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- Number in Sinkiang: The Kazakh race of Sinkiang is also referred to, both in Sinkiang and in English-language texts on that province, as Kazak, Kasak and Ha-se-ko. According to a 1941 survey they numbered 318,716, or slightly over 8.5% of the total population of Sinkiang.
- Origin of the Name: The origin of the Kazakhs is indicated by the name "Kazakh", which means "a fugitive or masterless man who has separated himself from his tribe or overlord". Their name was adopted by the Russians, Poles and Ukrainians, and is pronounced in an identical manner. The English-language version of this name, however, changed the Slavic pronunciation of Kazák to Cossack.
- History of the Race: The Sinkiang Kazakhs and the Kazakhs of the USSR shared a common history until a comparatively recent period. They were originally a part of the Ulus, an endowment of Jagatai, who was one of the sons of Jenghis Khan. Then they became part of the Uzbek Khanate, one of the successor states of the Ulus, endowed to Juchi, eldest son of Jenghis. The Uzbek Khanate, called the Golden Horde by the Russians, suffered from constant friction among tribal Sultans and Princes. In the middle of the fifteenth century two Sultans of the Barak clan, which was the most powerful opponent of the ruling Khan, left the Uzbek Khanate and migrated to the neighboring Khanate of Mogulistan. The Mogul Khan, who controlled the territory from east of Tashkent to Dzungaria, hoping to find them allies against his Uzbek rivals, gave the Sultans and their tribal subjects a stretch of grazing lands from north of the River Chu to west of the River Sary-su. The transformation of this small group into a national unit was not accomplished until the end of the fifteenth century. The Uzbeks at that time conquered the southern oasis regions of Inner Asia and through close contact with the sedentary oasis population, ceased to be pastoral nomads. Several tribes then separated from the Uzbek Khanate and joined the Kazakhs, whose border was thus moved far westward into what is today called the Kazakh steppe.

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In the sixteenth century the newly formed Kazakh Khanate split into three hordes, forming a loose federation which united only rarely, under stress of war. Of these three hordes, it was the easternmost, or the Old Horde, whose grazing lands reached east of the present Soviet-Chinese border into Sinkiang. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Russians began to penetrate into the territory of the Kazakhs and by the end of the nineteenth century had succeeded in colonizing the territory of the three hordes, except for the easternmost part which remained under Chinese domination. Even after the border was established many aspects of the common historical development continued, as the nomads do not respect national boundaries and migrate back and forth across the frontiers which cut through their tribal lines.

4. Language: The language of the Sinkiang and Soviet Kazakhs is identical. It is the Kazakh language which belongs to the Turkic group of the Altaic family and is closely related to the other Turkic languages of Inner Asia. The small number of literates, mainly within the upper classes and the clergy, used the Arabic script. However, since this is not suited to any of the Turkic languages, the Soviets introduced a Latin alphabet and in 1940 replaced it by the Cyrillic alphabet, with the addition of a few special letters.
5. Religion: The Kazakhs belong to the Sunni sect of the Islamic faith. They were not converted to Mohammedanism until the seventeenth century. Because they are wild and utterly undisciplined nomads, they not only do not have mosques, but are by no means strict in their religious observances. Since the conditions of nomadic life require active kinds of work from both men and women, they neither seclude nor veil their women. They are also lax about the details of the Moslem dietary laws, except for the prohibition against pork. They frequently neglect to circumcise their sons, do not adhere to the hours of prayer or the seasons of fasting, but are completely enthusiastic in the performance of the feasts. Worship is a simple matter to them, involving little more than a prayer spoken while facing the west.
6. Physical Characteristics: The fierce, rugged and bearded Kazakh tribesmen present a very striking appearance. They are of Mongoloid type, short and stout, dark skin, dark straight hair, black eyes with an epicanthic fold, nose broad at the base and of medium facial and body hair. They do not shave on reaching manhood, but merely trim the beard along their lips for convenience of eating.
7. Dress: The Kazakhs dress themselves in black cloth coats with bushy fur hats, or in inverted sheep-skin coats and helmet-shaped hats that also cover the ears and neck. To their leather girdles a dagger is always attached on the right side and a leather bag on the left. They are also readily identified by high-heeled riding boots. In some instances the Kazakh men and women also wear skull-caps (tebiteika) which are always either black or maroon in color. The women generally wear long white cotton gowns which fall to the ground and in cold weather are topped by padded black cotton jackets which reach to the hips. Their head and neck is covered by white cotton hoods which expose only the face. For ornaments they wear rings and costly bracelets, often of gold studded with precious stones.
8. Concentrations: The main grazing grounds of the Sinkiang Kazakhs are along the border between Sinkiang and the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic and in the Altai region bordering the Mongolian People's Republic. They are the predominant race in northwestern Sinkiang. From the Takes and Kunges Rivers, in the Ili region, they range northeastward to the Chugushak region and then southeastward along the Mongolian border. There are even Kazakhs on the other side of this border, under the sovereignty of the Mongolian People's Republic.
9. Dwellings: Kazakhs generally live in "yurts" all the year around, but some reside in mud or log cabins during the winter. A yurt is a round felt tent with a conical roof. It is a home which is easily transportable, commodious, cool in summer and warm in winter. Yurts vary in size from the one-man variety

