RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN AND RUSSIAN INFLUENCE: ANALYSIS AND PROSPECT

CHOONG Y. LEE

Gladys A. Kelce College of Business
Pittsburg State University
Pittsburg, Kansas 66762
U.S.A.

ABSTRACT

This paper will demonstrate how the proximity of Kazakhstan to Russia has influenced Kazakhstan’s development, history, and will continue to do so. The people of Kazakhstan originated as a nomadic Turkic people that would eventually be incorporated into the Russian Empire in the 1700s. They would be culturally assimilated by the Soviet Union especially during Stalin’s reign. When the Soviet Union fell apart, Kazakhstan timidly accepted independence and has tried to survive and prosper as an independent state since 1991. Always conscious of his country’s large neighbors, the leader of the independent Kazakhstan’s early foreign policy was focused on keeping good relations with them, but especially Russia, because most of Kazakhstan’s infrastructure was tied to Russia, as a supplier of Russia’s oil and mineral wealth. Slowly Kazakhstan began to assert itself and develop its nation’s own resources without as much consideration to Russia. However, with Russia’s recent saber rattling and use of force to keep her neighboring countries in line, it can be surmised that Kazakhstan will continue to respect and fear its northern neighbor.

KEY WORDS: