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Author(s): Steven Sabol

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Comparing American and Russian Internal Colonization: The "Touch of Civilisation" on the Sioux and Kazakhs[1]

Steven Sabol

This article compares American and Russian colonization of continental interiors and the consequences for the indigenous Sioux and Kazakhs, focusing on imperial perceptions, social and economic dislocation, political sovereignty, and sedentarization. It provides a critical, comparative analysis of internal colonization exercised by the United States and Russia.

In the 1890s, American John W. Bookwalter traveled through the grassland regions of Russian Siberia into the Kazakh Steppe. His description of the region noted that for "all Americans who have travelled to the Rocky Mountains through the States of Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska, the country I have come through is easy to describe. To simply say it is exactly like [the steppe] would constitute a more or less perfect description. Indeed, I have never seen any two things more absolutely similar than are the prairie and plains regions of our country and that vast region lying in southeast Russia."[2]

In 1905 Russian historian Paul Miliukov compared American and Russian expansion within their continental interiors by claiming that "if we study the conditions of settlement . . . we shall soon discover how close the similarity is between the countries." He believed that the Plains and the steppe possessed "virgin prairie land" that "had to be broken" by settlers and peasants. He claimed, however, that the "raids of the Tartars from the Black Sea . . . were more dangerous for Russia than the 'Indian

Steven Sabol is an associate professor of history at UNC Charlotte and editor of *First World War Studies*. He gratefully acknowledges support provided by UNC Charlotte, the Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, and colleagues Carol Higham, John David Smith, and Clyde Ellis.

[1] John Foster Fraser, *The Real Siberia: Together with an Account of a Dash through Manchuria* (London, 1902), 42.

[2] John W. Bookwalter, *Siberia and Central Asia* (Springfield, OH, 1899), 18–9.

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wars' have been [in the United States]."[3] Bookwalter and Miliukov possessed the colonizer's perspective, ignoring the consequences of expansion and colonization for the indigenous populations and commenting instead upon expansion's apparent benefits for the dominant society.

This article provides a critical, comparative analysis of the internal colonization exercised by the United States and Russia in order to negate the "tendency to isolate the study of American history, to overemphasize the uniqueness of the American development and to exalt national pride." Yet, as Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan note in their introduction to *Imperial Formations*, "What scholars have sometimes taken to be aberrant empires—the American, Russian, or Chinese empires—may indeed be quintessential ones, consummate producers of excepted populations, excepted spaces, and their own exception from international and domestic laws."[4]

Comparing American and Russian colonization of the northern Plains and the Kazakh Steppe connects these conquests to the nineteenth-century global colonizing experience. Trade, land, and security motivated expansion, and greater wealth, superior technology, power, and population eventually eclipsed the ability of the indigenous populations to resist colonization. Sedentarization forced both peoples to abandon nomadism in favor of developing settled, agricultural economies. Specifically, this article examines how perceptions of the Sioux and Kazakhs as uncivilized peoples—and similarly held perceptions of the northern Plains and the Kazakh Steppe as "uninhabited" regions that ought to be settled—reinforced government sedentarization policies and land allotment programs in both countries.[5]

[3] Paul Miliukov, *Russia and Its Critics* (New York, 1962), 22–5.

[4] Dietrich Gerhard, "The Frontier in Comparative View," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 1 (March 1959): 205 and Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan, "Introduction: Reconfiguring Imperial Terrains," in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan, and Peter C. Perdue (Santa Fe, 2007), 11. Stoler and McGranahan define imperial formations as "polities of dislocation, processes of dispersion, appropriation, and displacement." This system creates "new subjects that must be relocated to be productive and exploitable, dispossessed to be modern, disciplined to be independent, converted to be human, stripped of old cultural bearings to be citizens, coerced to be free." Stoler and McGranahan, "Introduction," in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Stoler, McGranahan, and Perdue, 8.

[5] Significant comparative work links American expansion and internal colonization with similar processes in the nineteenth century, including Ian Tyrrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96 (October 1991): 1031–55; John F. Richards, *The Unending Frontier: An Environmental History of the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, 2003); Herbert Heaton, "Other Wests than Ours," Supplement: The Tasks of Economic History, *Journal of Economic History* 6 (May 1946): 50–62; James O. Gump, *The Dust Rose Like Smoke: The Subjugation of the Zulu and the Sioux* (Lincoln, 1994); Margaret Ziolkowski, *Alien Visions: The Chechens and the Navajos in Russian and American Literature* (Newark, DE, 2005); and James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939* (Oxford, 2009). I selected the Sioux and Kazakhs for this project because they provide a comparable case study. As nomadic populations, their sociocultural and military dominance in the steppe and the northern Plains was supreme at the time of expansion and colonization. Other American Indians or Central Asians presented comparable dilemmas for the colonizing power,

Steeped in the Enlightenment tradition, American ideas about individual liberties and popular political participation seem utterly alien to Russia with its autocratic, repressive tsarist system. The United States avoided the revolutionary upheavals and authoritarian tendencies evident in Europe, most notably as existed in Russia. And yet closer analysis reveals that American expansion, conquest, and colonization of a continental interior paralleled Russian expansion, conquest, and colonization of Siberia and the Kazakh Steppe with similar political, economic, social, and cultural processes and consequences for the indigenous population. In the nineteenth century, the United States and tsarist Russia, two expanding powers that seem particularly far removed from each other in every way, pursued conquest and internal colonization policies that prove remarkably similar.[6]

No comparison, however, is exact, and differences do appear, especially distinctions specific to time, geography, and actors involved. This broad comparative approach, nevertheless, should identify those tendencies and experiences recognizable as part of a larger, common process of conquest and colonization by territorially contiguous empires while still differentiating between inimitable and idiosyncratic characteristics. Moreover, focusing too deeply on the "uniqueness" within the realm of one's own area of specialization could mean ignoring larger, perhaps readily comparative, trends and consequences.

Americans and Russians viewed the Sioux and Kazakhs through the prism of ethnic and historical stereotypes and by clichés created by their own sense of moral and national superiority. Assimilation became the goal of both governments. But Sioux and Kazakhs oriented their sociopolitical formations to life on the Plains and the steppe. While pursuing internal colonization, Americans and Russians denigrated and destabilized these structures, particularly leadership and land utilization, which exacerbated relations between colonizer and colonized. In order to understand colonization's consequences—the perceptions and reality—requires a brief description of Sioux and Kazakh nomadic sociopolitical structures.

The Sioux divided into three groupings: Santee, Yankton-Yanktonai, and Teton. The first two referred to themselves as *Dakota*, and the Teton called themselves *Lakota*. Geographic, linguistic, and cultural distinctions marked the three divisions, but due to

which sometimes required different approaches but reached similar conclusions. A comparative analysis of those processes would prove equally fruitful but is beyond the scope of this work.

[6] George M. Fredrickson argued that the main objective of a comparison ought to be "the systematic comparison of some process or institution in two or more societies that are not usually conjoined within one of the traditional geographical areas of historical specialization." George M. Fredrickson, "Comparative History," in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca, 1980), 458. Additionally, American and Russian expansion both fit the definition of imperialism and colonization, whereby the "aggressive encroachment of one people upon the territory of another" results in the "subjugation of the latter people to alien rule." Donald W. Meinig, "Geographical Analysis of Imperial Expansion," in *Period and Place: Research Methods in Historical Geography*, ed. Alan R. H. Baker and Mark Billinge (New York, 1982), 71.

