate, you can say she raised Katya together with me. She's Kazakh. She accepts Katya and cares for her. Well, she's a very close friend of mine. She accepts our ethnically mixed family. But, when her son became interested in Katya... I didn't hear it from her, but from someone else. She said: 'No, Timur. Katya is a good girl, but you need a Kazakh wife.'» These friends,

she noted, consider Katya to be Russian despite her half-Kazakh background. The boyfriend, incidentally, is mixed himself--half Kazakh and half Tatar.³⁶

«Darya Kim,» a Ukrainian woman married to a Korean man, had a similar tale to tell. She noted that her two daughters have always had friends of various nationalities—Kazakh, Russian, Ukrainian, German—without even thinking about it. Her daughter Anya's best friend was a Kazakh girl named Saule. Nevertheless, she went on,

My daughter Anya, my youngest daughter is dating a boy; he treats her very well. The boy is Russian, but just by looking at Anya it's clear that she's not Russian. And so this Pasha, they used to have such a loving relationship, and now... Perhaps, [his] parents don't want him to marry her because she's not Russian. And I think that we will have more problems here. It's all coming to the fact that if she were a Russian woman, then his parents would have allowed him to marry her.³⁷

In post-Soviet Tajikistan, Nargiza Nazarova (b. 1979) described extremely negative new attitudes toward mixed people.

For some reason, starting from approximately 1996-98, mixed [marriages and people] became dregs – unclean. Everyone married people who were the same as them.

This was a major change from the Soviet period, she noted, when there weren't such strict divisions into Tajiks and Russians and it was “completely normal” if a Tajik man married a Russian woman.³⁸

Because of Tajikistan's recent history of civil war and violence, members of mixed families who remain there express concern not just about possible prejudice and discrimination, as in Kazakhstan, but about the physical safety of their families. Yekaterina Rusieva, a Russian woman married to a Tajik, said. “if

the Russians will be driven out of here, what will I do? My kids are mixed. It concerns me. Sometimes, I lie awake at night and think what if that were to happen someday.³⁹ Dilbar [last name withheld], a Tatar woman married to a Tajik, expressed similar fears for the future. During the civil war, she saw slogans calling for Russians and Tatars to leave the country.

And my husband said: “Dusya, don’t you worry. I have so many children, they will have to drive me out too, and I won’t leave them”. I said: “I will be kicked out of here”. “No, no, this shouldn’t happen, wherever you will go, I will leave with you”. He said exactly that.⁴⁰

Because of the rise of vocal opposition to mixed marriage in both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, some children of mixed marriage expressed the view that their parents probably would not have married if they had met today.

«Arkhat Isaev,» a young Chechen-Russian man, declared,

Yes, I think that they would not have gotten married. Because now Chechens marry other Chechens and Russians marry Russians. Well, I say this because I think that’s how it’s supposed to be.⁴¹

Timur Sergazinov, whose father is Kazakh and mother Russian, said that his father has urged him to marry a Kazakh woman—even though Timur himself is half-Russian.

These are the times nowadays. I would tell him: “you married a Russian woman, the times were different back then, does that mean it was a [marriage] of convenience?” He says: “back then there were simply no Kazakh women.”⁴²

Timur's father did not mean this literally, of course, but probably meant that there were not as many educated, modern, urban-dwelling Kazakh women to choose from as there are today. The reasons for his father's change of heart have to do in part with the changing linguistic situation in Kazakhstan. Timur explained: "After all, it's all about the language. If a wife is Kazakh, then a child will learn its first words from the mother. If the mother speaks Kazakh, then the child will speak Kazakh and it will be easy for the child to live in this society. Timur's father, despite having married a Russian woman, has also become a proponent of Kazakh ethnic purity. Timur recalled, "He also said that we should preserve Kazakh blood. He wasn't like that during the Soviet time. After the 1990s, an ethnic Kazakh trait started to dominate in him - that one needs to know one's blood." In this, Timur's father is sailing with the prevailing winds.

Paradoxically, despite the national revival and hardening of ethnic attitudes, some respondents in Kazakhstan believe that the situation is more favorable for mixed couples today. In the post-Soviet era, young people have greater freedom to travel and more access to information. They are exposed to a variety of ideas. Many of them have open-minded attitudes about whom they should marry. Susanna attributes this in part to Kazakhstan's official policy of multiethnicity.

