

POLITICAL MODERNIZATION AND INFORMAL POLITICS IN UZBEKISTAN

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ASLAN YAVUZ ŞİR

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Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata

Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

---

Assist. Prof. Dr. Oktay F. Tanrısever

Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

---

Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım

Supervisor

**Examining Committee Members**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Recep Boztemur (METU, HIST) \_\_\_\_\_

Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım (METU, SOC) \_\_\_\_\_

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Baydar Aydın (METU, SOC) \_\_\_\_\_

**I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.**

Name, Last name : Şir, Aslan Yavuz

Signature :

## ABSTRACT

### POLITICAL MODERNIZATION AND INFORMAL POLITICS IN UZBEKISTAN

Aslan Yavuz ŞİR

M. Sc., Eurasian Studies

Supervisor: Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım

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The objective of this thesis is to examine the political modernization experience of the Uzbeks. In order to do that, first, this dissertation critically analyze the modernization theory, and second, the identity- and socio-political transformation of Uzbeks in the pre-modern and modern eras. The political modernization of Uzbeks and its relation with the peculiar social-political structures, as well as the impact of Tsarist and the Soviet rule on those structures are examined. Moreover, the dissertation analyzes the emergence of an Uzbek political identity and its influence on the post-Soviet independent Uzbekistan. The main argument of this dissertation is that the Uzbek experience under the Tsarist and Soviet rule has inevitably transformed the Uzbek society and achieved relative success in changing the traditional forms into ostensibly modern ones. However, despite the successful political modernization during the Soviet era, the specific socio-political organization, clans and kinship structures inherent in the Uzbek society succeeded adapting and even transforming modern institutions and structures externally imposed by the Soviet. These informal traditional structures emerged as strong institutions in the post-independence era. Moreover, the dissertation claims that the transition and modernization approaches to Post-Soviet Uzbekistan failed in understanding the peculiar socio-political structures and their impact on informal politics in independent Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Political modernization, Uzbeks, Clan, Informal Politics, Transition Regime

## ÖZ

### ÖZBEKİSTAN’DA SİYASAL MODERNLEŞME VE RESMİYET DIŞI SİYASET

Aslan Yavuz ŞİR

Yüksek Lisans, Avrasya Çalışmaları

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Bu tezin amacı Özbeklerin siyasal modernleşme tecrübesinin incelenmesidir. Bunu yapabilmek için, öncelikle modernleşme teorisinin eleştirel bir analizi yapılmaya çalışılmış ve Özbeklerin kimlik ve sosyo-politik dönüşümü, modern öncesi ve modern sonrası dönemlere ayrılarak incelenmiştir. Özbeklerin siyasal modernleşmesinin kendine özgü toplumsal-siyasi yapılarla ilişkisi araştırılmış, Çarlık ve Sovyet yönetimlerinin bu ilişkiyi nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir. Ayrıca Sovyetlerin ilk yılları ve Sovyetler döneminde Özbeklerin siyasi kimlik geliştirme çabaları ve bu çabanın bağımsızlık dönemine etkisi siyasal modernleşme açısından incelenmiştir. Tezin temel savı Çarlık dönemi ve özellikle Sovyetler zamanında yaşanan dönüşümün Özbeklerin ayrı bir topluluk olarak siyasi kimliğe kavuşmaları ve siyasal modernleşmesi aşamasında etkili olduğudur. Ancak Sovyetler zamanında, Özbeklerin kendine özgü sosyo-politik örgütlenmesi, klan ve akrabalık gibi yapılar, tepeden inme modernleşmeye adapte olabilmeyi başarmış, hatta modern siyasi kurum ve davranışları kendi lehine çevirebilmiştir. Bu özellik bağımsızlık döneminde daha da ortaya çıkmış ve güçlenmiştir. Sovyet sonrası Orta Asya ülkeleri ve Özbekistan’ı inceleyen geçiş teorileri Özbeklerin bu özelliklerini kavrayamamıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Siyasal modernleşme, Özbek, klan, Gayri resmi Siyaset, Geçiş Dönemi

**To My Family  
Aileme**

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION & AIMS: HOW TO ANALYZE UZBEK HISTORY?

“ .. what blindness, what deafness, what density of ideology would have to weigh me down to prevent me from being interested in what is probably the most crucial subject to our existence, that is to say the *society in which we live, the economic relations within which it functions, and the system of power which defines the regular forms and the regular permissions and prohibitions of our conduct.* The essence of our life consists, after all, of the *political functioning of the society in which we find ourselves.*”  
—Michel Foucault

This dissertation tries to locate Uzbek political transformation in the history of modernization, while focusing on the peculiarities of socio-political structures of Central Asians in general and Uzbeks in particular. The main aim of the dissertation is to question the Western perception on the bases and consequences of change in Central Asia and Uzbekistan based on the modern/Western conceptualizations, and try to offer a more focused approach on the peculiar socio-political structures and the change taking place in Uzbekistan. These conceptualizations reflected a Western-oriented approach seemed to ignore other experiences -such as those in Central Asia and Uzbekistan- with absolutely distinctive social-historical experiences and structures. Obviously, “Inner Asians are denied a voice, an independent existence, and a status of being actors rather than subjects. Central Asia was and to a large extent still is a ‘contested terrain,’ a ‘no man’s land.’”<sup>1</sup> We will try to show that these informal, rather than formal political structures and their

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<sup>1</sup> Cengiz Sürücü (2004) “Exploring Terra Incognita: a Reading on the Pre-history of Central Asian Studies” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* Vol.3 (Spring), No:1 p.76

evolution, their peculiar socio-political organization, their power politics, have crucial role in shaping contemporary Uzbek politics, while Western-based approach within the confinements of modernization is not adequate enough to grasp the particular nature of politics and transformation in Uzbekistan.

