

AU/ACSC/2012

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

RUSSIFICATION EFFORTS IN CENTRAL ASIAN AND BALTIC REGIONS

By Major Sean C. Brazel

A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty
In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

Advisor: Dr. Matthew R. Schwonek

Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

December 2012

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this academic research paper are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the US government or the Department of Defense. In accordance with Air Force Instruction 51-303, it is not copyrighted, but is the property of the United States government.

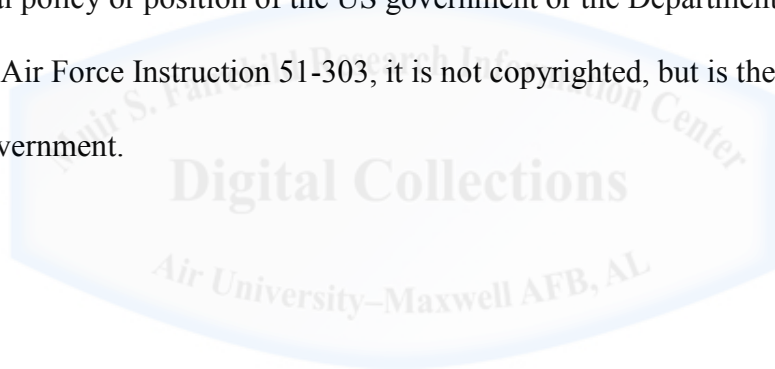


TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DISCLAIMER	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
Introduction	1
Pre-Soviet Migration Patterns	1
Migration Creates Ethnic Diversity	2
Diversity Creates Need for National Cohesion	3
Russification Efforts in Central Asia and Baltics	4
Central Asia	4
Geography.....	5
Industrialization.....	7
Education.....	9
Results of Russification in Central Asia	11
Baltics.....	11
Geography.....	12
Industrialization	13
Education.....	15
Results of Russification in the Baltics.....	17
Conclusion	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY	22

ABSTRACT

Russification is a term used to describe efforts to impose Russian language, ideals and beliefs on non-Russian communities throughout prerevolutionary Russia and the Soviet Union. A historical review of tsarist and Communist efforts to russify Russia's border regions reveals the extent to which geography, industrial development and education shaped the success of Russification efforts throughout the Central Asian and Baltic Regions. During the last half of the nineteenth century, nomadic tribes loosely affiliated by Turkic dialects and Islamic beliefs inhabited the vast regions of Central Asia. Local family or clan relationships established cultural identities that rarely extended beyond the borders of immediate tribes. Industrial development and literacy rates were the lowest throughout the Russian and Soviet realm and often depended on Russian subsidy for sustainment. When the Soviet Union collapsed, Russians dominated the population and titular groups were minorities throughout Central Asia. Additionally, the indigenous elites continued to favor Russian involvement in economic and political decisions, suggesting the high success of Russification. In contrast, the Baltic regions had historic exposure to heavy Western European influence by way of the Baltic Sea and developed core cultural identities that reflected German and Polish ideals. This region also boasted the highest industrial growth and literacy rates throughout the Russian and Soviet realm. When the Soviet Union collapsed, titular groups dominated the Baltic populations and the regions were the first to seek independence from Russian rule, suggesting the low success of Russification efforts. Geographic influence on ethnic identities, industrialization and education systems unique to each region shaped the degree to which Russification was successful.

INTRODUCTION

A highly complex population has complicated Russia's ongoing efforts to establish a united national image. Russia's central Eurasian location provides the ideal geographic setting for the integration of multiethnic populations; however, Russia's historical failure to create successful policies to accommodate the multiethnic reality of its empire promulgated tensions between its multiethnic populations. Under tsarist rule, serfdom and the division of peasants and intelligentsia created a system that promoted social diversity as well as ethnic diversity. Soviet economic and political programs exacerbated cultural tensions by migrating, sometimes forcefully, families and entire ethnic groups from indigenous lands to new locations throughout the fifteen republics. The creation of the Soviet Union introduced a republic divided by social, ethnic and cultural differences, which served as barriers to the Communist regimes' attempts to establish a cohesive identity. Overcoming these barriers required efforts to assimilate the Soviet people into a common Russian culture. The Soviet regime responded by implementing a process of Russification where the Russian language, culture and ideals were imposed on non-Russian institutions and communities throughout the republics. The effects of Russification varied and continue to vary today. Socioeconomic factors shaped by the geography, industrialization and educational elements unique to each region influenced the success of Russification. To illustrate these issues, this paper will compare efforts to impose Russian language and ideals across the Central Asian and Baltic regions to identify the elements necessary for successful Russification.

Pre-Soviet Migration Patterns

The complexity of the Russian population resides in the cultural diversity throughout the region. Prior to the collapse of the Communist Party, more than 100 ethnic groups resided in the Soviet Union.¹ A source of the diversity results from changes in nineteenth century policies that

introduced new migration patterns throughout the region. The abolishment of serfdom in 1861 released the Slavic peasants from their obligations, but many found it difficult to support themselves and their families on the land allotments provided to them.² Taking advantage of the newfound freedom, many began migrating to the border regions in search of opportunities.