I surveyed my students, and for them the most important thing, praise God, is the kind of a person they find and not his or her nationality. And then, our President proclaimed that soon we can expect the formation of a new Eurasian nation, that the people will be mixed from Kazakhstan's two main ethnic groups and that there will be two or three languages in every family and community.⁴³

Timur Sergazinov agreed, noting that the greater equality among nations in the post-Soviet period made intermarriage less problematic. “There are a lot more mixed marriages now,” he claimed, erroneously, and things are easier, “Because, first of all, there are no ideologies. There is no concept of an older and younger brother... There’s more equality now.”⁴⁴

Yerzhan Baiburin noted the paradox that despite the rise of ethnic and national exclusivity, changes in society made intermarriage more likely even among those who would seem to welcome it least.

Now, let’s take my relatives, for instance, who back then [in the Soviet period], perhaps, would have been strongly against marriages between people of different nationalities. ... Perhaps at that time they would have reacted a little inadequately. And now, well, I see their children also, you know, in mixed marriages (laughter). My cousin is in the Netherlands now. She’s married, yes [to a Dutchman]. And my uncle who is an adherent of tradition, one can say he is closer to the *Nagiz-Kazakhs*, and his daughter is married to a Russian man. They’re in Astana. That’s how it is. So you see, it’s [kind of complicated].⁴⁵

Irina Klimenko believes that society is more open today and people have more freedom, which makes things easier for mixed couples. The Soviet Union, for all its avowed internationalism, was a closed society.

There are no restrictions. A couple, a man and a woman, they’re free to choose where they want to live ... they have a lot more choice. They have more choice not only with regard to intrafamily culture and from which to take more, but they also have more choice with regard to choosing in which country they prefer to live. Even to leave! For example, I have Russian and Kazakh [friends] and they can leave either Russia or Kazakhstan and live in some neutral country. That’s why in this regard

such couples have more opportunities to have a peaceful and united family, so to speak, and for their kids to be healthy and to receive full cultural development.⁴⁶

New trends in intermarriage

How do we explain this paradox, that there seems to be greater opposition to mixed marriage among Central Asians, yet some respondents, particularly in Kazakhstan, believe that intermarriage has in certain respects become easier? There are complex trends at the root of these sentiments. While intermarriage rates as a whole have declined in both countries, in both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan the profile of the mixed couple has changed. More Central Asian women are intermarrying, in contrast to the Soviet period when it was overwhelmingly men who did so, and there are more marriages to foreigners or non-citizens. Both of these trends have been controversial and have led to debates about mixed couples and families.

The most reliable data on interethnic marriage in post-Soviet Kazakhstan reports a continuous drop in the proportion of such marriages since the collapse of the USSR. Between 1999 and 2012, the percentage of interethnic marriages in Kazakhstan steadily declined. It went from 21.4 to 18.8 percent between 1999 and 2005. In 2009 it declined further to 18.1 percent, in 2010 to 17.5 percent, and in 2012 to 16.2 percent. This is in part due to the drop in the percentage of Russians and rise in the proportion of Kazakhs within the population, since Russians intermarry at higher rates than Kazakhs. The nationalities most likely

to intermarry in post-Soviet Kazakhstan are Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Germans, and Tatars.⁴⁷

Much of the quantitative data about mixed marriage remains unreliable. The study of intermarriage in Kazakhstan mentioned earlier, for example, cited an increase in the absolute numbers of mixed marriages from 25,552 to 26,647 between 2009 and 2012 as evidence that mixed marriage is once again on the rise. Of course, depending on the total number of marriages in those years, this could easily signify a declining proportion.⁴⁸ This misleading use of data can also be found in the popular press. According to a 2011 article, the number of interethnic marriages in Kazakhstan between 1999 and 2011 rose by one third, from 18,402 to 25,669. The leaders in interethnic marriage, the article noted, are the Russians and the Kazakhs, with 8,841 and 4,246 marriages respectively. The article failed to mention that these are the two largest ethnic groups by far in the republic, so the absolute numbers in themselves do not mean anything.⁴⁹ Other evidence does suggest that among ethnic Kazakhs, at least, the proportion of ethnic intermarriages has been slowly increasing. In 1999, the percentage of mixed marriages among all marriages concluded by Kazakh men and women was 7.9%, and in 2000 it was slightly down at 7.5%. In 2003, however, the percentage had risen to 9.37%.⁵⁰