### **1.1.Motivations behind the Research**

A study on Uzbekistan leaves us challenged by some major problems to better analyze Uzbekistan. In this dissertation three major points of discussion provide a basis of research of political transformation of Uzbekistan. First, we argue that social sciences equip a Western-based approach towards transition in post-communist space and Central Asia in particular. The dominant approach on post-Soviet Central Asian republics would assume that the newly created nation-states, like Uzbekistan, would carry out the western model into the post-communist political systems and establish modern forms of democracies and liberal economies. The shift of political identities from pre-modern socio-political organization to colonial identities, from Sovietization (which is essentially based on territorialized ethnic identities) to new national identities in the post-Soviet independence era (which are also based on the domination of one particularly fictive supra-ethnic identity) constitutes an essential problem for modern Uzbek politics, i.e. for the national identity building, during the transition<sup>2</sup> period. The ideology of the nation-

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<sup>2</sup> For a brief discussion of the mainstream and alternative approaches to the research on transition & democratization: Bela Greskovitz (2002) "Path Dependence of Transitology" Chapter 11, in *Post communist Transformation and the Social Sciences* ed By Frank Bönker, Klaus Müller, and Andreas Pickel United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; Thomas Carothers (2002) "The End of the Transition Paradigm" *Journal of Democracy* Volume 13, Number 1 January, p.5; Claus Offe (1991)

state pushes the old, traditional and pre-modern forms of social organizations and replaces them with the modern forms of social-political institutions, law and economics. Regimes in transition are expected to transform politically, rationalize, bureaucratize and create functional system of political institutions, in which the political power is legitimately used. The rationalization of politics, economy and legal system are the main determinants as put forward by this Western-biased approach.

In studying the process of nation-building within Central Asian (Uzbek) context, the main question is how to analyze this change, its reasons, conditions and results; the legitimacy of whether to call this change as political modernization so as to comply with the Western-biased approach; or the feasibility of political modernization as to yield desirable results in the Uzbek context. The *telos* of this change, its peculiar conditions and results, and the location of power politics within this change must be essentially put under question. Obviously, the applicability of Western-biased approach, which premised rationalization in the form of bureaucratization, democratization, economic liberalization or legalization, in the Uzbek context requires a critical analysis of the feasibility of an adequate political projection of Uzbek politics. Moreover, the most crucial point in analyzing the change and the subject of inquiry, namely the role of peculiar socio-political structures, of *informal politics* and clans as the agent of informal politics in Uzbek political modernization must be seriously taken into account.

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“Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe”, *Social Research*, 58(4), pp. 865-892; Philip C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl (1994) “The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?” *Slavic Review* 54/1, spring, pp. 173–185; Valerie Bunce (1995) “Should Transitologists Be Grounded?” *Slavic Review* 54/1, spring, pp. 111-127

Secondly, the Western-biased approach which puts modernization/Westernization of politics in Uzbekistan to the fore is problematic. The 'Uzbek', 'Kazakh', and 'Kyrgyz' will then emerge as problematic cases, for in Central Asia there is the possibility of conflictual responses to externally imposed identities, if these new identities underestimate informal socio-political organization and the balance of power arising from it. Indeed the past experiences of societies in transition in Central Asia clearly show that despite the harsh imposition of Soviet identities along with territorial/ethnic identities, the pre-modern or pre-Soviet social forms & identifications were persistent and even successful in repelling the imposed forms. The territorial homogeneity of the titular nations remains problematic, since the construction of these identities is an artificial categorization of the peoples of Central Asia, which aimed at the manufacturing of hierarchically dominant and subordinate ethnic identities to replace the traditional identities that are seen as bottlenecks for political change. Even the *ethnos* of the ethnic groups, their creation by the Soviet ethnologists reflected the Soviet political aims of stabilization and control by official registration of differences, so that the aim was the elimination of the traditional political structures by the Soviet ideology. Thus, in Soviet Central Asia the existing groups are those which have been created, named and constructed along territorial-regional lines, and even assimilated to the dominant titular groups by officially incorporating the smaller groups existing via different communal identities and by the effect of the interaction with the Russian-Soviet. However, pre-modern forms of social and political organization and traditional political orientations that have prevailed in those societies still continue to determine social and political loyalties.

The modernization analysis perceives the recent history of Central Asia as a history of conflict that occurred between the *modernization* efforts and the *traditional*.<sup>3</sup> However, the determinants of the traditional as well as modern political change cannot be easily limited to this contrast between the traditional and the modern. Uzbek political modernization displays peculiar characteristics that are hard to contrast with that of its modern-Western counterpart. In that sense, the perception of the specificities of its historical and socio-political transformation is crucial for understanding what is going on in Uzbekistan.

Thirdly, the case of Uzbekistan is important in questioning this Western-biased approach and to understand its dilemmas concerning Central Asia. Uzbekistan is one of the most intriguing cases in contemporary Central Asia, offering a panorama of historically and socially deep-rooted identities with a rich cultural and political heritage. Being one of the most influential centers for Islamic civilization in Central Asia, the land of contemporary Uzbekistan is located at the centre of Central Asian civilization. The influence of the Oasis<sup>4</sup> culture is significantly observable in these lands, with a more sedentarized population of mixed origins, in comparison to the nomadic societies of the north and east. Essentially, Uzbekistan can be portrayed as one of the most ‘traditional’ societies in Central Asia, which makes it a peculiar case for an analysis of change and

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<sup>3</sup> Evgeniy Abdullaev (2005) “Uzbekistan: Between Traditionalism and Westernization” in *Central Asia at the End of the Transition* ed. by Boris Rumer, M.E Sharpe: London

<sup>4</sup> On the Central Asian oasis culture, Elizabeth Bacon presents a detailed analysis, and how Soviets’ modernization policies transformed the Central Asian oasis peoples. Elizabeth E. Bacon (1980) *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Culture Change* Ithaca: Cornell University Press

modernization. The crucial problem is to locate Uzbekistan in the history of change that is occurring in the region for centuries. Considering that the post-colonial approaches and transition studies are mainly based on a general perception of modernization occurring in different cases, Uzbekistan is distinguishable in terms of its particular experience with the externally motivated and Western-based perception of modernization. Therefore, this dissertation concentrates on the Uzbek case and its specific experience from political change and peculiar response to change.