In the mid nineteenth century, rumors of a “Siberian Utopia” with vast resources of land led many peasants to migrate from their ancestral provinces to the dry arid lands in the Southeast.³ The undeveloped region attracted many trappers, farmers and adventurers to the untapped rural resources. During this time-period, the Baltics were undergoing the initial phases of industrialization as reform policies began lifting obstacles to free enterprise.⁴ As a result, Russian peasants began migrating toward the new industrial jobs available in the developing urban cities throughout the Baltics.⁵ Unlike the Central Asian region where the prospect of land enticed peasant migration, the industrial opportunities emerging in the North attracted peasant migration into the Baltic regions. New opportunities in the borderlands to the North and South provided the incentive for many of Russian peasants to migrate away from their ancestral homes.

Migration Creates Ethnic Diversity

Russian migration patterns during the pre-revolutionary period integrated different ethnic and social groups and created three population trends that would eventually create barriers to the Soviet Union’s attempts to create a national, cohesive image. First, within the Russian borders, settlement patterns throughout the region created a mixture of ethnic groups so diverse, that no clear predominant group emerged as core “Russian.”⁶ Second, the early Russian empire’s rural agrarian society led people to view themselves in terms of province rather than state or nation.⁷ During the early twentieth century, much of the Russian-speaking population had little mobility and little education and simply could not imagine a larger political and cultural community that

defined their citizenship. Even when peasants migrated to cities, migrants from the same village or rural area tended to settle and work together and identify themselves in terms of locale.⁸

Third, encroachment of Slavic peasants into the non-Russian borderlands created hostilities between the migrants and the indigenous populations. In the Central Asian region, the migrants perceived themselves as superior to the nomadic tribes with inherent rights to their newly settled lands.⁹ In the Baltic Region, the indigenous citizens shared a sense of nationalistic pride that clashed and created interethnic tensions with the Russian immigrants.¹⁰

Diversity Creates a Need for National Cohesion

Diversity, segregation and expansion that resulted from Russia's migration patterns in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries created a mixed and divided population with very little national identity. The tsars sought to exert Russian influence throughout the vast empire; however, after the Bolshevik party came to power and united the fifteen republics, Communist officials sought to promote centralized control and Soviet patriotism.¹¹ Rather than promote a national conscious, Soviet ideologists worked to promote class-consciousness and Stalin would later intensify these efforts to promote Russian pride as a means to mobilize people for war with Germany.¹² Although Stalin took care not to invoke individual ethnic identities, he did recognize the Russians as the "first among equals" within the Soviet family.¹³ Russification began to take shape in the form of cultural, economic and political policies to instill a united Russian image. Officials understood they could not russify an entire population and chose therefore to focus Russification efforts on specific regions with non-Russian ethnicities and cultures.¹⁴ Characteristics of the region would determine types and degree of Russification efforts implemented, but most importantly, the characteristics would also determine the extent to which the border regions accepted or rebuffed Russia's Russification efforts.

Russification Efforts in Central Asia and Baltics

The Central Asia and Baltic regions are two post-Soviet regions targeted for Russification in the early twentieth century with contrasting levels of success that are evident today. In Central Asia, the nomadic tribes of Turkmen, Kazakhs and Kyrgyz coexisted with the settled Tajiks and Uzbek tribes and local clans or family lineages formed the foundations of Central Asian identities.¹⁵ Little indigenous coherence existed in a region marked by underdeveloped, mountainous territories and Russian immigrants were initially welcomed as emissaries of civilization and development.¹⁶ Meanwhile, German and Swedish influence shaped regional identities in the Baltics that developed into national aspirations.¹⁷ Deep-rooted cultural identities existed based on Western European influence and indigenous populations viewed the Russian immigrants as occupiers.¹⁸ A further look at the ethnicities, cultures and policies unique to each region will identify what characteristics made a region more or less susceptible to Russification.

Central Asia

The Central Asian region, composed of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, is nearly landlocked between the regions of Russia, China, Iran and Pakistan. Russification of the Central Asian regions initially occurred as a passive byproduct of tsarist policies to abolish serfdom that began peacefully; however, as gradual expansion escalated into conquest, Russification evolved into coercive procedures carried out with forceful measures under Soviet rule. The vastness of the Central Asian region provided a frontier full of possibilities for nineteenth century Russian peasants living under the oppression of the gentry. Migration patterns introduced new ethnic groups into a region traditionally inhabited by Turkic tribes and clans, giving the region a highly multiethnic character.¹⁹ As Russia, and later the Soviet Union, incorporated Central Asia's economic programs into the central planning process,

diversity would shape the industrial development of the region as heavy Slavic populations came to dominate the urban areas. Efforts to promote Russian influence also led to policies that controlled the vernacular throughout the education system. Geography, industrialization and education provided the fundamental instruments to russify the Central Asian region.