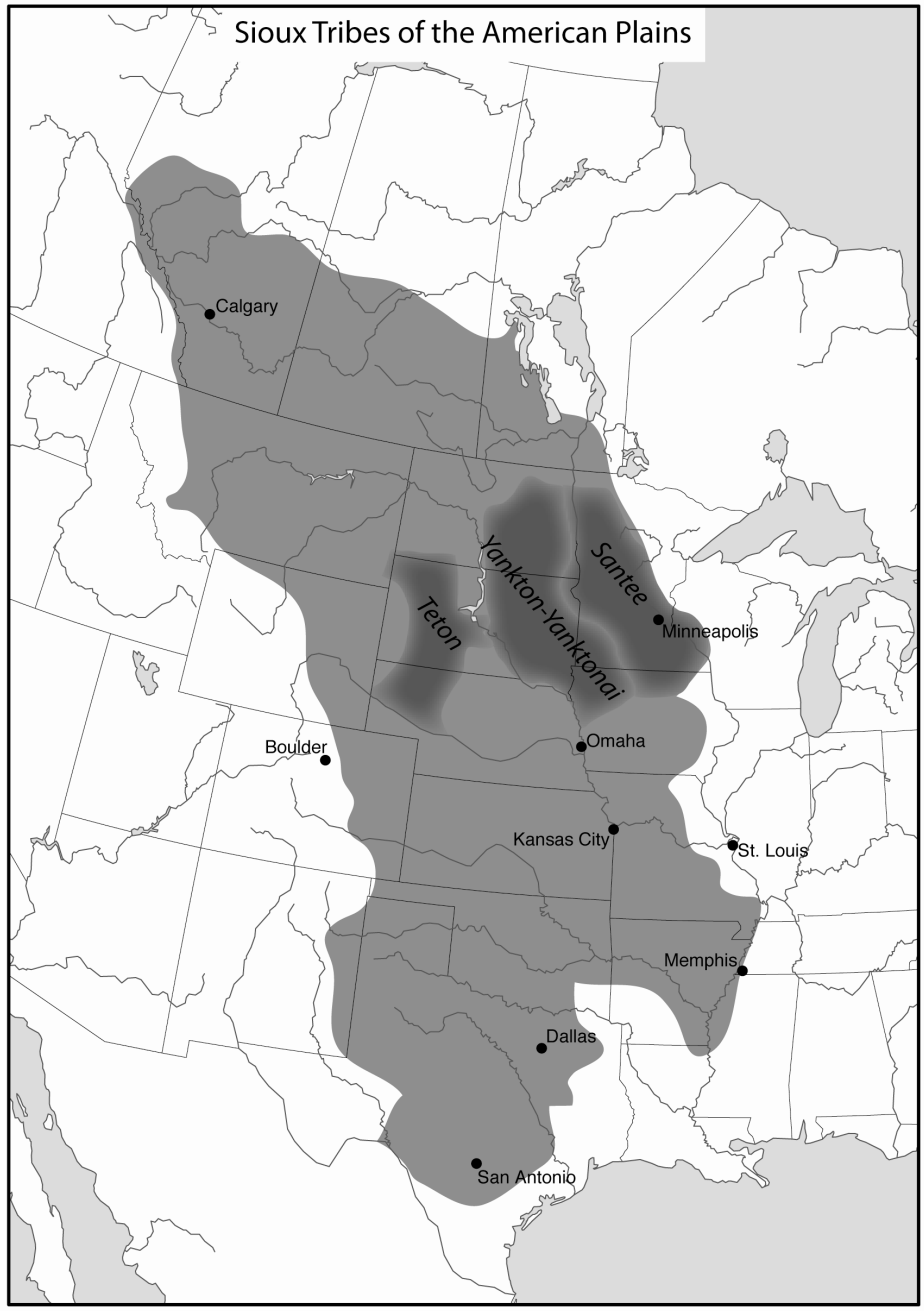

Figure 1: Sioux Tribes of the American Plains, mid-nineteenth century. Map by Patrick Jones.

"intermarriage and close associations," the differences blurred over time.[7] (See Figure 1.)

Sioux social structure evolved during their nomadic westerly hunting migrations in the eighteenth century. All Sioux shared their kinship units, or bands, called *tiyospaye* (Lodge Group); based on consanguineous units, bands typically stayed together throughout the year. The *wicasa wakan* (holy man) assumed an influential role along with a *blotahunka* (war-party leader). The camp council within the tiyospaye included *itancan* ("fathers" of the band), who demonstrated kindness, generosity, wisdom, oratory skills, and courage.[8]

The Kazakhs, too, consisted of three divisions called *zhuz*, or hordes, a sociopolitical formation that existed until the early twentieth century. Each horde—*Uly Zhuz* (Great Horde), *Orta Zhuz* (Middle Horde), and *Kishi Zhuz* (Little or Younger Horde)—had its own genealogy, history, and traditions, yet retained a common Kazakh culture, language, and religion.[9] (See Figure 2.)

As pastoral nomads, Kazakhs conceived their social organization in blood relationships and affinity. Genealogies provided the locus of authority between families: *aul* (the nomadic unit), *ru* or *taipa* (clan or tribe), and zhuz. They based this common social organization on fixed annual rounds between winter and summer pastures.[10]

Leadership among the Kazakhs usually consisted of, at the aul level, an *aqsaqal* (literally "white-beard") and a *bii* (sometimes translated as "judge") and a khan at the larger zhuz level.[11] They acknowledged the bii for his knowledge of *adat* (customary law). Kazakhs based leadership upon personal integrity, wealth and social standing, age, and numerous family members ready to offer support. And like the Sioux, they accorded respect and a leadership role to warriors or young men (*batyr*) who exhibited tremendous courage and skill.

Authority among the Kazakhs was, according to Elizabeth E. Bacon, "directly proportionate to the willingness of the followers to accept [the leader]," and a comparable environment existed among the Sioux. Success in war and peace perpetuated one's rule. Failure meant replacement or, occasionally, desertion by followers to another. In each

[7] Raymond J. DeMallie, "Sioux Until 1850," in *Plains*, vol. 13, part 2, ed. Raymond J. DeMallie, *Handbook of Native North America*, ed. William C. Sturtevant (Washington, DC: GPO, 2001), 718.

[8] For a more detailed explanation of these terms, see Royal B. Hassrick, *The Sioux: Life and Customs of a Warrior Society* (Norman, 1964) and Catherine Price, "Lakotas and Euroamericans: Contrasted Concepts of 'Chieftanship' and Decision-Making Authority," *Ethnohistory* 41 (Summer 1994): 449–50. See also Guy Gibbon, *The Sioux: The Dakota and Lakota Nations* (Malden, MA, 2003), 74–5.

[9] Lawrence Krader, *Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Pastoral Nomads* (The Hague, NL, 1963), 192–3.

[10] Charles Lindholm, "Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 28 (April 1986): 337 and Charles Lindholm, "Seasonal Nomadism," *Central Asian Review* 4, no. 3 (1956): 226–7.

[11] V. V. Radlova, *Opyt' slovaria Tiurkskikh narechii*, vol. 4 (St. Petersburg, RU, 1899), 1737–8 and Alfred E. Hudson, *Kazak Social Structure* (New Haven, 1964), 61.

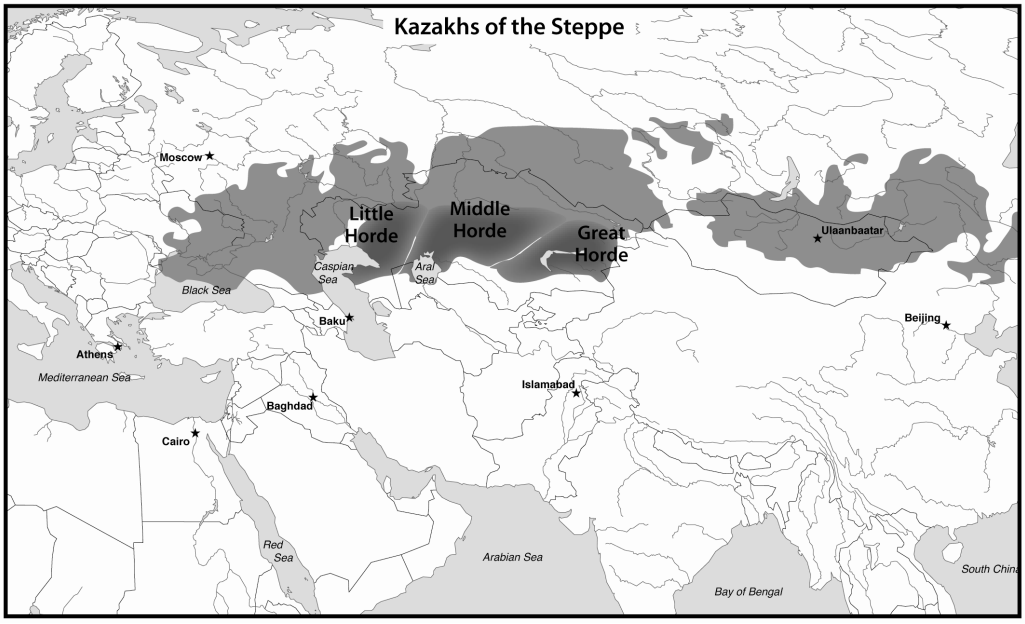

Figure 2: Kazakhs of the Steppe, mid-nineteenth century. Map by Patrick Jones.