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to a chieftain's yurt which may be from 30 to 40 feet in diameter. The structure consists of a framework of collapsible trelliswork about three feet tall, or four to five feet when not unduly extended. This trelliswork is set up in a circle, leaving an opening for the door frame. Next, arched poles, resembling ribs of a huge umbrella, are lashed all around to the top of the trelliswork and these curved ribs, instead of meeting above in an apex, are socketed into a wooden ring about a yard across. The roof of arched poles is covered with large pieces of felt, about a quarter inch thick and made of wool or camel's hair, and to the corners of these are attached long, gayly colored bands. The latter serve to fasten the felt pieces to the framework and add a decorative touch to the under roof. The open ring at the top lets light and air into the yurt and allows smoke to escape. A flap of felt can be drawn back and forth over the aperture by ropes, thus the draft can be regulated or in rain the interior made watertight. The door-frame also has a felt blind which can be rolled up in the daytime and secured at night.

As you enter a yurt, to the right of the door is a reed matting enclosure which serves as a storeroom for milk and cream and also affords the women a small area of privacy. The family possessions are stored along the back wall, set up off the ground on a low platform. Here are the trunks which contain the family heirlooms of embroideries and gold and silver trinkets. On top of the trunks are piled gay-colored comforters while on the ground, beside the platform, are the silver-trimmed wooden saddles. Attached to the trelliswork, all around the inside of the yurt, are whips, bridles, ropes, girdles and other saddle trappings.

10. Eating Habits: The diet of the nomadic Kazakh tribesmen consists of approximately 50% milk, 40% meat and 10% cereal. They eat absolutely no vegetables and are considered to be medium eaters. The Kazakhs are strong meat-eaters, being very fond of roasted flesh in any form. Horse-meat sausage is their chief delicacy. The poorer people live more on milk and cheese than on mutton, while wealthier herd-owners subsist mostly on mutton. The horse, formerly important in war, is honored in Kazakh folklore for its beauty, bravery and faithfulness. The meat of white horses is considered a specially delicate dish, while sheep are most esteemed when they have a yellow head and white body. Their daily drink is tea, with milk, and they also consume a great deal of "kumis", which is fermented mare's milk. Kumis serves as their wine and has an alcoholic content of from two to three per cent. The wealthy Kazakhs keep herds of mares for the specific purpose of producing this drink.