Geography

Geographic location governs the development of cultural and socioeconomic characteristics specific to a region, so we will begin by analyzing how geography shaped the initial Russification events in Central Asia. In 1856, Tsar Alexander II implemented the “Great Reforms,” which abolished serfdom and released fifty-two million people from bondage.²⁰ Meanwhile, to the South, nomadic groups inhabited the vast lands in the Central Asian region and their transient nature, coupled with the vastness of the region, left much of the land undeveloped and open for settlement. Newly found mobility among the peasants created a situation similar to the exploration of the American Western frontier. Slavic peasants with little opportunity for prosperity in their homeland sought their fortune in the vast Eastern frontiers. As a result, large populations of Slavs began migrating into the Central Asian territories.²¹

In addition to peasant migration, the tsars viewed Central Asia as an extension of the Russian empire and encouraged the migration of Slavic gentry into the borderlands to implement Russian influence. Tsarist policies allowed privileges and rights for many Slavic adventurers to seek their fortune and endure on the frontier. This encouragement stemmed partly from the tsars’ ongoing efforts to standardize the diverse administrative practices of the vast realm.²² These policies provided the incentive for the expansion of Russian gentry into the Central Asian frontiers and promoted the tsars’ vision of an enlightened “well-ordered police state” to the edges

of the empire.²³ Construction of the Trans-Siberian railroad in 1891 provided additional access into the Central Asian region and enhanced Russia's influential reach into the area.²⁴

At the onset of Russia's migration patterns during the nineteenth century, there were no borders separating the different ethnic tribes and therefore no sharp boundaries separated the Turkic dialects spoken by the diverse tribes and settled people of Central Asia.²⁵ Variations in dialect existed, but a majority of the indigenous people spoke similar languages. Additionally, Islam served as the nearly universal religious affiliation that provided the core belief system for the indigenous people of Central Asia.²⁶ Although no official state or central government existed to unify the regions of Central Asia, ethnicity, language and religion provided a core social structure that defined the titular population.

Slavic immigrants were initially welcomed into the Central Asian regions because the vast land could easily accommodate the initial wave of immigrants who were primarily hunters and trappers. However, as immigration rates increased, Russians, Koreans, Jews and other non-indigenous ethnic groups began diluting the titular population. Kazakhstan becomes a "settler colony" due to the large mixture of ethnic groups that inhabited the area.²⁷ As the population became more diverse, Soviet policies established borders that forced people into ethnic categories with no clear connection to their previous identities.²⁸ Military conscription of Central Asians led to the Muslim national revolt in 1916 that periodically resurfaced until 1920.²⁹ Nationalistic identities emerged in the early 1900s resulting from the intensity of Russification and the promotion of distinct cultures.³⁰ What began as peaceful settlement patterns turned hostile as immigration and Soviet policies threatened the sovereignty and core identities of the indigenous populations.

The abolishment of serfdom and Central Asia's geography combined to form the catalyst that facilitated the Russian migration patterns that inadvertently implemented Russification efforts in the region. However, the Bolshevik revolution introduced the Communist Party and formally annexed Central Asia into the Soviet Union. Soviet policies facilitated ethnic migration patterns into Central Asia. Stalin's deportation policies and the Virgin land campaign in the 1920s and 1930s created a mass immigration of Russians into the Central Asian states.³¹ Conscription in the Red Army brought Russian soldiers into the Central Asian region while involuntarily moving young Central Asian males away from their native homes. The strong influx of Slavs and other nationalities from throughout Russia changed the demographic balance of the country and created a diverse population more susceptible to Moscow's influence.

Industrialization

While geography facilitated migration patterns, Russia's centralized state policies hindered the rate of industrial growth throughout Central Asia as compared to other regions in and around the realm. A majority of the Central Asian territory consists of mountainous, desert land, making agriculture a difficult endeavor. Tsar Nicholas II's "Great Reform" improved industrialization throughout Russia, but concentrated production and industrial capabilities in the major cities in the Northwest and did not extend industrial development south into Central Asia.³² Negligence to bolster an industrial infrastructure resulted in an underdeveloped region unable to sustain itself and dependent on Russia for subsistence and support. Russia's programs of forced modernization, resource management and internal trade patterns further compounded Central Asia's economic dependency and fostered an environment conducive to Russification.

During pre-revolutionary Russia, many Russians migrated to the borderlands to spread Slavic influence under conditions of forced modernization and most immigrants settled in the

urban areas where they enjoyed special urban prestige and influence.³³ In the 1860s, cotton production became a specialty in the southern Central Asian region, which led to the subsequent construction of railways linking Russia with Central Asia.³⁴ Cotton production and railway construction led to some industrial development in the larger cities; however, Russian immigrants, enjoying the special privileges extended by the tsar, exercised primary control over the urban areas. The limited industrialization that did occur in Central Asia's urban areas benefitted the Russian immigrants, enhanced Russian influence and facilitated Russification of the urban and industrial sectors.³⁵

After Russian elites established their dominance in urban sectors, Soviet policies on resource management would later hinder the industrial growth in Central Asia. The discovery of energy and mineral resources in the 1950s offered new opportunities for development, but did little to promote industrialization throughout the Central Asian region because the Soviet Union treated the region as a resource for raw materials.³⁶ Communist policies shipped the energy and mineral resources extracted from Central Asia to the more industrialized regions throughout the Soviet Union for production.³⁷ There was little incentive to develop the industrial centers capable of processing raw materials into finished products because Communist policies required Central Asia to export all raw materials.