case, Russians and Americans mistakenly believed that khans or chiefs exercised absolute control over their people. Aleksei Levshin described a sojourn among the Kazakhs in the 1830s and the lack of social structures recognizable to a Russian as evidence of their "feebleness" and "their absence of laws" that "approximates the condition of their society to what one would normally describe as anarchic." Russians and Americans viewed the seemingly incoherent sociopolitical environment with contempt and frustration. Indeed, as examples of that perception, the noted nineteenth-century Russian Turkologist Vasilii Grigoriev complained that "nowhere in the world had the heads of the nation and the aristocracy by birth so little meaning, so little real strength, as the Kirghiz Khans and Sultans. If any one of them attained to any influence . . . he reached this . . . on account of his personal worth, and personal qualities."[12] Americans who negotiated with the Sioux often expressed similar complaints. In 1872 a certain Colonel Smith complained, "I never saw chiefs and headmen who had so little control over their young men."[13] Thus, Americans and Russians suspected a rigid social

[12] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *OBOK: A Study of Social Structure in Eurasia* (New York, 1958), 71; Aleksei Levshin, *Opisanie Kirgiz-kazach'ikh, ili Kirgiz-kaisatshikh, ord i stepei* (1832; repr., Almaty, KZ, 1996), 391; and Vasillii Grigoriev, "The Russian Policy Regarding Central Asia. An Historical Sketch," in *Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bikhara, and Kuldja*, Eugene Schuyler, vol. 2 (New York, 1877), 405.

[13] Colonel Smith quoted in Matthew G. Hannah, "Space and Social Control in the Administration of the Oglala Lakota ('Sioux'), 1871–1879," *Journal of Historical Geography* 19

hierarchy, but when they did not find it, they maligned the Sioux and Kazakhs.[14] The nomadic culture was ill-suited to such a rigid political system. In other words, fission commonly occurred in these societies.

Americans and Russians failed to understand Sioux and Kazakh sociopolitical structures. Yet they remained dependent upon those leaders they believed could negotiate for their people while simultaneously undermining and altering the political structure. European colonial powers behaved similarly and established new governing mechanisms designed to facilitate colonial rule. When indigenous leadership structures failed to produce the desired outcome, colonial powers typically identified what Robert K. Thomas called "cooperative marginal people" in order to subvert recognized indigenous authority or leadership. For example, in 1822 Russians abolished the title of "khan," but individuals selected by Russians to "lead" the Kazakhs had little to no community standing, except externally with the conquering Russians. Americans often attempted to replace native-recognized chiefs with leaders who offered more opportunity to negotiate and settle an issue. According to Robert M. Utley, this practice created a "chaos of authority" that plagued Sioux-American relations. Russians expressed similar dilemmas when colonizing the Kazakhs. In both cases, the colonizer destabilized sociopolitical structures in order to "tear down" leaders "opposed to civilization."[15] When the Sioux or Kazakhs failed to comprehend or comply, outsiders perceived their inaction as stubborn resistance or clinging to antiquated traditions. Both Americans and Russians regarded it as a failure or inability to adapt and a reaffirmation of indigenous social, political, and economic inferiority.

American and Russian understanding of Sioux and Kazakh land utilization resulted in strongly held perceptions of backwardness. The ability to migrate meant that property was by necessity minimal and movable. Therefore, land as property had little intrinsic value, but it held a strong symbolic importance. Traditionally, Kazakhs inseparably linked with zhuz, creating mythical borders used to distinguish them from "others." The Sioux used traditional wintering sites or migratory routes, but they considered some land invaluable and sacred. They strenuously resisted the American demand that they

(October 1993): 425.

[14] The strong emphasis on individual leadership in both Sioux and Kazakh societies meant political groups lacked cohesion. Leadership questions persistently emerged in Sioux-American and Kazakh-Russian relations. Among the Sioux, an oligarchic or monarchical system never developed because, as Robert H. Lowie noted, "the spirit of Plains culture militated against it, as did the splitting up of most tribes during a large part of the year." Robert H. Lowie, *Indians of the Plains* (Lincoln, 1982), 114. See also Price, "Lakotas and Euroamericans," 451–3; DeMallie, "Sioux Until 1850," 735; Robert M. Utley, *Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven, 1963), 9–10; S. E. Tolybekov, *Kochevoe obshchestvo kazakhov v XVII-nachale XX veka* (Alma-Ata, KazSSR, 1971); and Nurbulat E. Masanov, *Kochevaia tsivilizatsiia kazakhov: Osnovy zhiznedeiatelnosti nomadnogo obshchestva* (Almaty, KZ, 1995).

[15] Robert K. Thomas, "Colonialism: Classic and Internal," *New University Thought* 5, no. 4 (1966): 40 and Robert M. Utley, *The Indian Frontier, 1846–1890* (Albuquerque, 2003), 228–30. See also Utley, *Last Days*, 27–30.

sell the Black Hills, for example, which ultimately resulted in conflict. They determined land valuation based on notions of hunting grounds and the land's spiritual attributes. Proprietary concepts by Sioux and Kazakhs intensified in reaction to American and Russian colonization. In the steppe, Russians followed long-standing Imperial Russian practices and simply declared property state land. Russians, unlike their European and American counterparts, did not take "great pains to establish the legality, morality, and philosophical legitimacy of their possession and occupation of new lands." Indeed, according to Valerie Kivelson, Russians, by contrast, appear "to have lost not a wink of sleep over this issue." Stuart Banner argued that U.S. settlers moving to regions where uncultivated land seemed abundant were "unconvinced of the legitimacy of Indian property rights."[16] Americans and Russians easily depicted nomadic communities as neither farming nor claiming proprietary rights to the land. The perception of plains and steppe as uninhabited and open to colonization was ubiquitous in the perceptions, writings, and policies of the era.

Each government considered their respective region to be sparsely populated, uninhabited or underutilized, and suitable for extensive agricultural development and settlement by the industrious and civilized pioneer or peasant. These perceptions defined the Sioux and Kazakhs and "the degree to which others can be persuasively shown to be discordant with the putative norm, provides a rationale for conquest."[17] The American and Russian governments exercised policies that forced the Sioux and Kazakhs to occupy land insufficient to their needs and that subsequently produced social, economic, and political dislocation.

In the nineteenth century, travelers to the steppe and the Plains provide the best sense of the perceptions and stereotypes that influenced American and Russian internal colonization policies. Travelogues, romantic novels, official reports, and scientific expeditions described and deciphered for the reading public the vast, seemingly uninhabited environment they encountered and the indigenous people they met. These works reinforced the sense of power and superiority, whether it was a foreign traveler, a scholar, or a novelist who had never laid eyes on the place described or the natives encountered. The perceptions of the Sioux and Kazakhs as obstacles to progress and civilization that "derived from a potent combination of prejudices and received assumptions" in the literature "does not simply reflect stereotypes—it reinforces or even helps engender them."[18]

[16] Valerie Kivelson, "Claiming Siberia: Colonial Possession and Property Holding in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," in *Peopling the Russian Periphery: Borderland Colonization in Eurasian History*, ed. Nicholas B. Breyfogle, Abby Schrader, and Willard Sunderland (New York, 2007), 21, 22 and Stuart Banner, *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), 35.

[17] Seamus Deane, "Introduction," in *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*, Terry Eagleton, Frederic Jameson, and Edward W. Said (Minneapolis, 1990), 12.

[18] Ziolkowski, *Alien Visions*, 22, 25. See also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York, 1992).