Kazakhs are careful to wash their hands before every meal, if they can find no water for that purpose, they use clean earth. It is also a fixed custom with them to wear a hat when eating. Failure to do so is considered discourteous and if one of the tribesmen is offered food when he has no hat handy he will always do his best to improvise some head covering before eating. If nothing else is available for that purpose, they even put a piece of straw in their hair as an act of courtesy before partaking of food. They eat with their hands, but first cut the meat with their knives. Like other nomads, they parade the beast chosen for slaughter so that their guest may see that he is being given the best they have. When a stranger comes to their yurt he must at once be offered food and if no fresh-cut meat is to be had the host must explain to his guest the reasons for failing to provide it. Otherwise, the guest has the right to complain to the head-man of the community, who will reprimand the host severely and even inflict punishment upon him for having disgraced the encampment in failing to deal generously with a traveler.

11. Occupations: The Kazakh people are extremely strong and rugged pastoral nomads, but also very lazy. Outside of tending cattle, sheep, goats, horned cattle, horses and camels, they often do not have any other occupation. So some, when winter season comes, take to the life of a lancer. A few steal cattle and horses and many become bandits, killing travellers and taking their goods. For this is only an outgrowth of their military talent and since they have interest in tilling the soil, they lack any other way in which to use it. One of their subsidiary occupations is the trapping of wild animals and selling their pelts.

They trap by conventional means and also use hawks and hounds. The Kazakhs excel the Mongols in their knowledge of hawks and highly prize these great birds. They carry these valuable hunting falcons on their wrists, which are padded to protect them from the fierce grip of the claws. The arm bearing the bird is supported by a wooden crutch which rests in the rider's stirrup.

Like other nomads, the Kazakhs do not wander aimlessly. Summer pastures belong collectively to a group of families forming a clan and identified by a common ancestor, whether real or fictitious. These pastures lie within a large territory, in which jurisdiction is claimed by the larger unit, the tribe. Winter quarters more commonly belong to a single family, often the "large family" of several generations living together. The chief migrations are in spring, from winter quarters to summer pastures, and in autumn, from summer pastures back to winter quarters. The most hazardous migration is in spring, when herds are weak after the winter, when lambs are being born and when spring blizzards may cause heavy losses. Good winter quarters are much harder to find than good summer pastures. Shelter and food must be in close combination, hence the scarcity of suitable winter quarters rather than the abundance of summer pastures determines the total population capacity of a nomad territory. In practice, the wealthy Kazakh families acquire the determining political power within clans and tribes and secure the best pastures. Rich men sometimes hire Uighurs or Chinese to cultivate grain for them on suitable land. A Kazakh's wealth is measured by the number of sheep and goats that he possesses. Sheep and goats are the economic staple and serve as the two units of exchange value.

Disputes over winter quarters are the most common cause of quarrels between clans and tribes. Similarly, the fact that good winter quarters are often on land which is suitable for cultivation is the most common cause of friction between Kazakhs and colonizing Uighur and/or Chinese farmers.

12. Customs:

- a. General: Silence, among the Kazakhs and other nomads, is a prelude to greeting. This is a fine point in their social etiquette. After having approached one another in silence, the Kazakhs shake hands and then embrace each other round the waist. Although they are bearded they do not stroke their beards, as a sign of greeting, as do the Uighurs. Elders kiss their children when meeting them.

Justice is administered by a meeting of the entire community, which appears to gather without any special summons as soon as the whisper goes round that some wrong has been done. Minor offenses are punished by fines and sometimes the offender's cattle is confiscated by the order of the head-man. The death penalty is only exacted for premeditated and unwarranted murder and is followed by the distribution of his property among the community.

- b. Marriage: Marriage is strictly forbidden between those who were raised on the same milk. A marriage broker arranges the financial aspects of the affair and finally brings the two parents together. Once the parents have clasped hands, there is no going back on the bargain. The bridegroom then goes to fetch his bride. An interesting custom is that the father shall not meet his daughter-in-law until at least two years after the ceremony. Should they meet by accident, the girl must turn her back and cover her face with a handkerchief.

Polygamy is practiced by all who can afford it. A Kazakh man is allowed, four wives, but it is always understood that the first will have full control of the management of the home. The other wives are held in the position of servants, but treated well.