Finally, Soviet trade policies created another obstacle to Central Asia's economic development by limiting economic contact and trade with the outside world. The Soviet foreign trade organizations were located almost exclusively in Moscow and staffed by Russians or other Europeans.³⁸ Moscow allowed the Central Asian republics to engage in limited cross border trade, but prohibited any international activities involving foreign currency.³⁹ The "inward-

oriented” trade patterns created a closed system where the Central Asian states were dependent on Moscow for the purchase, transport and export of their raw materials.⁴⁰

The policies imposed on Central Asia created a weak industrial system with no autonomous economic capabilities. The shortage of natural resources and absence of industrial capabilities led the Central Asian republics to consume more than they produced. As a result, by 1988 all five republics incurred a domestic and foreign trade deficit and were completely dependent on the state to redistribute wealth from the other republics to Central Asia. Weak economic capabilities created a dependency on the Russian state for subsidy and created an environment favorable to Russification.⁴¹

Education

Education levels also shaped the efforts to russify the Central Asian regions. The Central Asian regions had some of the lowest literacy rates throughout the Russian empire during the last decade of the nineteenth century. Islamic schools and Russian state schools emerged throughout Central Asia in the late 1800s, but only 2.6% of the indigenous population was literate as compared to 26% of the Russian immigrants living in the region.⁴² Rampant illiteracy provided opportunities for tsarists and Soviet policies to exert Russian influence by controlling language and literature throughout the region. Controlling the educational systems allowed Moscow to promote Russian language and ideals while controlling any local vernacular that could invoke sentiments of national pride and indigenous identities.

Understanding how education contributed to Russification requires consideration of the gap in literacy rates that existed between rural and urban regions and between Central Asia and Russia. Prior to World War I, literacy rates in the Russian empire’s larger cities were close to 75% while literacy rates in the rural countryside were only 25%.⁴³ This trend portrays the

impact of urbanization on literacy and education. Shortly after World War II, regions within European Russia reported 51% of the school-aged children enrolled in school as compared to only 14% of school-aged children in Central Asia.⁴⁴ Literacy rates from the mid-1860s to the early 1900s reflect the gap that existed between urban European Russia and rural Central Asia. Illiteracy rates flagged a need to establish education programs that would later allow Russia to influence the vernacular development throughout the Central Asian region.

Moscow turned to the written language as a primary tool for russifying the Central Asian states. To solidify the region, Moscow designated Cyrillic, the alphabet used throughout Russia, as the linguistic standard for all Soviet Republics in the 1930s and it became the official alphabet for the Central Asian states.⁴⁵ Additionally, schools taught Russian as a secondary language with the intent that it serve as the standard for conducting business and political actions.⁴⁶ Moscow did not attempt to suppress indigenous languages and regions maintained their native language as the primary, but the benefits of the Russian language made it the language of choice for the local gentry. As the official language for business and politics, Russian became the language of social mobility and preference.⁴⁷

The spoken language also provided a tool to russify Central Asia by employing stories designed to unite the Russian population and establish artificial borders designed to divide the indigenous populations. At the end of the nineteenth century, publications of Russian tales, known as *lubok* stories, began circulating throughout the empire. The stories described great Russian accomplishments and provided a sense of national pride to the Russian peasant populations who were becoming more literate.⁴⁸ After years of *lubok* circulations, the Communist Party came into power and in 1924 Moscow began dividing Central Asia into the five republics we know today.⁴⁹ The artificial borders facilitated the formation of unique

cultures and variations in language specific to each republic emerged. Many historians portrayed the delimitation of the region as an attempt to divide the Turkic or Muslim populations within the region.⁵⁰ Imperial Russian literature and Soviet policies utilized the vernacular to promote nationalistic identities while suppressing individual ethnic and cultural distinctions.

Results of Russification in Central Asia

Geography, industrialization and education led to heavy Russification of the Central Asian region. The vast land, populated by nomadic tribes gave little resistance to the initial waves of Russian immigrants escaping the bonds of serfdom in the 1860s. Stalin's deportation policies in the 1930s and 1940s would further dilute the indigenous ethnicities with the introduction of Koreans, Crimean Tatars, Chechens, Poles and other groups from the Soviet Republics.⁵¹ By the 1960s, only 30% of the population in Kazakhstan, the largest of the Central Asian republics that borders Russia, remained titular in nationality.⁵² Economic policies directing the flow of all natural resources through centrally controlled Moscow prohibited any external trade and inhibited industrial growth, making Central Asia the poorest of the Soviet Republics.⁵³ Illiteracy also plagued the region with Central Asia reporting only 14% state school attendance in 1915.⁵⁴ The absence of a literate population invited early Soviet policies to institute the Russian alphabet, language and ideals into the education system.