## **1.2. Theoretical Framework**

Studies examining political transformation in Central Asia and Uzbekistan in particular have been directed towards two main-stream approaches on change in post-Soviet space. The first of these approaches is the *preconditions* approach, which deals with the causal role of macro-social, macroeconomics and macro-cultural determinants of regime change and democratization.<sup>5</sup> The consequence of change is fixed at democratization and liberalization, together with individualization and economic development, while the main determinant of change is defined to be the adaptability of the conditions inherent in the political system that is experiencing change. On the other hand, the second approach, namely the *transition* school argues that the elite choices, as the most likely path to successful political transformation, play the decisive role towards democratization and change.

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<sup>5</sup> Samuel P. Huntington (1968) *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, Yale University Press: also, Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz (ed) (1995) *Politics in developing countries: comparing experiences with democracy*, Seymour Martin Lipset. Boulder: L. Rienner Publishers

Firstly, *preconditions* school is mainly concerned with the adaptability of the conditions inherent in a society, namely the political institutions, political culture, economic organization or judicial system, so as to yield desirable modernization in that specific country. Therefore preconditions school examines whether some of these institutions and political culture have feasibility for further transformation towards democratization.<sup>6</sup> However, there are two main problems with this approach: first, the examination of conditions and their adaptability to political modernization is basically dependent on a definition of modernization as the endpoint of transition. Second, the modernization discourse, its aims such as democratization, institutionalization and rationalization of politics and the dynamics are problematic in the preconditions school's approach. On the other hand, a perspective, which would make in-depth examination of the conditions in a country so as to take the peculiarities into account, must be taken. The resulting modernization model in the end is still problematic, as it would resemble a Western modern political system, which it proved to be a failure in the short-run, predominated by the failures but no successes of political transformation.

Secondly, *transitions* school's emphasis on the elites raises a clear distinction between the elite motivations and the social motivation for socio-political transformation. The acuteness of this distinction makes the definition of modernization for those cases problematic, since the method of desired political modernization does not resemble a

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<sup>6</sup> Cyril E. Black (ed) (1991) *The Modernization of Inner Asia* Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe,

political modernization from below as experienced in the Western case. Moreover, even if there is a political agreement on the necessity for modernization between the elites in a country, the socio-political dynamics inherent in that particular case, namely the underlying political loyalties may hinder this consent for modernization.<sup>7</sup> In the case of Uzbekistan, Karimov appears to fulfill nearly all the formal requirements of political modernization as defined by the Western oriented theories, like the emphasis on national identity, establishment of an official Islam and its secularization, institutionalization and bureaucratization as well as relative economic liberalization, but at the end he is bound with the informal political elites' interests and balances within these groups.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, political elites may have consent on the need to modernize, but in the end what those elites seem to agree is the projection of a political modernization (institutionalization, bureaucratization, economic liberalization) that would evolve only in their advantage.

As this dissertation aims to critically analyze the failure of these approaches, the approach will be one of a combination and reexamination of the failures of these approaches, by bringing about a more historical and case-oriented approach. Thus, the dissertation will make a theoretical analysis of political modernization as an externally enforced project and as a result of the encounter with the Russian, Soviet and the challenges of independence. The theory of modernization and the proposed modernity that resulted from it will be examined from the viewpoint of the Western projector,

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<sup>7</sup> Kathleen Collins shows that the confrontation between the relatively modernizing elites and those who oppose change so as to protect interests from inherent socio-political loyalties is clearly exemplified in the Kyrgyzstan case. Kathleen Collins (2006) *Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia* Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press

<sup>8</sup> Samuel P. Huntington (1966) "Political Modernization: America vs. Europe" *World Politics* pp. 378-414

while also internal reformers/modernizers will also be considered. The theoretical analysis of modernization will provide a basis for understanding the corollary basis of political modernization in Central Asian context and in modern Uzbekistan. Thus, this dissertation aims to take a middle-point approach between the two theoretical perspectives outlined above, which is focusing on the preconditions theory for understanding the historical evolution of society in Uzbekistan, and its particular political structures that lead to the emergence of an “adaptive” and “flexible” political change in the host country, namely in Uzbekistan.

In order to analyze the political modernization in Uzbekistan, this dissertation will be using first, theoretical approaches to modernization in a broader sense by referring to mainstream theorists and debates on political modernization. Also a historical account of the emergence of the Uzbeks will be made by using the material from the historians of Central Asian region, so as to locate and define the nature of modern Uzbek society. The traditional socio-political structures, as well as the role of religion and Turkic identity will be critically analyzed. The dissertation will utilize secondary material on the pre-modern evolution of Uzbek society, mostly based on the Western historians’ (either Russian or Western) account of the region. The same method will be used for understanding the encounter with the Russians, the Tsarist era and the Soviet era, while the secondary material on Soviet political modernization project, which analyzes the primary sources on Uzbek Communist Party cadres and cadre policies, will also be used. Concerning the post-independence era, the dissertation will be dealing with the theoretical literature on post-Soviet transition not necessarily related with the Central

Asian case. Obviously, in the post-independence era, the republics of Central Asia became more transparent, while contemporary politics in those countries still hold their peculiar characteristics, such as the informal politics coexisting with formal information on political changes taking place. Thus, secondary literature on the national republics of Central Asia will be used to understand the post-independence political transformation of the era, while the secondary material on the region mostly refer to primary experiences of the researchers that closely monitor the region. The dissertation will try to remain at equal distance to the secondary material, their subjective arguments and even try to criticize them as much as possible, while the dissertation will try to provide another subjective reading of the secondary literature on Uzbekistan by using both theoretical considerations and up-to-date information in Uzbekistan.