- c. Divorce: The Kazakhs consider divorce disgraceful. If divorce appears unavoidable, the relatives of both parties meet and discuss with astonishing frankness and impartiality as to who is in the wrong. A husband may not divorce his wife without paying her a sum of money in proportion to his

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wealth. If the woman asks for a divorce, even though she is judged to be justified in her complaints, she receives nothing. They have a fixed rule that no matter what the circumstances are, all the children remain with the father and that the mother loses all her rights to them.

- d. Burial Rites: After a man's death his widow is not free to remarry as she chooses, for her husband's family paid good money for her and she is theirs by right of purchase. Therefore, she is usually married either to her husband's brother or to a cousin. This practice is not in accord with the principles laid down in the Koran, but the most that Islam has been able to achieve in this matter is to prevent compulsion from being applied to the widow. She may remain single if she desires, being then without any obligation to her husband's relatives. Sickness is treated by reading of appropriate scriptures on the part of the priest. Death is accepted with complete resignation, and there are no ceremonies save a general mourning. It is their custom to bury the dead immediately, for the spirit of the dead man may exercise an evil influence while his body is above ground. The corpse is washed in clean water and wrapped in a white cloth, after which it is laid out with the head pointing to the south and the face towards the west. A tomb is then hastily hollowed and the body is committed to the earth, a passage from the Koran being solemnly read. The ritual is quickly ended. It is well suited to a people whose life is hard and who are always on the move.

When the dead man is laid in the grave it is the custom for his widow to tear at her face with her nails, scratching till she draws blood. This shows her respect and love for her husband and signifies her wish that no other man shall ever enjoy her beauty. However, it is amazing how quickly the scars heal, and it is usually not long before she is married once again. In spite of this fact the ceremony is never omitted, for any woman failing to scar her beauty would be jeered at by all the community and condemned as incapable of true affection.

13. Good Qualities: The Kazakhs, although wild and often driven to dishonesty under pressure of great want, are a simple, courteous, hospitable, generous and lovable people. They are very clean in their habits. Every morning immediately upon rising they take up the water-pot to wash up, being particularly careful to wash the undisclosed portions of the anatomy. Kazakhs excel at horsemanship and children five and six years old have been known for their riding ability. There are none at the age of ten who do not have unusual talent such as enables them to tell the sickness of a horse, to control the animal, to stand on its back, to bend from the horse to pick up articles from the ground, to straighten up quickly and above all to ride as though glued to the animal. Their greatest sport and love is horse racing. The Kazakhs live very much in the present, caring so little for the past that there is not word in their vocabulary for great-grandfather.
14. Bad Qualities: For the most part Kazakhs are peaceful and honest, but occasionally, the young men feel it necessary to prove their manhood. They will then turn to banditry, plundering far and wide and slaying anyone who resists them. Such outbreaks are a major nuisance in northern Sinkiang. They often become intoxicated on kumis and are contemptuous of cities, usually causing a great deal of trouble when they visit fairs. Since they are nomads and their life is governed by a continual search for fresh pastures, the Kazakhs are generally considered to be the shiftiest people in Sinkiang.
15. General Problems: The most serious problem facing the nomadic peoples of Sinkiang, including the Kazakhs, is overpopulation. The available pastoral land has become increasingly scarce and inadequate due to a constant increase in the Kazakh and other nomadic population of Sinkiang. The Chinese authorities have added to their misfortunes by allowing the colonization of some of their territories by Uighur and Chinese farmers. Since Kazakhs refuse to understand, or accept, national boundaries and because of the hardships inflicted on them in the USSR, there has been a small but steady drift of Kazakhs from the USSR into Sinkiang. As a result, grazing lands throughout Sinkiang and especially between Chuguchak (Tahoheng) and Kuldja (Ining) are overcrowded. Since 1920 several attempts have been made to drive back these unwanted immigrants, but the task proved hopeless and the drift goes on. Therefore, the future holds nothing but increasing hardship for this primitive and free people.

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