Descriptions reflected the imperial vision of both writer and reader. Thus, Russian writers did not always use terms such as "savages" or "barbarians" but instead often chose words that inferred the inferior character of the non-Russian population. The most authoritative four-volume Russian dictionary of the period defined "Asiatic" as "savage, crude" and "Tatar" to mean "dishonest, cunning, sly, crude, and unclean." Foreign travelers to the steppe, however, utilized language and expressions that illustrated the literal comparison to the Plains and analogous sentiments that their readers easily recognized and understood. John Bookwalter effortlessly acclimated his readers to the comparable steppe environment and its inhabitants, noting climate and distance, but he also observed, "Unlike our American Indians, who possessed the waste lands of the West and lived exclusively by the chase, the Tartars who spread over the greater portion of Western Siberia . . . will, therefore, hold the lands occupied by their ancestors from time immemorial with greater tenacity, a juster right, and firmer tenure. To dispossess them, therefore, will not be the easy problem that it was in the case of our own Aborigines."[19]

Nonetheless, expansion and the "peaceful conquest of the steppe," as two Russian observers noted, "opened an entrance into western civilization to the nomads." Bookwalter's description of the Kazakhs, whom he mistakenly refers to as "Kirghiz" or "Tartars," is similar to descriptions made of the Sioux. He wrote, "Here one sees the Kirghiz in his natural state, but little modified by modern civilization. . . . Being a purely pastoral people, they disdain the tillage of the soil, living almost wholly on the production of their herds."[20]

Another visitor to the steppe, Thomas Witlam Atkinson, noted the Kazakhs' "reputation for plunder"; the two he encountered had "thorough bandit countenances, which spoke intelligibly what they would do on the first favorable opportunity." Describing the impoverished conditions, Atkinson recalled a solitary yurt, "a poor miserable place, in which were a dirty Kirghis woman and four young children, three of whom were very ill. . . . When the woman gave them the tea, I saw that they had not a rag of clothing to cover their little bodies."[21] Lewis and Clark pilloried the Sioux as "the vilest miscreants of the savage race." The Sioux were "rather ugly and ill made . . . both sexes appear

[19] Vladimir Dal', *Tolkovyi slovar' zhivogo velikorusskogo iazyka v 4 tomakh* (Moscow, USSR, 1989); Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca, 1994), 40; and Bookwalter, *Siberia and Central Asia*, 237.

[20] A. Estel and G. Vagner, *Puteshestvie po Sibiri i prilegaiushchim k nei stranam Tsentral'noi Azii po opisaniiam T. U. Atkinsonom, A. T. Fon Middendorfom, G. Radtse i drugimi* (St. Petersburg, RU, 1865), 139 and Bookwalter, *Siberia and Central Asia*, 124. In the nineteenth century the Russians referred to the Kazakhs as Kirghiz, and the people now known as Kirghiz were called *Kara Kirghiz*, or Black Kirghiz. As a result, many foreign visitors also used Kirghiz when in fact they were writing about the Kazakhs. In this article I have kept the term "Kirghiz" as used in the original source.

[21] Thomas Witlam Atkinson, *Oriental and Western Siberia: A Narrative of Seven Years' Explorations and Adventures in Siberia, Mongolia, the Kirghis Steppes, Chinese Tartary, and Part of Central Asia* (New York, 1858), 255.

cheerful and sprightly; but in our intercourse with them we discovered that they were cunning and vicious."[22] Annie D. Tallent's book, *The Black Hills; or, The Last Hunting Ground of the Dakotahs*, describes her 1874 journey to the Black Hills. She wrote of an uneventful meeting with some Cheyenne who were "quite friendly, and to do them justice, they were really quite respectable looking Indians, as Indians go, but like all their race, the most inveterate of beggars." Sarah Raymond Herndon noted after her encounter with some Sioux that they "were the most wretched-looking human creatures I ever saw, nothing majestic, dignified, or noble-looking. . . . I fail as yet to recognize 'The noble red man.'" Later she wrote, "The squaws and papooses are around our camp to-night begging biscuit. They are the greatest beggars I ever saw. I do wonder if they are hungry?"[23] Bookwalter, Atkinson, Tallent, and Herndon expressed disappointment with the Sioux and Kazakhs they encountered but noted how the absence of civilization in both physical environments evoked similar expressions of disenchantment as well as wonder.[24]

The Great Plains for decades persisted in the public consciousness as the "great American desert," comparable to the "sandy wastes of the deserts or steppes of Siberia rather than to the dead sands of Africa." Sir Arthur Conan Doyle described the Plains as preserving "the common characteristics of barrenness, inhospitality, and misery. There are no inhabitants of this land of despair." The region "for many a long year served as a barrier against the advance of civilization." The British traveler Fred Burnaby described the steppe as a place that "underwent an entire change. We had left all traces of civilisation behind us, and were regularly upon the steppes." Other accounts of journeys across such barren landscapes mirrored similar fears, dangers, tedium, and isolation: "Fourteen weary days were occupied in crossing the steppe; the marches were long, depending on uncertain supplies of grass and water . . . food for man and beast had to be carried with the party, for not a trace of human habitation is to be met with in these inhospitable wilds." An American traveler on the Plains observed that the "monotony of a vast unbroken plain, like that in which we now travelled for nearly one hundred and fifty miles, is little less tiresome to the eye, and fatiguing to the spirit, than the dreary solitude of the ocean."[25]

[22] Meriwether Lewis and William Clark quoted in Stephen E. Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York, 1996), 206.

[23] Annie D. Tallent, *The Black Hills; or, The Last Hunting Ground of the Dakotahs* (St. Louis, 1899), 54, 111–2 and Sarah Raymond Herndon, *Days on the Road: Crossing the Plains in 1865* (New York, 1902), 106, 159, 235. Tallent asserted that the region was uninhabited and that there was "no evidence that Indians had at any time made the Black Hills their home." Tallent, *Black Hills*, 112.

[24] See G. M. Lewis, "Changing Emphases in the Description of the Natural Environment of the American Great Plains Area," *Transactions and Papers*, no. 30 (1962): 75–90.

[25] Richard H. Dillon, "Stephen Long's Great American Desert," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 111, no. 2 (1967): 102; Arthur Conan Doyle, *Tales of Sherlock Holmes: Detective Stories*, The International Adventure Library (New York, 1890), 69; Fred Burnaby,

Persistent negative perceptions of these regions and their inhabitants created a degree of moral superiority that dominated American and Russian thinking about all Indians or Central Asians, usually juxtaposing perceived deficiencies according to each society's ideals. Thus, Americans easily recognized the Sioux as an inferior and depraved race in the *lingua franca* of the day; in the 1860s and 1870s, American writers excoriated them as the most aggressive, "meanest, most treacherous, and most cowardly of the plains Indians, and . . . the most constant in their aggression on the whites." Echoing this opinion, an anonymous German traveler described the steppe Kazakhs as "freebooting parties" that "sweep over the plains and carry off into hopeless slavery the surprised travelers, without respect to age, sex or rank . . . a Kirghiz khirgah [yurt] on the Pamir is to be avoided rather than sought for." Situating Sioux and Kazakhs within a hostile geographic environment seemingly explained their depraved, backward nature. In Aleksei Levshin's view, "everyone [Kazakhs], without exception was avaricious, false, and faithless." Ellsworth Huntington claimed that the Kazakhs "are so primitive, their manner of life is so simple and so closely bound up with their physical surroundings, and they are so little influenced by outside forces, that they furnish an unusually good example for the study of the influence of environment on human life." Nonetheless, he cannot resist subjective assertions such as "Everywhere the Kirghiz are lazy, according to Occidental standards." A missionary among the Sioux claimed, "It is a mistaken policy to treat them as grown-up persons. . . . Like a set of boys, when tired of work they run off and play."[26]

Americans' enjoyment of travel literature and "ethnographic" descriptions readily perpetuated the prevailing negative perceptions of the Sioux as savages, unworthy of the land they claimed. Sarah Herndon described the Sioux she observed as "anything else than dignified; they seem lazy, dirty, obnoxious-looking creatures." Tallent dreaded a chance encounter with the "fierce and bloodthirsty Sioux, doubtless I should have a far different story to relate, or, perchance, there might not have been one left to tell the tale."[27] Her fearful notions of the land as uninhabited or excessive to Sioux needs

Travels and Adventures in Central Asia: A Ride to Khiva (New York, 1876), 134; H. C. Rawlinson, "Observations on Two Memoirs Recently Published by M. Veniukof on the Pamir Region and the Bolor Country in Central Asia," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 10, no. 4 (1865/1866): 150; and E. James, "Part II of James's Account of S. H. Long's Expedition, 1819–1820," repr. Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846: A Series of Annotated Reprints of Some of the Best and Rarest Contemporary Volumes of Travel. . . .*, vol. 14 (Cleveland, 1905), 232.