The dissertation is methodologically closer to *preconditions* school, while concerning the end-point of political transformation of Uzbekistan, is theoretically closer to *transition* school. Still, both theories cannot fulfill to clarify their perspective on the political modernization, as their anticipation of democratization in the region remains to be a failure, at least for the short-run.

### **1.3. The Plan**

This dissertation will be dealing in the first chapter with the relation between history, change and strife, in order to give an overall understanding of modernization theory, the place of tradition in it, its Western-based ideology and problems with this approach in

the first. In the second chapter, the dissertation will be dealing with the historical account of the evolution of contemporary Uzbeks, their socio-political evolution and traditional identities. In the third chapter, a historical and theoretical approach will be used in order to analyze the encounter with the Russians in the Tsarist period and its contribution to the consolidation of political identities. In the fourth chapter, the dissertation will be dealing with the political modernization experience under the Soviet rule, the evolution of artificially and externally imposed identities, their influence in political transformation of Soviet Uzbekistan, and the failures of identity approaches to understand particular political organization in Central Asia and specifically Uzbekistan will be analyzed. The fourth chapter will also analyze the evolving political conditions at the end of the Soviet rule which provided the basis for post-independence political transformation in Uzbekistan. In the fifth and last chapter, the dissertation will be dealing with the post-independence political transformation and the essence of politics in Uzbekistan.

It can be argued that the clan politics prevalent in the Uzbek political organization presents the *traditional* political forms in the face of political modernization the Central Asian societies' experience. Despite what the major the premises of modernization offered as these post-colonial countries would experience, the political transformation in Uzbekistan followed a different direction of change, which makes the traditional vs. modern distinction and possible confrontation between them irrelevant or oversimplified, which underestimates informal aspects of transformation. The traditional political forms in Uzbekistan showed an adaptive and flexible character in the face of

political change experienced during Soviet rule and the independence following Soviet era. The general perception that the change would follow a path-dependent change, which is aimed towards modernity at the end, is a misconception, since the relation between the modern and the traditional does not seem to be put forward adequately.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORY, CHANGE AND STRIFE

Heraclites suggested some 2500 years ago, that change is universal, “Everything flows; nothing stands still”, and therefore inevitable. Since then the main question was how to manage *change*, and in modern sense how to avoid conflict during that process. Returning to Heraclites will be disappointing at that point, since he is a believer in war, as he thinks war is “universal, and strife is justice, and that all things come into being and pass away through strife.” For him, the war, the strife is at the core of change, transforming structures-ideas or replacing them altogether. The main problem is, whether change could be controlled and the possibility of conflict that arises from it is universal or not, for even those late-modernizer societies like Uzbeks.

Historians give different answers to explain historical development. Karl Marx proposes a materialistic and repressive mode of historical change. Accordingly, there are four stages of history: the primal stage, the feudal stage, the capitalist stage, and the communist stage. The four stages implied an inevitable process of change from primitive forms to more modernized and materially more repressive forms, via demonstrating its conflictual character. For the Marxist history the change is inevitably a change through strife, which would lead to revolution via the consciousness of the self. The end-point is this consciousness and liberalization from all bonds (either modern or traditional) that prevent them to realize the self. This means the historical change has progressive results for the individual and the society

however through conflictual means. Accordingly, modernization process in Uzbek society brought about conflict, which however is expected to result in progress (the condition of modernity) in the future, as it becomes involved in a revolutionary process of modernization. The conflictual progress is a kind of “creative destruction”<sup>9</sup> of the traditional and ineffective for the sake of modern progress.

On the other hand, those intellectuals like Georg Simmel define history “as an empirical science, [which] concerns itself with changes in the forms of culture, and aims to discover the real carriers and causes of change in each particular case.”<sup>10</sup> For Simmel, the subject of the history of modern change is cultural in essence, while despite the “increasing lack of form” in modern life, the change is not fully a negative dying of traditional ‘forms’, but it is in a positive sense a reformulation of the forms that were repressed by the traditional.<sup>11</sup> This understanding of historical change assumes that the transformation of Uzbek society does not bring about conflict, which would arise from the reaction of the traditional bonds to change (modernization). The modernization process, as it aims to avoid conflict in the developing societies, would bring about evolutionary progress in Uzbekistan, which keeps the traditional for the sake of reformulating them as proper for modernization or not.

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<sup>9</sup> Joseph Schumpeter (1950) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* New York: Harper

<sup>10</sup> Georg Simmel (1968) “The Conflict in Modern Culture” in *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays* Trans. By K. Peter Etkorn New York: Teachers Colleague Press, Teachers Colleague, Columbia University, pp.11-12

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. pp.12–13

These two main-stream approaches to historical change, although differ in the shape of historical change, points out a major *progress* as the endpoint of change. E. H. Carr argues that it was Hegel, who was the first to analyze the history of humankind as a continuous development.<sup>12</sup> Carr indicates that “history in its essence [sic] is change, movement, or- if you do not cavil at the old-fashioned word- *progress*.”<sup>13</sup> Relevantly, the rational-evolutionists make an ontological conceptualization of change as a history of development (from a modern perspective) into three, as evolving from animism (primal stage), theological/metaphysical speculation to scientific rationality in the end.<sup>14</sup> Thus, development and modernization as subjects of history has been defined as “the process by which historically evolved institutions are adapted to rapidly changing functions that reflect the unprecedented increase in man’s knowledge, permitting control over his environment, which accompanied the scientific revolution.”<sup>15</sup> These accounts of history as the progress from underdeveloped stages of traditional structures towards the rationalist- and relatively capitalist- stage are the common denominators of the dominant interpretations of historical change. In the case of Uzbekistan, either through conflict or evolution, the end-point is assumed to be progress, as is experienced in the Western modernization.