One well-documented change is that more Kazakh women are marrying interethnically than in the past. In Soviet times, Kazakh men, like all Central Asian Muslim men, intermarried much more often than their female counterparts. In fact, the number of Muslim women marrying outsiders was infinitesimal.⁵¹ In

the post-Soviet period this has been changing rapidly. In 1999, 8.4% of Kazakh women married someone from another nationality, while just ten years later the proportion had nearly doubled to 16.4%.⁵² Out of the total number of Kazakh intermarriages, 3406 involved Kazakh men and 2666 involved Kazakh women.⁵³ What are the reasons for this change? One writer attributes it to the “breakdown” of the Kazakh family, and in particular the failure of Kazakh men to fulfill their responsibilities in a new environment. Other reasons may be the high level of educational attainment among Kazakh women and the increasing interest of Russian men in marrying a Kazakh woman in order to gain access to Kazakh social networks.⁵⁴

Another noteworthy trend is the rising number of Kazakhs, including women, who are marrying foreign citizens. These include citizens of other former Soviet republics as well as non-Soviet countries. The most common foreign marriage partners for Kazakhs are citizens of Turkey and Uzbekistan. Kazakhs also marry Afghans, Africans, Indians, Europeans, Chinese, and U.S. Americans. Some Kazakhstanis view these marriages with a jaded eye, regarding them as a pragmatic strategy rather than one motivated by love. One of my respondents, «Ruslan Isaev,» commented that some Kazakh women are determined to marry *only* a Russian or a foreigner. This could be because of the “social degradation” of Kazakh men, he said, which makes men of other nationalities more attractive to urban, educated women. To these women, Russian men seem “more cultured, intelligent, more democratically-minded in domestic life, family life, and

such.” Ruslan added, “I personally know some Kazakh women who say: “I won’t marry a Kazakh man.”⁵⁵

“Maria Iskanderova» (b. 1960), a mixed Russian-Azerbaijani resident of Kazakhstan, sees marriages to foreigners as a pragmatic choice, one not necessarily based on love or mutual feeling as would have been the case in the Soviet Union. Many women, she claimed, are simply seeking a more comfortable life by moving overseas. “...like some kind of an agreement. Not emotional, but purely a business-like agreement, I would say. I give you something, you give me something.”

I completely don’t like the change in the attitude. It’s, shall we say, kind of practical. It became kind of like a commercial project. Yes. Namely, to break out and go overseas, to secure one’s future or something.⁵⁶

Tajikistan, for all its differences, has experienced some of the same new trends as Kazakhstan. In Tajikistan, too, marriages to «foreigners»--meaning citizens of other countries—are now much more a topic of conversation than marriages to members of other ethnicities within Tajikistan (though of course Russians living in Russia have now also become «foreigners».) Such marriages are especially controversial when Tajik women are involved. Sometimes the foreign marital partners are non-Muslims such as Europeans and Americans, though more often Tajik women marry Muslim men from Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iran.⁵⁷

It is hard to get data about mixed marriage in post-Soviet Tajikistan. Tajikistan's statistical agencies do not track interethnic marriages on a nationwide level—scholars have to hand tabulate registry documents from individual ZAGs

branches, just as they did in the Soviet era. The numbers of Tajik women intermarrying, according to Sofia Kassymova, are small, but they do show an increase in both urban and rural areas. «At the same time, the geographic and cultural territory of potential bridegrooms is widening.»⁵⁸ Mixed marriages of women, especially to non-Muslims, have aroused what Kassymova calls a «moral panic» in Tajik society.⁵⁹

Tajik women today are more socially and physically mobile than their predecessors of the 1970s and 1980s. They have greater freedom of choice, partly due to processes of globalization and the transformation of political and economic structures. They have much more contact with people of other nationalities and cultures, through NGOs and other organizations. Some Tajik women have studied abroad through various official exchange programs.⁶⁰ Labor migration has also changed the lives of both men and women. More than 600,000 Tajiks left to work abroad during first ten months of 2008, 16% of them women.⁶¹ The massive labor migration of Tajik men has left many Tajik women with a diminished chance of finding a decent marriage partner of their own ethnicity.⁶²