Baltics

The Baltics, composed of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, make up a coastal region centrally located between Western Europe and Russia on the Baltic Sea. Moscow's territorial expansion in the eighteenth century claimed the Baltic region as a coastal outlet for Russia; however, Tsar Alexander III sought to initiate heavy Russification efforts throughout the region to suppress Western European influence over the Baltic people.⁵⁵ Tsarist strategies created

social and educational policies to facilitate Russification throughout Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia and Soviet occupation would later intensify Russification efforts through a series of economic policies designed to integrate the Baltic economy into the Communist central planning system. Despite attempts to russify the Baltic region, geographic influence, urban development and educated populations provided the elements necessary to resist Russian influence as evidenced by titular population demographics and the region's immediate declaration for independence following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Geography

The geographic setting of the Baltic region historically condemned the area to repeated Russian subjugation. The region's location on the Baltic Sea provides communication and economic opportunities with Western European states. Throughout the nineteenth century, trade and commercial opportunities facilitated urban growth that exceeded that of imperial Russia and its territories. Opportunities associated with the Baltic region's strategic location prompted Russia to launch a series of Russification efforts based on forced occupation and mass migration trends that drove demographic shifts in the populations.

Efforts to occupy the Baltic region date back to tsarist expansion programs. Ivan the Terrible's desire to increase trade with Central Europe led to the Livonian War in 1558 where his armies attacked what is today Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.⁵⁶ He failed to conquer the region, but 163 years later, Peter the Great would succeed in claiming the land and expanding Russia's reach to the Baltic Sea.⁵⁷ Russian occupation of the Baltics would last until the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 where Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania would emerge as independent states until World War II. After 23 years of independence, the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a non-aggressive pact containing a secret protocol placing the Baltics under Soviet control in

1940.⁵⁸ The Red Army moved into the region and signaled the start of another forced occupation of Baltic territories. Following World War II, the Communist government deported or killed roughly 235,000 Latvians and Estonians within five years of Soviet occupation.⁵⁹ Occupation of the Baltics during the nineteenth century allowed for the immigration of Russian gentry charged with overseeing the political and economic aspirations of the Tsar. Russian immigration and indigenous deportation provided a way to russify the Baltics by systematically shifting the population demographics in favor of Russian nationalists.

Shared borders between the Baltics and Russia created opportunities for migration routes that would facilitate efforts to russify the region through economic and transportation developments. The late nineteenth century saw the abolishment of serfdom in Russia and the growth of large-scale urbanization in the Baltics.⁶⁰ The abolishment of serfdom left many peasants unable to sustain their families on the meager tracts of land surrounding Russia's larger cities; however, it offered new freedom of movement and opportunities to seek employment in the surrounding areas. During the last decade of the nineteenth century, the transportation system throughout Russia remained underdeveloped by European standards, but the emergence of an extensive rail network in the Northwest region provided mass transportation opportunities to the nearby Baltics.⁶¹ Job opportunities in the Baltic's urban regions offered incentives to immigrate, but proximity and means of transportation between the Baltics and Eastern Russia facilitated immigration rates that introduced large Russian populations to indigenous populations with ethnic identities deeply rooted in Western European culture.

Industrialization

The massive urban developments that attracted many Russian immigrants into the Baltics resulted from the industrial growth that emerged at the turn of the century and would later

accelerate under Soviet rule. Soviet occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania following World War II transformed an independent agricultural and fishing economy into a heavily industrialized, manufacturing economy dependent on Russian resources. Industrial growth created massive urbanization throughout the region and intensified the Russian migration rates that began under tsarist rule. Russian influence on the Baltic industrialization process created economic dependencies and fostered additional shifts in population demographics that favored Russification throughout the Baltic regions.

Despite having a strategic location on the Baltic Sea and exposure to Western European culture, heavy industrialization throughout the Baltic region would not occur until Soviet occupation. In the early 1800s, urban elites and rural landowners in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania controlled movement of the peasant force and dictated who could practice entrepreneurship. Tsar Alexander II's reforms in the 1860s abolished the restrictions on labor movement and entrepreneurship and industrial growth slowly emerged within the Baltic cities.⁶² After signing the non-aggressive pact with Germany at the onset of World War II, the Communist government collected land under central Soviet rule and large-scale heavy industries emerged.⁶³ However, mineral and energy resources were scarce and the industrial machines were dependent on raw materials collected from throughout the Soviet Republics and controlled by Moscow.⁶⁴ State control over the delivery of resources kept the Baltics dependent on the central government for the resources and raw materials required for manufacturing.

The emergence of industrialization within the Baltics following World War II created economic opportunities and demands for workers to run the factories. Moscow responded by filling many of the positions with immigrants recruited from regions throughout the Soviet Union. Although the Russians arrived to fill the industrial positions, one representative from the

Latvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed the Soviets recruited Russian workers simply to colonize the territories. A majority of Baltic immigrants were native Russians while others were Ukrainians, Belarusians and other Russian-speaking people from throughout the Soviet Union. Importing Russians and Russian-speaking people created shifts in population demographics so dramatic that some Baltic cities became predominantly Russian speaking cities.⁶⁵

The Soviet Union established large-scale industries throughout the Baltics following World War II. However, the region defined primarily by agricultural and fishing resources could not support the energy demands of large industrial complexes and became dependent on Moscow for energy and raw materials. Except for Central Asia, the Baltics were the most economically dependent on Russia for raw materials when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.⁶⁶ Development of large industrial complexes created demands for a workforce and large populations of Russian nationalists immigrated to fill the positions. Creating economic dependencies and shifting the urban population demographics provided key tactics to russify the Baltic region.