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<sup>12</sup> E. H. Carr (1961) *What is History?* New York, Knopf, p.151

<sup>13</sup> Keith Jenkins (1995) *On “What Is History?” From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White* Florence, KY, USA: Routledge p. 58

<sup>14</sup> Leonard Binder (1966) “Ideology and Political Development” in Myron Weiner (ed.) (1966) *Modernization: The Dynamics of Growth*, New York-London: Basic Books Inc. Publishers,p.194; This last categorization, and many others find their origins in the classification of Hegel’s hierarchy of forms as “original, critical and philosophical”, which essentially embodies a idea of history. G.W.F. Hegel (1956) *Philosophy of History* New York, Dover Publications

<sup>15</sup> Cyril E. Black (ed.) (1966) *Dynamics of Modernization* New York: Harper and Row, p.7

Western-oriented understanding of historical change has an agreement on the progress, but may differ in the method of achieving it.

The two examinations of historical change have laid the basis of the contemporary modernization theories, as already evaluated in the introduction section, namely the preconditions school and transition school. The uncontrolled change is assumed an inevitable conflict from within or from without. Thus modernization aims to overcome this conflict by imposing its own model. For some, “there is no possibility of society without antagonism,” which is why, “society does not exist.”<sup>16</sup> What actually exists is the change brought about by the historical antagonism/conflict. What the thinkers actually agree about the causes, forms and consequences of change that history consists of conflictual evolution that is caused by change within society and the reaction to it. Still the modernization model, as long as it puts forward the duality between the modern and the traditional, puts conflict/strife (*Polemos*) and war at the core as *she* is the “bearer of every old society, which causes a new society to arise.”<sup>17</sup> The abandonment of the traditional and its replacement by the modern is crucial “because the past no more enlightens the future that human mind lost its way in the darkness.”<sup>18</sup> This dissertation deals with the ‘dynamics’ of this historical change, the determinants and the locations of power, the

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<sup>16</sup> Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau (1985) *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics* London: Verso

<sup>17</sup> Karl Marx (1967) *Capital* New York: International Pub.

<sup>18</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville (2002) *Democracy in America* Chicago, University of Chicago Press,

change taking place and the adaptability to this change which mainly revolves around two concepts: 'tradition' and 'modernity.'

## **2.1 Modern vs. Traditional**

The distinction between the traditional and the modern is crucial for an analysis of mainstream approaches to political transformation in Central Asia and Uzbekistan, since Uzbekistan is considered in many ways as having one of the most traditional societies in Central Asia. Thus, the main expectation is about the forms of an encounter between the two, when Uzbekistan in the post-Soviet era is challenged by the modernization process. However, the distinction between *modern* and *traditional* cannot be easily drawn due to their conceptual complexities and lack of an objective definition.

Literally, the concept "modern" is what we call as of today, which is contemporary and what constitutes it. Similarly, the process of becoming modern is called modernization. Even though the term may be perceived as being generally applied to different cases of transformation and development, the term modernization today is attributed to those processes initiated by the non-modern (late-comers, underdeveloped, modernizing, Third World etc.), a phenomenon which will be detailed out later.

On the other hand, modernization is assumed to contrast *tradition*, as it indicates a *detachment* from the traditional, since the main claim is the improvement and

development in comparison to the traditional forms of society/politics and economic conditions. This detachment from tradition entails that the process of modernization would include change in the form of a progress intensified in time in the Weberian sense and prospering in those areas that are however peculiar to this modernized age, but built on the traditional.

Traditional, on the other hand, is both literally and phenomenologically hard to define. Tradition refers to customs, beliefs, and practices. The limits and the meanings of the traditional imply these values of a society belong to that particular community, and are in opposition to modernizing effects. Modern is symbiotically put against the traditional. The tradition resembles the old while the modern is contemporary or progressive towards development and change. Tradition implies conservation of values, while modern implies an overall transformation of those values in favor of *rationalization* and *enlightenment*. Modernization paradigm locates itself in the attempt to overcome the static and reactionary character of tradition by replacing it with the progressive Western-oriented model of development.

It can be argued that the relation between the modern and traditional forms constitutes the momentum of change in developing societies. Traditional forms may provide the basis for or against modernization. For Eisenstadt (1963) one aspect of modernization focuses on the *change* of these structural characteristics [inherent in the traditional and pre-modern] (economic specialization, urbanization, the breakdown of ascriptive criteria, the opening of mobility, widespread formal education, the development of a

highly differentiated political structure, the extension of politics, the weakening of political control of traditional elites, the spread of political participation, the differentiation of cultural and value systems, and the growth of a widespread communications network). The other aspect focuses on the *adaptiveness* of the traditional to this change (the process of sustained growth and change through the development of a socio-cultural and political system that not only generates continuous change but “is also capable of absorbing changes beyond its own institutional premises”).<sup>19</sup> Change is modeled upon the characteristics of a deterministic modernization process, while the adaptability is concerned with the traditional/non-modern structures that are prevalent within the system that is to be transformed. Thus the pace of change and the adaptiveness resembles the modern ‘condition’ (defined by the West) and modernization ‘experience’ (in the non-Western).<sup>20</sup>

Observably, the basis of the Western approach that puts the modern and the traditional as opposed to each other has its roots in Western-oriented categorization of the non-Western countries as pre-modern, traditional and underdeveloped. From this perspective, modernization is defined in terms of Western experience, which makes modernization of the non-Western world only possible when the non-Western