Kassymova's interviews show that many Tajik women consciously seek a foreign spouse; in other words, it is part of a pragmatic strategy. Modern Tajik parents are often resigned, because they see few other marriage opportunities for their daughters. This is especially true if the daughters are «too old» by Tajik standards, (i.e. in their late twenties) or single mothers.⁶³ Marriage to a foreigner can be a means of economic survival, especially for women from poor families,

widows, and divorcées.⁶⁴ These marriages involve a kind of «status exchange», in which the bride trades her beauty and youth for the wealth and/or citizenship of the groom. (Even though these women are «old» by Tajik standards, they are often desirably youthful by Western standards and are marrying men who are even older.) The pragmatic basis of these marriages is evident in the fact that many Tajik women prefer to go to Europe, not to an «uncivilized» country. One woman interviewed by Kasymova said, «Of course, the fact that he is from Europe played a role, I definitely would not have gone to Africa. But a civilized country, why not live there, if someone invites me?»⁶⁵

Intermarriage and “Re-traditionalization” Along with globalizing trends that have provided broader opportunities for some Central Asian women, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have both experienced inward-looking tendencies since 1991 that are often lumped together under the label of «retraditionalization.» Practices related to gender, marriage, and family have attracted a great deal of attention from scholars and policy practitioners as areas in which “tradition” is being revived in post-Soviet Central Asia. International and feminist organizations have been critical of the reemergence of traditions such as polygamy and underage marriage that allegedly push women back into an era before Soviet emancipation. Scholars have written about the rise of bride kidnapping in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, “best daughter-in-law” contests in Uzbekistan, and other seemingly retrograde practices. In Tajikistan, these include a valorization

of arranged marriage, marriage to cousins and other relatives, and marital endogamy more generally.⁶⁶

Marital endogamy and cousin marriage have been particularly fraught topics in Tajikistan, where a 2010 report suggested that every third marriage in Tajikistan is between relatives.⁶⁷ Families often marry their children to relatives in an effort to bolster the well-being of the clan by keeping property and relationships within the extended family. Even though such marriages have a great deal of popular support, they remain controversial, with one study claiming that more than 20 percent of birth defects are due to inbreeding. In 2013, the Tajik parliament drafted a bill prohibiting marriages between first and second cousins, but it was not adopted, apparently because legislators believed the country did not have the ability to enforce such a ban. But Tajik health authorities and even the president himself have continued to express concern about marriages between close relatives, after several studies within the republic showed a close association between cousin marriages and birth defects. Others have claimed that these statistics are exaggerated.⁶⁸

Several of my respondents in Tajikistan expressed dismay at the prevalence of cousin marriages. Rustam Iskandarov, a mixed Tajik-Russian man, finds the prevalence of marriage between close relatives to be a terrible thing:

Honestly speaking, if you were to look at it, what's happening is terrible.... They hide it, the statistics hide it, but in reality it's terrible here. Morons, freaks are being born with cerebral palsy, oligophrenia. Oh, what's happening here is terrible. Well, they can't do anything about it.

Another tendency often seen as part of a «retraditionalization» of society is the revival of subethnic divisions--whether regional, genealogical, or status-based. There has been a revival of genealogical awareness in Kazakh society, with Kazakhs taking renewed pride in tracing their descent and advertising their tribal membership. Kazakhs are divided into different zhuzes (usually translated as «hordes,») as well as numerous subgroups with each horde. Non-genealogical divisions include those between rural and urban Kazakhs, often described as the difference between «Nagiz» or «authentic» Kazakhs and «shala» or «asphalt» Kazakhs (those who have lost the Kazakh language and way of life). The derogatory term “shala-Kazakh,” which literally means half-Kazakh, is most often used today not to refer to the product of a mixed marriage, but to any Kazakh who is linguistically and culturally russified.⁶⁹ The situation in Kazakhstan has been further complicated by the arrival of a number of ethnic Kazakh migrants from other countries, mainly China and Mongolia. They are known as Oralmans and form a distinct group of their own.⁷⁰

Tajikistan, too, has experienced a revival of the importance of subethnic, tribal and clan identities, as well as status hierarchies based on descent. These social institutions and practices of course never disappeared completely, but they were criticized and downplayed in Soviet times. My respondents noted that «intermarriage» now refers most often to marriage among people from different status and social groups. Anthropologist Sophie Roche has described the

continuing significance of social status groups in marriage decisions in Tajikistan.⁷¹