Education

In addition to geography and industry, education served as a critical factor influencing the dynamics of Russification throughout the Baltic regions. Education and literacy provide access to the histories and cultures that shape identities and foster the ideas of nationalism. Education levels in the Baltics have traditionally exceeded those in Russia and other republics throughout the Soviet Union. Prior to World War I, the Baltics boasted the highest literacy rates across the empire for both Russian and indigenous languages.⁶⁷ Moscow's concern that shared histories and cultures between the Baltics and Western European states could incite nationalistic ideals created a need to leverage the extensive educational programs predominant throughout the Baltics as a means to russify the region.

Understanding the link between Baltic educational systems and Russification requires a look at education rates within the Baltics as compared to the rest of Russia and the surrounding republics. The beginning of the twentieth century marked an increase in school attendance throughout the Russian empire; however, literacy rates were not increasing in a uniform manner throughout the region. The Baltics and other Russian borderlands with Western European ties experienced literacy rates that were significantly higher than literacy rates throughout the rest of the region.⁶⁸ Additionally, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian state languages established during the brief period of independence following World War I provided an opportunity to produce high volumes of literature published in their respective native languages.⁶⁹ By the 1950s, the Baltic region produced more original publications in their native language than any other republic within the Soviet Union.⁷⁰ The threat of nationalism and outside influence associated with education drove Moscow's need to instill Russian influence and control throughout the Baltics.

In response to the perceived threat of emerging nationalism, Moscow targeted the Baltic educational systems for Russification by mandating Cyrillic as the official alphabet for publications in a tactic similar to the one employed in Central Asia. Additionally, the Russian language would be a mandatory subject of study in all schools and only Russian nationals could serve as officials in the education system. The Russian government did not have the means to suppress all non-Russian influences, but there was a focus on countering the effects of Western European influence with a specific goal of suppressing the unfavorable Polish and Catholic influences.⁷¹ Moscow saw little need in completely russify the people because time would naturally assimilate small countries such as Lithuania as the populations adopted the larger, more influential and superior culture of the Russian people.⁷²

Education and literacy rates prevailed in the industrialized Baltic region as compared to Russia and the less industrialized regions in the Southeast. However, established education systems provided opportunities for Russia to exert influence throughout the region. Publishing books in Cyrillic, enforcing the use of the Russian language and employing Russian teachers throughout the Baltic school systems, in theory, would instill an appreciation of the Russian spirit. Russification in the Baltics utilized the concept of educating younger generations with Russian ideals to suppress Western European influence and unite the people to Moscow's call.⁷³

Outcome of Russification in Baltics:

Despite Russian influence, geography, industrialization and educational programs unique to the Baltics minimized the long-term effects of Russification. Centuries of exposure to Western European influence established strong ethnic and cultural identities throughout the Baltics. These identities created immediate conflicts with Russian settlers who insisted on the use of Russian language in day-to-day transactions.⁷⁴ Russia's industrial endeavors established large manufacturing centers throughout the Baltics, but economic policies employed Russian nationals in the key industrial positions. As a result, the Communist policies served to exacerbate national differences rather than alleviate prejudices.⁷⁵ Education systems in the Baltics also provided a vehicle for Moscow to insert Russian language, ideals and beliefs to promote Soviet ideals. However, the Baltics preserved a deep sense of national identity enhanced by Western European influence and fostered by the simultaneous emergence of industrial, urban and educational developments that served to resist the effects of Russification.

Conclusion

Post-Soviet trends and policies verify the successful degree of Russification that occurred throughout Central Asia. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 required the new

independent republics to establish new identities and infrastructures, but this would prove difficult in the highly diverse region. In 1959, Kazakhs composed 30% of the population in Kazakhstan while Russians composed 42.7% of the population.⁷⁶ By 1999, Kazakhstan's titular population increased, but constituted only 53% of the population while Russians still comprised 30% of the population.⁷⁷ The heavy Russian demographics created a barrier to reinserting Kazakh culture and language. Post-Soviet economic trends also indicated the effects of heavy Russification. At the time of the Soviet collapse, Central Asia's living conditions were low as compared to European Russian republics and the economy remained underdeveloped and required continued subsidy from Moscow.⁷⁸ Soviet era economics made Central Asia dependent on Moscow and sovereignty presented the potential for economic collapse because the centralization of economic policies deprived the republics of the trade experience needed to operate in the international community.⁷⁹ Finally, the heavy degree of Russification resulted in a large number of indigenous people speaking the Russian language after Kazakhstan's liberation from the Soviet Union. After gaining independence, policy makers added a provision to Kazakhstan's Constitution in 1995 defining the Kazakh language as the sole state language and gave no legal status to the Russian language.⁸⁰ The intent aimed to suppress the Russian vernacular that resulted from heavy Russification efforts by mandating the use of the Kazakh language in schools, politics and public institutions.