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<sup>19</sup> Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt (1963) *The Political Systems of Empires* London [New York] Free Press of Glencoe, p.5; also Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, (1966) “The Basic Characteristics of Modernization” in *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte*, <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/>

<sup>20</sup> For an understanding of modernity as a *condition* and *experience*: Anthony Giddens (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* Cambridge; Oxford: Polity Press; Alain Touraine (1995) *Critique of Modernity* Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass. : Blackwell; Marshall Berman (1982) *All that is Solid Melts into Air: the Experience of Modernity* New York : Simon and Schuster; David Harvey (1989) *The Condition of Post-modernity: An Inquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* Oxford [England] Cambridge, Mass., USA : Blackwell

countries, like Uzbekistan adapts itself to the model identified by the Russians/West. The lack of an alternative model for modernization in the non-Western countries becomes a problem, when the Western observer tries to understand/control these countries/societies. Therefore, political modernization in the non-Western world is problematic as soon as the modern/Western actors cannot control the modernization in that area. It is because political modernization is seen as a Western phenomenon, and the others are limited with the traditional vs. modern distinction, that the Western literature fails today to understand the post-Soviet regime transition in Uzbekistan and others.

## **2.2 Modernization as Western Experience**

Considering modernization as a generalized understanding of progress, which began in the West and spread as a category of understanding of change, it is possible to argue that, industrial/capitalist society and its socio-political development laid the basis for the development of modernization in the West. Capitalism's Western character makes modernization which arises from the particular implications of capitalism also a Western experience.

For Marx, as for Weber, capitalism, which began in the West, is the 'most fateful force' of modernism in shaping the world. It is an indivisible feature of Western modernity, yet this need not imply an economically deterministic analysis, since "it is not that capitalism as a form of economy causes modernity to be as it is, though for both Weber and Marx, capitalism's colonization of global economic life is a crucial

agency of modernization.”<sup>21</sup> The consequences of capitalism, such as industrialization, urbanization, secularization, rationalization, individualization and nation-state formation, had inevitably resulted in other major changes in the West and elsewhere, while the major transformation would still be divided into two as “sociation” and “subjectivity”.<sup>22</sup> In contrast to capitalism as an ‘economy’, modernity is ‘a mode of life’, a sociation of the ‘nexus relationship’, [which is] a societal tapestry, in which ‘social and cultural phenomena do not trail after the economic at some remote remove’ but are constitutive of what ‘the economics is.’<sup>23</sup> As we will see, the capitalism of the West, categorizes the transition countries like Uzbekistan as underdeveloped, or developing countries in terms of capitalist development.

If we are to conceptualize modernization on the Western experience of capitalism, industrialization, democratization, liberalism etc., it can be argued that there are three mainstream modernization experiences: 1) The process since the industrial revolution and the political revolutions at the end of the 18th century when the small group of today’s modern societies developed in Western Europe and North America, 2) Many successful and unsuccessful efforts to catch up and reduce the gap to the leading societies by poorer and less developed countries, 3) Efforts of the modern societies to

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<sup>21</sup> Derek Sayer (1991) *Capitalism and Modernity: An Excursus on Marx and Weber* Routledge, Great Britain, pp.1

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. pp.2-3

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. p.84

cope – via innovation and reform – with new internal problems and, more importantly, with the changing international and globalizing environment.<sup>24</sup>

Daniel Lerner argues that the Western model is universal, and therefore *modernization process is essentially a 'Westernization' process*. Accordingly, all those that are modernizing will/should experience modernization as the Western European countries had experiences, and will/should become, in the end, modern like the Western European models.<sup>25</sup> The central actors of the modern world refer to their own historical experiences while defining the condition of modernity and the process of modernization. Shmuel Eisenstadt defines modernization as a particularly Western phenomenon, which however does not prevent other modernizers to pursue their peculiar (multiple) modernization processes. He defines modernization as “historically [...]the process of change towards those types of social, economic, and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and north America from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and have spread to other European countries and in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to the South Americans, Asians and African continents.”<sup>26</sup>

All these conceptualizations imply a hierarchy between the cases as being successful and unsuccessful in the course of historical change. Western discourse

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<sup>24</sup> Wolfgang Zapf (2004) “Modernization Theory and the Non-Western World” Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung (WZB) June [online] <http://skylla.wz-berlin.de/pdf/2004/p04-003.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Daniel Lerner (1958) *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd. Toronto, Ontario, pp 46-47

<sup>26</sup> Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt (1966) *Modernization: Protest and Change*, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, p.1

characteristically undermined other experiences<sup>27</sup> as being deviant, and centralizes the Western experience. There is the ‘modern’ on the one hand that incarnates in the West, and the *late, imperfect* ‘modernizers’ on the other. Uzbekistan falls into the imperfect and late-modernizer category in that distinction. The gap between the developed world and the underdeveloped is never closing. The definition of the political change in Uzbekistan is made in the West as authoritarian, due to its traditional socio-political or to Soviet heritage. The failure on the part of the Western approach is clearly visible in the sense that the approach fails to grasp the peculiarities of Uzbekistan case, its particular development path, the flexible informal politics inherent in society and their adaptation to the forms that are externally pushed in the country. Uzbekistan, as a failed state<sup>28</sup>, emerges to be unable to satisfy the inevitable modernization after the Soviet collapse. The distinctiveness of the Western modernization and the gap between the modern West and the non-modern/traditional Uzbekistan is a gap that will, at least in the discursive level, remain still, and the modern history, the modern manner, the pressures from globalization and liberalism are indispensable outcomes of this historical process (that are internal to the process) of change, which occurs in an ever-exciting manner in Central Asia and with unexpected consequences, which will be analyzed in this dissertation in detail.