Some scholars have been critical of the idea of re-traditionalization, pointing out that it assumes that “tradition” is something that can be easily identified and brought back to life, something fixed and unchanging, belonging to an imagined golden age before the arrival of modernity and colonialism. As Hobsbawm and Ranger have pointed out so persuasively, traditions are continually being invented and reinvented.⁷² Uncritical acceptance of the idea of “re-traditionalization” essentially buys into the nationalist understanding of tradition, in which nations always imagine themselves as carrying forward a glorious past. For Central Asia specifically, Deniz Kandiyoti has persuasively rejected the idea of re-traditionalization with respect to Muslim women, arguing that Soviet rule itself bolstered tradition in important respects. Soviet “modernization” in the region was paradoxical, encouraging high fertility and the continuation of a strict gender-based division of labor at home, even as women were educated and drawn into the public sphere.⁷³ In a somewhat similar vein, Sofia Kassymova has rejected the notion of re-traditionalization as it pertains to Tajik women. She sees women as having been very constrained in their private lives in the Soviet era, despite the public veneer of “emancipation.”⁷⁴

In the post-Soviet period, I have argued here, the rise of nationalist sentiment in Central Asia has led to criticisms of ethnic mixing in both Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, along with calls for “ethnic purity” and preservation of the “gene pool.” All this might sound like a rejection of Soviet norms and values

and a return to older traditions, yet to assume that would be an oversimplification. For one thing, the use of such terms as “pure-blooded” and “gene pool” in discussing mixed marriages is really a continuation of the Soviet discourse of ethnicity and nationality dating back to the Brezhnev era. The “ethnos” (a term for ethnic or nationality group which came to dominate Soviet discourse beginning in the 1960s), which was supposed to have historical and cultural roots, became increasingly primordial and even biological in the late Soviet era.⁷⁵ Talk of the gene pool (or *genofond*, in Russian) and of innate national characteristics was all too common in the late Soviet period. Moreover, the very idea of Tajiks and Kazakhs as exclusive national groups that should naturally tend toward endogamy was largely a product of Soviet nationality policy. The Soviet state itself created the “national republics of Central Asia in 1924-25, and Yulian Bromlei, dean of Soviet ethnographers, argued in an influential 1970 article that the most important characteristic of the ethnos is its endogamy.⁷⁶

What might be considered a return to pre-Soviet tradition is the idea that one should marry within the family, which has been very obvious in Tajikistan with the prevalence of first cousin marriages. (This is not an issue in Kazakhstan, where exogamous marriage is the norm.) However, the practice of first cousin marriage never disappeared, but like many things was simply less talked about in the Soviet era. Moreover, it is controversial; the Tajik state and prominent scholars have sought to discourage cousin marriages, claiming that they are unhealthy and lead to genetically defective offspring. (This, by the way, is also an idea that came from the Soviet medical establishment.)

Thus, while there may be a hardening of negative attitudes toward mixed marriage in some circles within Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, and even open expression of opposition to such marriages (which was not possible in the Soviet era), it would be wrong to view this simply as a form of “re-traditionalization.” Rather, beliefs about marriage and family, always important to group identity, are one of several spheres in which citizens of these two countries are debating and working out their national identities in the post-Soviet era.

¹ “Marriage, Modernity and the ‘Friendship of Nations:’ Interethnic Intimacy in Postwar Soviet Central Asia in Comparative Perspective,” *Central Asian Survey* vol. 26, no. 4 (December 2007), pp. 581-600.

² The interviews for this project were conducted between 2008 and 2012 in various regions of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. Most respondents permitted the use of their real names; those using pseudonyms are identified with quotation marks.

³ Jacob M. Landau and Barbara Kellner-Heineke, *Politics of Language in the Ex-Soviet Muslim States* (London: Hurst and Company, 2001), p. 42.

⁴ William Fierman, “Language and Education in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan: Kazakh-Medium Instruction in Urban Schools,” *Russian Review* vol. 65 (January 2006), p. 110.

⁵ Landau and Kellner-Heineke, *Politics of Language*, p. 42, 49.