On the other hand, post-Soviet trends and policies verify the degree to which the Baltic regions resisted Russification. Geographic proximity and industrial growth promoted Russian immigration, but following the fall of the Soviet Union, majorities of the population throughout the Baltic republics were titular. In Latvia, the titular groups composed 54% of the population as compared to 62% in Estonia and 80% in Lithuania.⁸¹ Industrial trends also demonstrate the

failure to effectively russify the region. The Baltic republics had to import energy and mineral resources required to run the industrial centers and this resulted in economic dependency on Moscow for resources. In 1988, the three Baltic republics consumed more than they produced and, with the exception of Central Asia, had the highest debt burden; however, they were among the first republics to press for political and economic sovereignty when the Soviet Union collapsed.⁸² Eagerness to break financial ties with the Soviet Union resulted from emerging trade opportunities with Scandinavia, Western Europe and the United States that stood readily available following Baltic liberation in 1991.⁸³ The Baltics boasted the highest school enrollments and literacy rates throughout the Russian empire and education served as a key factor in the nationalization process because the classroom introduced the masses to the idea of national pride.⁸⁴ Geography, industry and education were interrelated characteristic of the Baltics that enabled the titular populations to retain cultural, social and ethnic identities that emerged as the dominant traits following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Russia exerted similar efforts to russify the Central Asian and Baltic regions, but only the Baltic republics were eager to regain their independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Nomadic groups in Central Asia initially welcomed the development that accompanied Russian immigrants while the more developed Baltic titular groups, heavily united by German and Polish influence, viewed the Russians as occupiers.⁸⁵ Central Asia remained undeveloped under Soviet control as rapid industrialization transformed the Baltics to manufacture the raw materials collected across the Soviet empire. Education levels parallel the social and industrial development in both regions. Central Asia's literacy rates lagged that of Russia while the Baltics claimed the highest literacy rates throughout the region, providing a national theme that unified the titular people. Strong ethnic identities, high levels of industrialization and educated masses

enabled the Baltics to resist Russification efforts while loosely affiliated tribal identities, low rates of industrialization and poor educational development made the Central Asian regions susceptible to Russification during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹ Barbara A. Anderson and Brian D. Sliver, "Estimating Russification of Ethnic Identity Among Non-Russians in the USSR," *Demography* 20, no. 4 (November 1983): 464.

² Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 53.

³ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴ Andrejs Plakans, "Family Enterprise in the Baltic Estate Economy: The Nineteenth Century," *History of the Family* 6, no. 2 (2001): 248.

⁵ Kaiser, *Geography of Nationalism in Russia and USSR*, 60.

⁶ Anatolii G. Vishnevskii, "Demographic Changes and Nationalism," *Sociological Research* 34, no. 2 (March – April 1995): 60.

⁷ David Brandenberger, "Stalin's Populism and the Accidental Creation of Russian National Identity," *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 5 (September 2010): 724.

⁸ Kaiser, *Geography of Nationalism in Russia and USSR*, 61.

⁹ Theodore Weeks, "Russification: Word and Practice 1863 – 1914," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 148, no. 4 (December 2004): 472.

¹⁰ Kaiser, *Geography of Nationalism in Russia and USSR*, 65.

¹¹ Brandenberger, "Stalin's Populism and the Accidental Creation of Russian National Identity," 725.

¹² *Ibid.*, 726 – 727.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 729.

¹⁴ Theodore Weeks, "Russification and the Lithuanians, 1836 – 1905," *Slavic Review* 60, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 96.

¹⁵ Jonathan K. Zartman, "Political Transition in Central Asian Republics: Authoritarianism Versus Power-Sharing," (PhD diss., University of Denver, 2004), 9.

¹⁶ Renata Matuszkiewicz, "The Language Issue in Kazakhstan – Institutionalizing New Ethnic Relations After Independence." *Economic and Environmental Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 2010): 214.

¹⁷ Joseph Roucek, "The Geopolitics of the Baltic States," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 8, no. 2 (January 1949): 171 – 172.

¹⁸ Matuszkiewicz. "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 214.

¹⁹ Zartman, "Political Transition in Central Asian Republics," 6.

²⁰ John Thompson, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, 6th ed. (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2009), 89 & 172.

²¹ Kaiser, *Geography of Nationalism in Russia and USSR*, 54.

²² Austin Jersild, "Imperial Russification: Degestani Mountaineers in Russian Exile, 1877 – 83," *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 1 (2000), 5 – 6.

²³ *Ibid.*, 127.

²⁴ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 55 – 56.

²⁵ Victor Ya Prkhomovsky. "Historical Origins of Interethnic Conflicts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia." *In Central Asia and Transcaucasia: Ethnicity and Conflict*, ed. Vitaly V. Naumkin, 1 – 30. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994. Pg 18.

²⁶ Zartman, "Political Transition in Central Asian Republics," 12.

²⁷ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 212 & 213.

²⁸ Zartman, "Political Transition in Central Asian Republics," 11.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

³¹ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 212 – 213.

³² John Thompson, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, 182.

³³ Anatolii G. Vishnevskii, "Demographic Changes and Nationalism," *Sociological Research* 34, no. 2 (March – April 1995): 69.