This failure and ignorance on the part of Uzbekistan to grasp the nature of Uzbek political development, its historical roots and its labeling as a failure of modernization

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<sup>27</sup> Edward Said (1979) *Orientalism* New York: Vintage Books

<sup>28</sup> Vitaly Naumkin (2006) “Uzbekistan’s State-Building Fatigue” *The Washington Quarterly* No 29:3, pp.127-140

has been misleading. Concerning the application of a comparative/dictating approach for modernization processes, Marion Levy criticizes the “Western oriented path-dependent approach” on modernization “project” and employs three interrelated arguments concerning differentiation between modernization experiences.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, “the requisites of relatively modern societies are not necessarily the same as the prerequisites for achieving such a state.” Moreover, “the prerequisites for latecomers to the process are not necessarily the same as the prerequisites for those societies whose members achieved these patterns largely indigenously and above all gradually in a situation in which they have not been previously developed”, while similarly “the prerequisites of one set of latecomers are not necessarily the same as prerequisites of another set of latecomers.”<sup>30</sup> Shmuel Eisenstadt vaguely sketches a picture of “multiple modernities” with no visible trend toward convergence the result of which should be “several modern civilizations”, perhaps even including fundamentalist and new communal-national movements<sup>31</sup>. Still, the detachment from the original model is also labeled as a modernization project, but this time an *alternative one*. This dissertation will try to explain the historical development peculiar to Uzbek society as a traditional society, but political transformation of which could not be understood from the viewpoint of the Western observer, who ignores the specific character of the evolution of Uzbeks as a distinct group. Also, as will be seen,

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<sup>29</sup> Marion J. Levy (1965) *Social Patterns (Structures) and Patterns of Modernization* The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 358, March, pp 29-40 in “Readings on Social Change” edited by Wilbert E. Moore and Robert M. Cook (1966), pp189-208 Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey

<sup>30</sup> Levy (1965) pp. 192-193

<sup>31</sup> Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt (2000) “Multiple Modernities in an Age of Globalization” *Daedalus*; Winter: 129/1, Academic Research Library p. 4

the failure on the part of the Western observer has its own internal reasons, such as its superiority claim, its centralization of progress and rationality, as a metaphysical characteristic, which can only be found in the Western political transformation, and which can only be copied by the non-Western.

### **2.3 Superiority of the Modern over the Non-Western**

The superiority claim of the Western political development lies at the heart of the Western approach on the non-Western political change. As the *mission civilisatrice* pursued by the Russians to justify their efforts in penetrating and controlling Central Asia shows, modern Western perspective aimed to establish a strategic control, while the traditionalism of the non-Western world proved problematic for this strategic control. Accordingly, Western (namely modern) is perceived to be *superior* and *progressive*, in an evolutionary sense, to the historical periods that preceded it. Modernization is a continuous process of improvement in the capacity of humanity to manage and control its physical,<sup>32</sup> social and cultural environment for its own benefit. Accordingly, the condition of being/becoming modern is a better condition compared to the traditional/non-modern, and modernization therefore implies a development and improvement for becoming better by adapting the dynamics of change, by managing the change towards better use of scarce resources by applying efficiency, rationality and other factors to the process of social change.

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<sup>32</sup> Michel Foucault (1973) *The Birth of the Clinic: an Archeology of Medical Perception* New York, Pantheon Books; Talcott Parsons *Action Theory and the Human Condition*, New York: Free Press. pp. 331–51

Still, the continuous process of improvement in order to become modernized in the general sense of the term does not have a definite endpoint (Fig.1, the point “O”), in contrast to a fixed beginning point(X). The modernization begins simultaneously with the emergence of industrialization and capitalism, and even before, with the emergence of the rationalism – at a point when the modern began to detach itself from the *undefined* traditional past (X). It is obvious that the modern history, modern science or modern politics etc. implies a detachment paving the way for a new era of non-traditional, anti-traditional. The followers of the new era, the modern states (B)

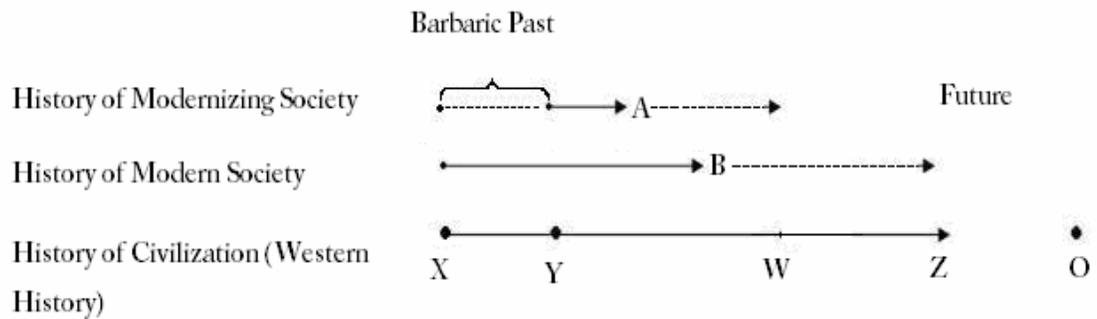


Figure 1. Modernization Timeline

and societies, dominate the new manner, and the latecomer (A) experiences a process, boundaries and principles of which is pre-determined. But the latecomer, since it is a latecomer, is in a position that the process of modernization is unending (the process is the realization of O), which means the superiority of the modern over the modernizing is continuous. Since the latecomer begin at a point (Y) while the modern states (B) realized their modernization experiences, the gap between the two experiences is never closing, while the modernizing latecomer reaches the point W, the already modern state will be at a further point (Z), at least she will create a

discourse that the A is to achieve more in order to become modernized and to reach the O.