⁶ Kamoludin Abdullaev and Shahram Akbarzadeh, *Historical Dictionary of Tajikistan*, second edition (Plymouth, UK: Scarecrow Press, 2010), p. 7, 309.

⁷ Mehriniso Nagzibekova, «Language and Education Policies in Tajikistan,» in Aneta Pavlenko, ed., *Multilingualism in Post-Soviet Countries* (Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2008), p. 228.

⁸ Sofia Kassymova, “Rasshiriaia granitsy: mezhnatsionnyye i mezhkonnatsionnyye braki v post-sovetskoy Tajikistane (na primere brakov tajikskikh zhenshchin s inostrantsami),” *Laboratorium* 2010, no. 3, p. 131.

⁹ Golam Mustafa, «The Concept of Eurasia: Kazakhstan's Eurasian Policy and its Implications,» *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 4 (2013), pp. 160-170.

¹⁰ Interview with Lesya Karataeva, Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 19, 2010.

¹¹ Interview with “Ruslan Isaev,” Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 20, 2010.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Joanna Lillis, «Astana Follows Thorny Path toward National Unity,» *Eurasianet.com*, April 29, 2010.

¹⁴ *Idem.*, “Kazakhstan: How Deep Does Ethnic Harmony Go?” *Eurasianet.com*, May 19, 2011.

¹⁵ See for example, the online feature “Liubov’ bez granits,” *Vox Populi*. March 20, 2013 (<https://www.voxpopuli.kz/main/983-lyubov-bez-granits.html>)

¹⁶ «Brak eto ne brak», in *Dumaem.ru*, «Spetsproekt Kazakhstan», December 21, 2005.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Vladislav Shpakov, «Obliavlennyye voprosy muzhskoy i zhenskoy toki,» *Express K*, no. 151 (17266), August 19, 2011.

- ¹⁹ The results were discussed in Angela Inzigolyan, «Mezhetnicheskie braki v Kazakhstane (po materialiam sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia), in *Diaspory: Nezavisymyi nauchnyi zhurnal*, no. 2, (2014), pp. 96-114.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 100
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ Interview with Marina Abdrahmanova, Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 15, 2010.
- ²⁵ Interview with “Ruslan Isaev.”
- ²⁶ Interview with Valentina Geiger, Shymkent, Kazakhstan, October 2012.
- ²⁷ Interview with “Maira Ahmetova.” Almaty, Kazakhstan, April 11, 2010.
- ²⁸ Interview with «Kurulai Zhemsekbaeva,” Shymkent, Kazakhstan, October 2012.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ Interview with Irina Klimenko, Shymkent, Kazakhstan, October 2012.
- ³¹ Kassymova, “Rasshiriaia granitsy,” pp. 126-7.
- ³² Galim Faskhutdinov, “Zachem v Tadzhikestane vvodiat novye pravila, kasaiushchiesia brakov s inostrantsami,” *Deutsche Welle*, February 2, 2011.
- ³³ *Ibid.*; see also RFE/RL, Jan. 26, 2011
- ³⁴ Firuza Umarzoda, «Osobennosti tajikskogo natsionalizma,» *Azia Plus, gazeta novogo Tajikistana*, July 8, 2013 (accessed on Sept. 21, 2015).
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ Interview with Svetlana Hassenova, Öskemen, Kazakhstan, September 21, 2011.
- ³⁷ Interview with “Darya Kim,” Öskemen, Kazakhstan, Feb. 14, 2008.
- ³⁸ Interview with Nargiza Nazarova, Khujand, Tajikistan, July 2011.
- ³⁹ Interview with Yekaterina Rusieva, Sugd region, Tajikistan, Oct. 11, 2010.
- ⁴⁰ Interview with Dilbar (last name withheld), Tajikistan, July 2011.
- ⁴¹ Interview with “Arhat Isaav,” Shymkent, Kazakhstan, October 2012.
- ⁴² Interview with Timur Sergazinov, Öskemen, Kazakhstan, April 5, 2010.
- ⁴³ Interview with Susanna Morozova, Öskemen, Kazakhstan, April 10, 2010.
- ⁴⁴ Interview with Timur Sergazinov.
- ⁴⁵ Interview with Yerzhan Baiburin, Öskemen, Kazakhstan, Sept. 19, 2011.
- ⁴⁶ Interview with Irina Klimenko.
- ⁴⁷ «Eksperty podshchitali kolichestvo mezhetnicheskikh brakov v Kazakhstane,» *Respublikanskaia Gazeta ‘Karavan’*, March 24, 2014.
- ⁴⁸ Indzigolian, «Mezhetnicheskie braki v Kazakhstane,» pp. 99-100
- ⁴⁹ Shpakov, «Obliavaem vas muzhem i tokal.»
- ⁵⁰ “Brak--eto ne brak”
- ⁵¹ N.P. Borzykh, “Rasprostrannost’ mezhnatsional’nykh brakov v respublikakh Srednei Azii i kazakhstane v 1930-ykh godakh,” *Sovetskaia Etnografiia*, 1970, no. 4, pp. 94-95.
- ⁵² “Eksperty podschitali»
- ⁵³ «Brak--eto ne brak»
- ⁵⁴ Dariga Bekbusonova, “Mezhnatsional’nye braki: pro et contra,” *Zona kz (Internet gazeta)*, August 24, 2006.
- ⁵⁵ Interview with “Ruslan Isaev.”
- ⁵⁶ Interview with “Maria Iskanderova,” Öskemen, Kazakhstan, April 3, 2010.
- ⁵⁷ Kassymova, “Rasshiriaia granitsy,” p. 127.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 135-6.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-7.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-140.
- ⁶⁴ The only alternative within Tajikistan, Kassymova writes, would be to become a man's second wife or lover. *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 142-3.