-
- ³⁴ Richard Pomfret, "Central Asia since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union: Economic Reforms and their Impact on State-Society Relations," *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 6, no. 1 – 3 (2007): 315.
- ³⁵ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 76.
- ³⁶ Pomfret, "Central Asia since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union," 315.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 315.
- ³⁸ Yaacov Ro'I, *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1995), 258.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 258.
- ⁴⁰ Pomfret, "Central Asia since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union," 315.
- ⁴¹ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 336 – 337.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 67.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 67.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 72.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 127.
- ⁴⁶ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 214.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 214
- ⁴⁸ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. 68.
- ⁴⁹ Richard Pomfret, "Central Asia since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union: Economic Reforms and their Impact on State-Society Relations," 315.
- ⁵⁰ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 110.
- ⁵¹ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 213.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 213.
- ⁵³ Pomfret, "Central Asia since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union," 315.
- ⁵⁴ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 72.
- ⁵⁵ Roucek, "The Geopolitics of the Baltic States" 174.
- ⁵⁶ Thompson, *Russia and the Soviet Union*, 74.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 112.
- ⁵⁸ Doug Reardon, "The Baltic and their Russian Problem," *World and I* 9, no. 12 (December 1994): 63.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.
- ⁶⁰ Plakans, "Family Enterprise in the Baltic Estate Economy," 255.
- ⁶¹ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 51.
- ⁶² Plakans, "Family Enterprise in the Baltic Estate Economy" 248 & 255.
- ⁶³ Reardon, "The Baltic and their Russian Problem," 64.
- ⁶⁴ Pomfret, "Central Asia Since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union" 315.
- ⁶⁵ Reardon, "The Baltic and their Russian Problem," 64 - 65.
- ⁶⁶ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 336.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 126.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 261.
- ⁷¹ Theodore Weeks, "Russification and the Lithuanians," 96.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 105 & 110.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 106.
- ⁷⁴ David Smith et al., *The Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania* (New York NY: Routledge 2002), xxiii.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, xxii.
- ⁷⁶ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 214.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 214.
- ⁷⁸ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 336.
- ⁷⁹ Ro'I, *Muslim Eurasia*, 258.
- ⁸⁰ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 219.
- ⁸¹ Reardon, "The Baltic and their Russian Problem," 65.
- ⁸² Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 336.
- ⁸³ Reardon, *The Baltic and their Russian Problem*, 63.
- ⁸⁴ Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, 72 & 74.
- ⁸⁵ Matuszkiewicz, "Language Issue in Kazakhstan," 214.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, Barbara A. and Silver, Brian D. "Estimating Russification of Ethnic Identity Among Non-Russians in the USSR." *Demography* 20, no. 4 (November 1983): 461 – 489.
- Brandenberger, David. "Stalin's Populism and the Accidental Creation of Russian National Identity." *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 5 (September 2010): 723 – 739.
- Jersild, Austin. "Imperial Russification: Dagestani Mountaineers in Russian Exile, 1877 – 83." *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 1 (2000): 5 -16.
- Jersild, Austin. *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845 – 1917*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
- Kaiser, Robert J. *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Matuszkiewicz, Renata. "The Language Issue in Kazakhstan: Institutionalizing New Ethnic Relations After Independence." *Economic and Environmental Studies* 10, no. 2 (June 2010): 211 – 227.
- Plakans, Andrejs. "Family Enterprise in the Baltic Estate Economy: The Nineteenth Century." *The History of the Family* 6, no. 2 (2001): 241 – 256.
- Pomfret, Richard. "Central Asia Since the Dissolution of the Soviet Union: Economic Reforms and Their Impact on State-Society Relations." *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 6, no. 1 – 3 (2007): 313 – 343.
- Prkhomovsky, Victor Ya. "Historical Origins of Interethnic Conflicts in Central Asia and Transcaucasia." In *Central Asia and Transcaucasia: Ethnicity and Conflict*. Edited by Vitaly V. Naumkin. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994. 1 – 30.
- Reardon, Doug. "The Baltic and Their Russian Problem." *World and I* 9, no. 12 (December 1994): 62 – 69.
- Ro'I, Yaacov. *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*. London: Frank Cass & Co., 1995.
- Roucek, Joseph S. "The Geopolitics of the Baltic States." *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 8, no. 2 (January 1949): 171 – 175.
- Smith, David J., Artis Pabriks, Aldis Purs, and Thomas Lane. *The Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Thompson, John. *Russia and the Soviet Union*. 6th Ed. Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2009.

Vishnevskii, Anatolii G. "Demographic Changes and Nationalism." *Sociological Research* 34, no. 2 (March – April 1995): 59 – 75.

von Eggert, Konstantin. "Russian Power, Russian Weakness." *Policy Review*, no. 172 (April – May 2012): 27 – 36.

Weeks, Theodore R. "Russification and the Lithuanians, 1863 – 1905." *Slavic Review* 60, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 96 – 114.

Weeks, Theodore R. "Russification: Word and Practice 1863 – 1914." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 148, no. 4 (December 2004): 471 – 489.

Zartman, Jonathan K. "Political Transition in Central Asian Republics: Authoritarianism Versus Power-Sharing." PhD diss., University of Denver, 2004.