[26] Richard Irving Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West and their Inhabitants, Being a Description of the Plains, Game, &c. of the Great North American Desert* (New York, 1877), 374; Rawlinson, "Observations," 150; Levshin, *Opisanie Kirgiz-kazach'ikh*, 344; Ellsworth Huntington, "The Mountains and Kibitikas of Tian Shan," *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 37, no. 9 (1905): 515, 526; and missionary quoted in a letter by Reverend Henry L. Westropp, S.J., Pine Ridge, South Dakota, in Emma Helen Blair, *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes. . . .*, vol. 2 (Cleveland, 1912), 285.

[27] Herndon, *Days on the Road*, 105–6 and Tallent, *Black Hills*, 55.

and, therefore, open to colonization, reflected Americans' perception of all Indians as obstacles to American expansion. Few expressed this sentiment as eloquently as John Quincy Adams in 1802, when he asked, "Shall the liberal bounties of Providence to the race of man be monopolized by one of ten thousand for whom they were created? Shall the exuberant bosom of the common mother, amply adequate to the nourishment of millions, be claimed exclusively by a few hundreds of her offspring?"[28] Similar views appeared countless times in the American press, historical works, fiction, and other published sources.[29]

Kazakhs appear infrequently in Russian novels and stories, but when they do it is often analogous to the captivity narrative so familiar to Americans and usually in comparison with other Central Asian nomadic peoples such as the Bashkirs or the much maligned Turkmen. According to historian Beate Eschment, "Kazakhs often threaten their Russian captives that if they misbehave, they will be sold to the Turkmens; captivity among the Turkmen is always represented as much worse than among the Kazakhs." Nineteenth-century Russian novels cast Kazakhs as dirty, sly, plundering nomads and thoroughly lazy. Alexander Pushkin described the steppe as "vast and wealthy" but the Kazakhs as "half-savage peoples who but recently acknowledged the authority of the Russian sovereigns. Unused to the laws and habits of civilized life, cruel and reckless, they constantly rebelled, and the Government had to watch over them unremittingly to keep them in submission." If the Kazakhs rebelled again, the commandant in Pushkin's short story "The Captain's Daughter" boasted that he "will give them such a fright that they will keep quiet another ten years." His wife initially "dreaded those accursed infidels!" After years on the frontier, she claimed, "I don't stir when they tell us the villains are prowling around the fortress."[30]

Some nineteenth-century writers observed parallels between the fate of the Sioux and Kazakh populations in the United States. According to Roy Harvey Pearce, Americans were of "two minds about the Indian whom they were destroying. They pitied his state but saw it as inevitable; they hoped to bring him to civilization but saw that civilization would kill him."[31] John Foster Fraser, who visited an aul, described the

[28] John Quincy Adams quoted in Cyrus Thomas, "Introduction to Indian Land Cessions in the United States," comp. Charles C. Royce, *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1896–97* (Washington, DC, 1899), 536.

[29] See Ray Allen Billington, *Land of Savagery, Land of Promise: The European Image of the American Frontier in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1981). In one novel, Elisha Peabody quips, "When [a] country which might support so many actually supports so few, then, by thunder, the inhabitants have not made good use of the natural possibilities. . . . That failure surely is justification for invasion, peaceful if possible, forceful if necessary, by people who can and will capitalize on opportunity." A. B. Guthrie, *The Big Sky* (New York, 1947), 278.

[30] Beate Eschment, "Neither Barbarians, nor Noble Savages: The Russian View on the Kazakhs of the Empire," paper presented at the Central Eurasian Studies Society Conference, Seattle, WA, October 2007 and Alexander Pushkin, *The Captain's Daughter and Other Stories* (New York, 1936), 27, 47.

[31] Roy Harvey Pearce, *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of*

Kazakhs as the "Red Indians of the West Siberian steppes." He noted that the Russians "have conquered them, and pushed them upon the least fertile tracts of land to make room for immigrants. The race is decreasing in number, and will one of these days disappear from the face of the earth altogether." According to Fraser, Kazakhs have "lost their heritage and are soon to be extinct. The touch of civilisation means death to them." They must civilize or die in order for Russia to exploit "land capable of immense agricultural possibilities, great stretches of prairie waiting for the plough . . . I saw a country that reminded me from the first day to the last . . . of the best parts of western America."[32] The strongly held perceptions assumed that the Sioux and Kazakhs had two choices: settlement and assimilation or extinction.

As perceptions crystallized into a sort of reality, the United States and Russia developed reductive strategies and policies, based upon widely held perceptions of progress, designed to ease Sioux and Kazakh transitions into a sedentary existence and, importantly, to prevent conflict over land and settlements between migrants and indigenous populations. The United States struggled throughout the nineteenth century to solve the "Indian problem." Russia, however, never resolved its contradictory attitudes toward its non-Russian populations—not just Kazakhs but the myriad of peoples that included Finns, Poles, and Jews. Referred to as *inorodtsy*—literally of an "other origin"—the term had both legal and informal connotations and usages; Kazakhs were "non-assimilable, radically different subjects of the tsarist realm," and the term reflected distinct social, cultural, and religious characteristics as well as their degree of civilized development. According to John W. Slocum, Russians deemed assimilation improbable for inorodtsy, "whose purportedly 'low level of civilization' placed them in need of a special relationship of trusteeship to the Russian state." Indeed, in 1864 Russian Foreign Minister Prince Alexander Gorchakov issued perhaps the most important policy statement justifying the country's expansion into the region, explaining that for all "civilized States 'which are brought into contact with half-savage, nomad populations, possessing no fixed social organization . . . it always happens that the more civilized state is forced . . . to exercise a certain ascendancy over those whom their turbulent and unsettled character make most undesirable neighbors.'" Therefore, he continued, "the tribes on the frontier have to be reduced to a state of more or less perfect submission." It is, he claimed, a "peculiarity of Asiatics to respect nothing but visible and palpable force; the moral force of reason and the interests of civilization has as yet no hold upon them."[33] Incorporation

Civilization, rev. ed. (Baltimore, 1965), 64.

[32] Fraser, *Real Siberia*, 40–2, vii, viii. American travelers used similar descriptions, such as referring to "northern plains Indians as 'the American Tartars'" or "ruthless red Tartars of the desert." Quoted in Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), 286n13.

[33] John W. Slocum, "Who, and When, Were the *Inorodtsy*?: The Evolution of the Category of 'Aliens' in Imperial Russia," *Russian Review* 57 (April 1998): 175, 183 and A. M. Gorchakov, memorandum, 21 November 1864, in *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print*, ed. D. C. B. Leiven, part 1, series A, vol. 1 (Frederick,

into the empire did nothing to alter the legal relationship between Kazakhs and the Russian government; they had no legal title to the land and the government disposed of it with little consideration of their claims or needs.

The United States also established a legal relationship with the Sioux and other tribes concerning civil status and land dispensation. The 1831 Supreme Court decision in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* acknowledged the "distinct political society" which ultimately placed the Sioux in the legal ambiguity called "domestic dependent nations." All Indians, including the Sioux, became "wards" under the guardianship of the United States. The U.S. government claimed Indian land "independent of their [Indian] will, which must take effect in point of possession when their right of possession ceases."[34] Indians enjoyed no rights as wards, and subsequent court cases identified the federal government as the final arbiter in Indian affairs. A major difference existed between American and Russian relations with the Sioux and Kazakhs: the nature of Kazakh "oaths" made to Russia as opposed to Sioux "treaties" negotiated with the United States.

In 1732 the khan of the Little Horde, Abulkhair, swore an oath of loyalty to the Russian empress. This "remarkable" event, according to Grigoriev, represented the "voluntary submission of the numerous Horde of Kirghiz who had formally been hostile to us." But Abulkhair's oath represented only his horde; it likely reflected his desire for Russian assistance against other external threats rather than incorporation into the empire. Unlike American treaties with the Sioux, Russia was not obligated to fulfill specific commitments, such as annuities and services. Oaths were not legally binding, and Kazakh khans often swore oaths to China, Bukhara, and other regional powers while simultaneously proclaiming loyalty to Russia. Oath obligations were unspecified, easily broken, and deeply contested. Between 1732 and 1847, Kazakhs persistently rebelled against Russian expansion and fought a bitter internecine war that ended only with the death of the last khan, Kenesary Kasymov.[35]

In the United States, treaties recognized the Sioux as legal entities and obligated the government to take specific action; expectations of the Sioux included maintaining peaceful relations and behavior. Americans and Sioux often disputed each other's interpretations of these obligations, which resulted in conflict during the 1860s and 1870s. Like the Kazakhs, not all Sioux acknowledged treaties or obligations. In 1872 the Indian appropriations bill substituted the word "arrangements" for "treaties," generally suspending American acknowledgment and recognition of Indian treaties.[36]

MD, 1983), 287, 288.