⁶⁶ See Cynthia Werner, "Bride Abduction in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Marking a Shift Towards Patriarchy through Local Discourses of Shame and Tradition," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 15, no. 2 (June 2009), pp. 314-331; Michele E. Commercio, "The Politics and Economics of 'Retraditionalization' in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 31:6 (2015), 529-556.

⁶⁷ Galim Faskhutdinov, «Kazhdyi tretii brak v Tadzhikestane zakliuchaetsia mezhdu rodstvennikami,» *Deutsche Welle* on line, November 15, 2010.

⁶⁸ "Zapret na krovnorodsvennye braki v Tadzhikestane uzhestochat'," *Tengri News* (online version), March 27, 2013; Farangis Najibullah and Orzu Karim, "In Tajikistan, Too Much Cousin Love Could Be Causing Birth Defects," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* (on line version) March 21, 2015.

⁶⁹ Jumabai Jakupov, *Shala Kazakh: Proshloe, Nastoiashchee, Budushchee* (Almaty, 2009), pp. 9-10.

⁷⁰ On Oralms and their impact on the cultural and linguistic landscape in Kazakhstan, see Sholpan Zharkynbekova and Baurzhan Bokayev, "Global Transformations in Kazakhstani Society and Problems of Ethno-linguistic Identification," in Sarah Smyth and Conny Optiz, eds., *Negotiating Linguistic, Cultural, and Social Identities in the Post-Soviet World* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2013), pp. 247-278.

⁷¹ Sophie Roche, "Maintaining, Dissolving and Remaking Group Boundaries through Marriage: The case of Khujand in the Ferghana Valley," in Adrienne Edgar and Benjamin Frommer, eds., *Intermarriage from Central Europe to Central Eurasia: Ethnic Mixing under Nazism, Communism, and Beyond* (University of Nebraska Press, forthcoming).

⁷² Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, ed., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁷³ Deniz Kandiyoti, "The Politics of Gender and the Soviet Paradox: Neither Colonized, nor Modern?" *Central Asian Survey* 26:4 (2007), pp. 601-623.

⁷⁴ Kassymova, "Rasshiriaia granitsy," p. 147.

⁷⁵ Marlene Laruelle, "The Concept of Ethnogenesis in Central Asia: Its Political Context and Institutional Mediators, 1940-1950," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 9, no. 1 (Winter 2008), pp. 169-188. For details on the concept of ethnos see Iu. V. Bromlei, *Etnos i Etnografiia* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973).

⁷⁶ Iu. V. Bromlei, "Etnos i endogamiia," *Sovetskaia Etnografiia* 1969, no. 6 (November-December), pp. 84-91; see also Iu. V. Bromlei, *Ocherki Teorii Etnosa* (Moscow: Nauka, 1983), pp. 338—382.