

# The Kazaks of China Essays on an Ethnic Minority

Edited by  
Linda Benson & Ingvar Svanberg



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**Abstract**

The Kazaks of China. Essays on an Ethnic Minority

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China as a multiethnic society is discussed from the point of view of a specific ethnic group, the Kazaks. The book has two immediate goals. On one hand, it seeks to present an overview of the past and present situation of the Kazaks of China. The formulation and implementation of Chinese policy from the Qing Dynasty until the mid-1980s towards this nomadic group is also treated in some detail as this policy has had a considerable impact on the Kazaks of today. It is based on the most recent sources in Chinese, Turkic, Russian and other languages, and it also presents first-hand information gathered by scholars during recent visits to northwestern China. On the other hand, this work also seeks to present more specialized, in-depth material illuminating various aspects of Kazak society in this century. Chapters by individual authors with a first-hand knowledge of the Xinjiang Kazaks and their contemporary society include studies of social organization, rebellion among the nomads, and linguistics as well as contemporary pastoral life in the Bogda Range. A common theme in the contributions is the relationship between the Chinese state administration and the Kazak nomads of Xinjiang.

(Key Words: **Kazaks, Xinjiang, Minority Policy, China Studies, Turkology**)

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Among China's many ethnic minorities the Kazaks belong to one of the most colourful. About one million in number, they are distributed mainly in the contemporary Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of northwestern China. They still subsist on nomadic pastoralism with large herds of sheep, cattle and horses. In this book a group of scholars, specialists on Xinjiang, its many peoples, and their languages, illuminate various aspects of Xinjiang Kazak history, culture and society. A common theme in the essays is the relationship between the Chinese state administration and the Kazaks, from the days of the Qing Dynasty, through the turbulent days of the Chinese republic and the Mao era, up to the changes in the China of the mid-1980s.

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