[34] Cherokee Nation v. Georgia (1831) in *Documents of United States Indian Policy*, ed. Francis Paul Prucha (Lincoln, 1975), 58–60.

[35] Grigoriev, "Russian Policy," 403. See also Alan Bodger, "Abulkhair and His Oath of Allegiance," *Slavonic and East European Review* 58 (January 1980): 40–57 and Steven Sabol, *Russian Colonization and the Genesis of Kazak National Consciousness* (New York, 2003).

[36] See Jill St. Germain, *Broken Treaties: United States and Canadian Relations with the Lakotas and the Plains Cree, 1868–1885* (Lincoln, 2009); Edward C. Valandra, "U.S. Citizenship: The American Policy to Extinguish the Principle of Lakota Political Consent," *Wicazo Sa Review*

Subsequently, however, as legal documents, the treaties became the basis for reasserting Sioux rights and sovereignty, an opportunity never available to the Kazakhs during either Russian tsarist or Soviet rule. Thus, one difference between American and Russian assimilation strategies was that the Sioux had dangled before them the promise of citizenship and treaty rights whereas Kazakhs remained inorodsty during tsarist rule with very limited legal standing. Yet assimilation for either group could only occur once the territory that they claimed was fully incorporated and controlled.

In 1822 Russia annexed more Kazakh territory and subdivided it along a typical pattern—*okrug* (district), *volost* (division), *uezd* (region), aul—supplanting traditional Kazakh confederated structures.[37] Each okrug had fifteen to twenty volost; each volost had ten to twelve auls; each aul had fifty to seventy yurts. In the steppe, Russia fixed land allotments for natives to thirty *desiatin* (one desiatin equals approximately 2.7 acres) and promoted Kazakh sedentarization.[38]

Before the 1860s the United States established removal to Indian Territory as the government's policy.[39] Subsequently, the reservation system developed as a solution to removal amidst growing concern that Indian extinction was near, which by the 1870s affected the Sioux and their territories. Moreover, reservations offered the possibility of available land for white settlers on non-reservation lands, thereby reducing, it was thought, the chance for conflict. According to Francis Paul Prucha, the "reservation policy that was developing in the 1850s . . . included as an essential component the establishment of fixed and permanent homes for the Indians." Russia developed similar ideas in the Kazakh steppe. Virginia Martin noted that "from the 1860s to the 1890s, it was clear that the Kazakhs would be easier to supervise if they lived in permanent, clearly defined administrative units instead of in mobile encampments with their livestock."[40]

Confining Sioux and Kazakhs to reservations or specific districts, however, failed to prevent conflict with settlers. In the United States, settler expansion westward after the Civil War resulted in the occupation of lands reserved for Sioux and, concomitantly, escalated tensions. As Patricia Nelson Limerick ironically noted, "Squatters defied the boundaries of Indian territory and then were aggrieved to find themselves harassed and

8 (Autumn 1992): 24–9; and Catherine Price, *The Oglala People, 1841–1879: A Political History* (Lincoln, 1996).

[37] The Russian government adopted the aul to designate the smallest administrative unit. See Levshin, *Opisanie kirgiz-kazach'ikh*, 294–8 and Hudson, *Kazak Social Structure*, 24–5.

[38] A. Kuzembaiuly and E. Abilev, *Istoriia Kazakhstana* (Almaty, KZ, 1996), 227; Richard Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867–1917: A Study in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, 1960), 76; and Marc Raeff, *Siberia and the Reforms of 1822* (Seattle, 1956), 107.

[39] Removal was a means to prevent extinction but was not perceived to be the mechanism of assimilation.

[40] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, abr. ed. (Lincoln, 1986), 110–1 and Virginia Martin, *Law and Custom in the Steppe: The Kazakhs of the Middle Horde and Russian Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Richmond, UK, 2001), 41.

attacked by Indians." In the Kazakh steppe during the second half of the nineteenth century, *samovol'tsy* (voluntary or unauthorized) peasants dominated Russian settlement. The government failed to control this movement, which increased conflict and tensions for land as the samovol'tsy generally occupied land allocated for Kazakhs, severely disrupting traditional migration routes. The land hunger that consumed American and Russian migrants compelled both governments to develop mechanisms to reallocate tribal land. Once restricted, Sioux and Kazakhs needed permission to leave to hunt or pasture herds.[41] Eventually, American reformers demanded more humanitarian consideration be given to displaced and relocated tribes. But it took until the 1890s for Kazakh intellectuals and some Russian liberals to organize and advocate on behalf of the impoverished nomads.

In the United States in the late 1860s and early 1870s, the so-called Peace Commission negotiated treaties with various tribes to end sporadic conflict and land disputes. President Ulysses S. Grant's newly established "peace policy" relied heavily on religious denominations to act as agents and administrators on Indian reservations. Religious and educational foundations, it was believed, could properly assimilate tribes into white American society, thereby civilizing them.[42] "Pessimism and pity," according to Frederick E. Hoxie, had become the chief rationale for American policy. It was hoped, as well, that churches would eliminate the corruption and egregious practices of former Indian agents and federal officials, practices that the reformers used to bolster their case to defend Indian rights and their anticipated civilizing mission. The Russian government took a different approach to spreading orthodoxy among the Kazakhs. Since the late eighteenth century, they discouraged proselytizing among Muslim Kazakhs in order to ease tensions between the indigenous population and missionaries and settlers. Indeed, the government, according to Robert Crews, viewed Islam "through the lens of imperial expansion" in order "to win over Muslim intermediaries who might assist the regime in securing this frontier and projecting Russian power into the steppe." By the 1880s, fear of "Tatarization," or the spread of Islamic fanaticism among the nomadic Kazakhs, led many government and church officials to reconsider missionary efforts to civilize and assimilate the nomads. As one Russian official reported in 1867, the government should be concerned about the "fanatical barbarity" of an "aroused Islam" among the Kazakhs, which stood on the "edges of our frontier." L. F. Kostenko, however, following a journey among the Kazakhs, noted, "Islam terrifies its people, so that not only are they incapable of development, but on the contrary they digress further still into a type of ignorance." The church established missions in the steppe but by 1910 generally acknowledged the minimal success of this effort. As one missionary

[41] Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York, 1987), 42; Akim D. Reinhardt, *Ruling Pine Ridge: Oglala Lakota Politics from the IRA to Wounded Knee* (Lubbock, 2007), 21; and Martin, *Law and Custom*, 40.

[42] See Clyde A. Milner II, *With Good Intentions: Quaker Work among the Pawnees, Otos, and Omahas in the 1870s* (Lincoln, 1982) and Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865–1900* (Norman, 1976).

noted, lack of material resources, insufficient schools, a meager number of missions and missionaries (particularly those with knowledge of indigenous languages), the territorial expanse, diversity of cultures, and "the fanatical propaganda of Mahometanism" conspired against the church's labors.[43]

Missionary activity among the Sioux occurred before the 1860s, but its limited success ought to have cautioned American government officials. One missionary, frustrated by problems associated with "civilizing" the Sioux through education and Christianity, openly complained that the "determination on the part of the Indians seems settled not to avail themselves of the means of education" and "that the present effort to educate the Sioux is little better than a waste of time and money." Another noted that the "Sioux belong to a class of Indians who are not readily brought under the power of the gospel."[44]

This is not to suggest that success remained elusive or that all missionaries concluded that all Sioux were unrepentant heathens. It was a difficult task made all the more troublesome by the sectarian struggles on the reservations and the American government's inconsistent support. In the steppe, however, Russians perceived Kazakhs differently precisely because of Islam, which they accepted as a monotheistic faith derived from a consecrated book with something that they recognized as canon law. Islam advanced Kazakhs from the primitive paganism evident among the other indigenous peoples the empire encountered. Nonetheless, Russians feared the growing influence that Islam seemingly had in the steppe ("Tatarization") and by the 1880s abandoned the decades-long practice of noninterference with local religious orientations.[45] In the end, religious conversion became secondary to sedentarization as agricultural pursuits dominated efforts to "civilize" the Kazakhs and Sioux.

In the 1870s, many Americans believed that civilizing Indians and, concurrently, facilitating American expansion and resettlement could best be achieved by allotment. The government and reformers considered a variety of solutions but chose the

[43] Frederick E. Hoxie, *Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians* (Lincoln, 1984), 177; Robert Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 33; "Otchet," 31 January 1867, fond 821, opis 8, dela 594, list 36-36, *Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv* [Russian State Historical Archive], Moscow; L. F. Kostenko, *Sredniaia Aziia i vodvorenie v nei russkoi grazhdanstvennosti* (St. Petersburg, RU, 1871), 85; and missionary quoted in Eugene Smirnov, *A Short Account of the Historical Development and Present Position of Russian Orthodox Missions* (London, 1903), 68.

[44] "North American Indians: Schools among the Natives," *Friends' Review; a Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal* 5 (18 October 1851): 69 and "North American Indians. . . .," *Missionary Herald* 46 (January 1850): 15.

[45] See Chokan Vailkhanov, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Alma-Ata, KazSSR, 1952), 187–95; Mark Batunskii, "Islam i Russkaia chul'tura XVIII Veka: Opyt istoriko-epistemologicheskogo issledovaniiakh," *Cahiers du Monde russe et sovietique* 27 (January/March 1986): 45–69; Robert Crews, "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *American Historical Review* 108 (February 2003), 50–83; and Robert P. Geraci and Michael Khodarkovsky, eds., *Of Religion and Empire: Missions, Conversion, and Tolerance in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca, 2001).

1887 General Allotment Act, or Dawes Act, which "mandated a fundamental change in Indian-white relationships." Well-intentioned supporters of the act believed that it would make Indians more amenable to white settlement and encourage them to abandon completely their nomadic culture and adopt agriculture permanently. It would, one advocate claimed, elevate the barbarian because civilization "follows the improved arts of agriculture as vegetation follows the genial sunshine and the shower, and that those races who are in ignorance of agriculture are also ignorant of almost everything else."[46]

In the steppe, the Russian government considered allotment, despite failed efforts to control peasant migration, the best means to settle and civilize the Kazakhs. Various Russian ministries sponsored scientific studies to gather statistical information in order to promote legal immigration and ease the transition to a sedentary and "civilized" existence. These studies identified suitable sites for settlement to ensure Kazakhs had sufficient pastureland. The Kazakhs, however, were caught in a governmental dilemma. The government promoted sedentarization to encourage their civil and cultural development, but it also valued Kazakh livestock. For example, one government study determined that among the 50 million desiatin in Akmolinsk oblast, only about 2.4 million was suitable for settlement without "crowding the Kirghis." Another study concluded that more than 5.5 million desiatin was available, and, in 1893 the Imperial Geographic Society claimed that nearly half the land was free for agriculture, with the remainder designated as unsuitable.[47] Land deemed permissible for settlement had expanded more than ten times, abandoning concerns about overcrowding. The situation in the United States was equally chaotic.

According to the Dawes Act, each Indian head of house was eligible to receive a 160-acre tract of land; single individuals over the age of eighteen would receive an additional 80 acres, and children under eighteen would receive 40 acres. On reservations with land suitable only for livestock, the allotment doubled. In the Kazakh steppe, the government putatively provided each Kazakh household with about 15 desiatin of land—roughly 40 acres—an insufficient amount. Peasants and administrators alike often ignored the process and allotment norms. Kazakhs were forced to settle in the desert, on hilltops, and on mountainsides. In 1896 the Ministry of the Interior established a special Resettlement Administration (*Pereselencheskoe Upravlenie*) and promoted the practice of "scouting" (*khodachestvo*), but one French commentator regarded these "scouts" as thieves sanctioned by the state to seize land from the natives. A government expedition that year, commanded by statistician F. A. Shcherbin, concluded that many Kazakhs had abandoned nomadism to farm, but, more importantly, they required less land than Russians. Therefore, the transition to agriculture freed millions

[46] Leonard A. Carlson, *Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land: The Dawes Act and the Decline of Indian Farming* (Westport, CT, 1981), 3 and U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1885* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1885), iii. See also Francis Paul Prucha, comp. *Americanizing the American Indian: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian," 1880–1900* (Cambridge, MA, 1973), 8.

[47] Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, 123.

of desiatin for Russian peasant settlement. Citing the new information, the government designated previously closed areas as available to settlement. In fact, they opened more than 18 million desiatin.[48]

U.S. allotment made more than 9 million acres available to American settlers, essentially destroying the Sioux reservations. Throughout the 1890s, reservation agents reported "progress" toward allotment's completion, but they also noted that opposition remained. In 1894 the Pine Ridge Reservation agent reported that roughly 90 percent of the Sioux opposed the plan. Over the next two decades, about 3,000 of the 6,700 Pine Ridge Sioux eligible for allotment had selected property, a process that intensified between 1904 and 1914. George E. Hyde argued that the United States provided the impetus for future allotments by compelling the Sioux to settle, effectively destroying their sociopolitical structures. The government made non-allotted land available to white settlers. Rather than assimilating the Sioux or the Kazakhs, allotment, surveys, and forced sedentarization created deep social and cultural cleavages and economic crises.[49] One difference existed in this process: Kazakhs had the right to dispose of their land without government interference, whereas the Sioux did not receive title to the land. Despite this difference, neither the Sioux nor Kazakhs benefited.

In 1888, for example, Russian officials observed significant increases in the number of indigent Kazakhs. One report noted that "in order not to die from starvation, they [poor Kazakhs] work as seasonal laborers at local markets and factories, and live as farm hirelings doing agricultural work. . . . The number of these beggars already numbers in the thousands." In the United States, Commissioner of Indian Affairs J. D. C. Atkins noted, "Character, habits, and antecedents can not be changed by an enactment. The distance between barbarism and civilization is too long to be passed over speedily." Indeed, within a couple of years after the passage of the Dawes Act, its author, Senator Henry L. Dawes, complained that Indians had "no homes, no horses, no hoes, no seeds, and had they had ploughs, they would not know how to use them."[50]

[48] O. A. Vaganov, "Zemelnaia politika tsarskogo pravitelstva v Kazakhstane," *Istoricheskie zapiski*, no. 31 (1950): 71–3; Donald W. Treadgold, *The Great Siberian Migration: Government and Peasant in Resettlement from Emancipation to the First World War* (Princeton, NJ, 1957), 120–1; Ervin de Palosi, "Question de la Terre dans la Zone des Steppes," *Turan* (October 1918): 478; A. A. Kruber, ed., *Aziatskaia Rossiia*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg, RU, 1914), 541–3; and de Palosi, "Zone des Steppes," 476.

[49] Sister Mary Antonio Johnston, *Federal Relations with the Great Sioux Indians of South Dakota, 1887–1933: With Particular Reference to Land Policy under the Dawes Act* (Washington, DC, 1948), 93; General Statistical Records & Reports, Main Decimal Files 051.5-054: 1928, Records of the Pine Ridge Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1793–1989, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration–Central Plains Region (Kansas City); George E. Hyde, *Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians* (Norman, 1937), 315; and Johnston, *Federal Relations*, 113–4.

[50] *Kanteseliariia Stepnogo General-gubernatora* (Chancellery of the Steppe Governor-General), fond 64, opis 1, dela 125, list 44, *Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv, Respubliki Kazakhstana* [Central State Archives], Almaty, KZ; U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1887* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1887), vi; and Committee on

Another senator even suggested that "rich" Indians delayed civilization, so it was better that they had "no money, no funds, no land, no annuities."[51]

Becoming industrious, productive farmers who settled on large tracts before rapidly assimilating into civilized society proved difficult for the Sioux and Kazakhs. Emily Greenwald described allotment and sedentarization as an effort to "atomize Indians, to break down their economic and social bonds by dispersing them onto individually owned parcels of land."[52] The government expected that settling would stimulate the Sioux "to personal action" in order to "abandon his nomadic habits . . . to a life of comparative industry."[53] For the Kazakh population, the duel effect of sedentarization and hired labor eroded traditional, consanguineous social relations and transformed the aul, ru, and taipa into political, territorial, economic, and administrative communities. Sedentarization impoverished the Sioux and Kazakhs in order to elevate their sociocultural status from nomad to farmer.

Both the United States and Russia exercised the process of internal colonization. Scholars have often neglected Russian colonial expansion, Taras Hunczak noted, because as "a continental state, its expansion has been viewed largely as a process of unification and consolidation." Similarly, Amy Kaplan argued, "United States continental expansion is often treated as an entirely separate phenomenon from European colonialism of the nineteenth century."[54] The contiguous nature of both countries, and the proximity of colonized regions, seems to exclude each from discussions of nineteenth-century colonialism. The United States and Russia blurred the distinctions between the metropolitan origin and the newly incorporated territory by amalgamating it into a single polity. The seamlessness of Russian and American movements reinforced perceptions of expansion rather than colonialism. Nonetheless, contiguous expansion echoed European overseas expansion where every "settler frontier required the active political,

Indian Affairs, H. R. 7902, part 9, 73rd Cong., 2nd Sess. (1934), 468.

[51] Quoted in Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 156.

[52] Emily Greenwald, *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Perces, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act* (Albuquerque, 2002), 2. In 1885 the commissioner of Indian Affairs stressed that Indians "must abandon tribal relations; they must give up their superstitions; they must forsake their savage habits and learn the arts of civilization; they must learn to labor, and must learn to rear their families as white people do." *Annual Report 1885*, v.

[53] "Allowance of Lands in Severalty to Indians," *House Indian Affairs Committee Report*, no. 2247, 48th Cong., 2nd Sess. (1885), 1.

[54] Taras Hunczak, ed., *Russian Imperialism from Ivan the Great to the Revolution* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1974), ix and Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone in America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, ed. Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham, 1993), 17. See also Ewa M. Thompson, *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* (Westport, CT, 2000), 15–6; Gerhard, "Frontier in Comparative View," 205–29; Marvin W. Mikesell, "Comparative Studies in Frontier History," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 50 (March 1960): 62–74; and Hans Kohn, "Some Reflections on Colonialism," *Review of Politics* 18 (July 1956): 259–68. "Reduced to its barest outline," Kohn argued, "colonialism is foreign rule imposed upon a nation." Kohn, "Some Reflections," 264.

military, and fiscal engagement and support of an aggrandizing state."[55] American and Russian expansion started slowly, often clumsily, but accelerated during the nineteenth century without any clear understanding of the people and their numbers, societies, histories, and traditions and the problems troops, settlers, or officials would encounter.

Intensified migration and occupation of land traditionally utilized by the Sioux and Kazakhs after 1850 resulted in sporadic contact and conflict in proportion to American and Russian formalized control. Land was critical to the deteriorating relationships, but the colonizing powers also achieved formal control of indigenous sovereignty and subordinated political decision making to the colonizers' sociopolitical and economic structures. Sioux and Kazakh political, economic, social, and cultural dependence and collaboration intensified as governmental policies altered and eventually undermined tribal sovereignty. Motivated by stereotypes and misperceptions, Americans and Russians created an environment that made expansion and colonization—and ultimately civilizing the nomads—part of the national mission. As Helen Carr noted, officials reformulated policies that derived in part from misperceptions of the indigenous peoples and the needs of the colonizing power to occupy the land and settle the nomads as agriculturalists into plans that urged "removal of land as the granting of civilisation."[56]

Americans and Russians had many preconceived images of the Sioux and Kazakhs when they ventured into the Plains and the steppe—particularly notions of their superior culture, society, and civilization, when compared to savage nomads. In the nineteenth-century United States, officials intensified their belief in Jeffersonian agrarian social theory, the "agricultural paradise" that anticipated the "imaginary figure of the wild horseman of the plains . . . replaced by that of the stout yeoman." The tsarist regime similarly perceived Russian peasants as carriers of the agrarian ideal, the purveyors of modernity, and equal to American pioneers.[57]

As scholars have taken note of indigenous populations' reactions to colonialism, they have developed a tendency to neglect the ideology or motivation of the colonizing power. Yet complimentary narratives make understanding both sides critical to understanding the whole. Both colonizer and colonized reacted and adapted to their relationship as it evolved. Expansion produced resistance; but colonization produced adaptive strategies by the Sioux and Kazakhs as well as administrative tactics by the colonizers that suited their sensibilities. According to Jeffrey Ostler, American power "manifested itself primarily through reservation agencies administered by the Indian Office." The government expected Sioux leaders, identified by reservation agents, to

[55] Richards, *Unending Frontier*, 6.

[56] Helen Carr, *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender, and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789–1936* (New York, 1996), 44. See also Michael W. Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca, 1986), 36.

[57] Sherry L. Smith, *Reimagining Indians: Native Americans through Anglo Eyes, 1880–1940* (New York, 2000), 4–5; Smith, *Virgin Land*, 179; and Willard Sunderland, *Taming the Wild Field: Colonization and Empire on the Russian Steppe* (Ithaca, 2004).

maintain order within this alien political environment. Restrictions placed on the Sioux and Kazakhs obstructed mobility and forced settlement and impoverishment, not assimilation. Russia did not establish reservations but instead confined Kazakhs to *volosty* and *uezdy* to raise livestock or farm—an environment just as restrictive as the American reservation system. And yet some scholars regard American expansion as somehow worse, an unparalleled "colonial occupation," and "one of the greatest known *land thefts* in human history." This inherently comparative statement assumes, however, that no other colonial occupation was continental in scope and that American expansion was an exceptional "theft."[58]

The "touch of civilisation" did not exterminate the Sioux or Kazakhs; it diminished their societies, radically altered their cultures, and economically dislocated and impoverished individuals. Yet they survived despite dispossession and the intensive cultural, social, political, and economic consequences of colonization. The concerns that the Sioux and Kazakhs must perish or assimilate did not, and likely could not, predict the powerful forces that ultimately aligned to sustain their greatly weakened communities and preserve cultural attachments and symbols, language, and religious beliefs. One consequence of colonialism concerns the isolation of a community from its constituent parts due to the decay of sociopolitical or economic institutional norms once operative in a pre-colonized era. Expansion resulted in conflict that ultimately forced the Sioux and Kazakhs to settle onto land deemed sufficient for occupation and agriculture.[59] American and Russian expansion and internal colonization in some cases destroyed native sovereignty and institutions, but Sioux and Kazakh social, cultural, and spiritual vestiges adapted and survived in various ways.

As different as American and Russian expansion and conquest of continental interiors might initially appear, the consequences for the Sioux and Kazakhs are remarkably similar, and the solutions devised by the U.S. and Russian governments to deal with intractable nomadic peoples share many parallels and results. In both cases, the colonizing power expressed absolute confidence in its civilizing mission and realized its own greatness through territorial expansion and the introduction of progress, prosperity, and stability and social, economic, and political order. Resistance by the Sioux and Kazakhs to the superior power—as well as, by extension, the general civilizing tendencies of those countries—produced in the minds of Americans and Russians only two possible outcomes: assimilation or extermination. The process and comparison of internal

[58] Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York, 2004), 8 and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, "When History is Myth: Genocide and the Transmogrification of American Indians," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 29, no. 2 (2005): 114 (emphasis added).

[59] Thomas, "Colonialism: Classic and Internal," 38. In 1887 the Cheyenne River agent highlighted the difficulties, writing that "the drawbacks to successful agriculture are so great as not to be overcome with any reasonable amount of labor. . . . Since about 1872 efforts have been put forth by every agent to make agriculturalists of these Indians, but the soil and climate will not allow it." *Annual Report 1887*, 17.

colonization of the Sioux and Kazakhs deepens our understanding of and redirects attention to the United States and Russia as active participants in nineteenth-century imperial conquests undertaken by other European powers in Asia and Africa. It reveals a more universal struggle between civilization and savagism and between internal and external colonialism, and it negates the tendency to study these countries in isolation or as singular national histories. When viewed through a comparative prism, Russian expansion and conquest, and its subsequent treatment of its indigenous population, no longer appears more brutal, more autocratic, more Russo-centric; American expansion in comparison no longer seems exceptional or a rejection of "old Europe" for something uniquely "American" but rather part of a global process.