The superiority assumption builds a hierarchical structure between the Western experience of historical change and the non-Western traditional. Namely, the traditional remains backward, and therefore needs to develop. The modern will enforce and impose the main elements of modernization, since hierarchically she is the ‘modern’-more developed. Modernization perception assumes that a pre-modern society is not adequate in our contemporary world and must be replaced via revolution, democratic transition or through external pressures (as it was the case with the Russian conquest of Central Asia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, or like the US intervention in Iraq to install liberal-democratic societies and nation-states), which also bears authoritative consequences. Referring to this hegemony of the modern over non-modern (or traditional; 3<sup>rd</sup> world) it is possible to say that modernity, once generates and renovates those socio-political structures and actors, which provides support and its reproduction, in order to enter into and transform the societies under concern, those structures and actors would try to transform this modernity -from which they are born- so that it would serve their interests and advantages.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Mustafa Armağan (1999) “Alternatif Modernliğe ve Modernliğimize Dair” Doğu-Batı No: 8, p 76

## 2.4 Modernization in Central Asia and Uzbekistan

In the case of Central Asia and Uzbekistan, the adaptation of the old system to Russian modernization project is not a new phenomenon. Especially after the establishment of Soviet control over the newly created republics, the Soviet institutions and structures were introduced in order to transform communities living in Turkistan. This institutional change had not been a swift transformation of the socio-political structures in the beginning; Soviet system tolerated traditional forms of organization in both political and social areas.<sup>34</sup> When the system realized that such coexistence might have destabilizing effects considering the Soviet interests, those traditional forms were either totally destroyed or transformed.<sup>35</sup> Soviets did not aim to pioneer modernization and progress in the region, but rather the main aim was to establish *control* and *stability*. Especially during the last years of the Tsarist rule and recently after the Soviet revolution, the political instability and Civil War in Turkistan region was tried to be solved by the new regime by this political projection.

However, political modernization in the Uzbek society cannot be explained only by an inclination for exploitation nor can it be accomplished by simple adaptation to an imitated model of modernity that champions rationalism, economic development and the modern state, specifically dictated by Russians. Political modernization did not

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<sup>34</sup> For H. C. d'Encausse, Lenin followed two different policies: the satisfaction of national demands, and the recognition of the right to self-determination. The *Narkomnats*, special commissariat for the realization of these two relatively sympathetic objectives, were transformed into agencies for the consolidation of central control over the republics, trying to "restrict in every possible way the competence of national institutions" of the republics. H. C. d'Encausse (1978) "Determinants and Parameters of Soviet Nationality Policy" pp. 42-43 in *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices* (ed.) by Jeremy Azrael New York: Praeger Publishing

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p.45

function purely as theoretical or on a purely discursive level; the political modernization, even in the Western sense, is a result of the authoritative model injected by the Russians. Obviously, as Alain Touraine calls, political modernization has to be initiated through de facto social-political structures despite its ideological tools and functions.<sup>36</sup> Political modernization of Central Asia devised functional tools<sup>37</sup> and penetrated into the societies of Central Asia disseminating its ideological principles. Therefore, political modernization took mainly two shapes: first as an external projection for control and stability in the region by the Russians, and second as a response to this external projection. In both cases, new institutions, socio-political alliances, new elites and ideologies emerged.

Moreover, the modernization of Central Asian republics under the Soviet rule had not only followed a technological or institutional path, but also a discursive reformulation of socio-political structures in *accordance with the ideology of the Soviet state*. In order to establish Soviet ideology, the Soviet state initiated a policy of toleration for Central Asian national self-determination. However, since there were no national Asian identities, the Soviets abandoned the toleration to national self-determination, for the sake of ‘liberating’ and ‘creating’ national consciousness of the newly created republics, based on the subjective perceptions of Soviet ethnographers.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Alain Touraine (1995) *Critique of Modernity* Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell

<sup>37</sup> Louis Althusser (2002) *İdeoloji ve Devletin İdeolojik Aygıtları* İstanbul: İletişim

<sup>38</sup> Francine Hirsch (1997) “The Soviet Union as a Work-in-Progress: Ethnographers and the Category *Nationality* in the 1926, 1937 and 1939 Censuses” *Slavic Review*, Vol.56, No 2 Summer pp.251-278; Marcus Banks (1996) “Soviet Ethnos Theory” pp. 17-24 in *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions* London; New York: Routledge; Rocky L. Rockett (1980) “Ethnic Stratification in the Soviet Union: A Preliminary Analysis” *Ethnic Groups*, Vol. 2, p. 327- 341; Yuri Slezkine (1994) “The USSR as a

*Nationalization as differentiation was perceived to be the 'modernizing tool' for the Central Asian republics.* Nationalities policies provided the basis for establishing control and secure stability, while using this identity-building in order to mobilize people, prevent reactionary opposition that would lead to opposition. The same is applicable to Islamic identity, since the Soviets degenerated, suppressed or created official Islam so as to prevent uncontrolled religious mobilization. As will be evaluated later, Islamic identity is one of the two mobilizing tools for Central Asians; however which has limited effect and ability to unite people.

The crucial point for the socio-political evolution of the Uzbek society is the multiplicity of traditional forms, of which Tsarist, or Soviet may perceive as threats are destroyed, while other traditional political forms survive in a much diversified manner. The traditional in Central Asia takes multiple forms; either ruling empires tried to localize and therefore define traditions in order to control, assimilate and overrun these societies. On the other hand, their perceptions of these societies had always remained insufficient. What this dissertation tries to show is the evolutionary prevalence of the traditional forms, not in a conflictual but assimilationist manner, so as to transform even the modernizing actor and institutions by traditionalizing them.

## **2.5 Problem Outlined**

The main aim of this dissertation is to make a brief analysis of the relation between *modernization* and *traditional* elements of this process. The social identities came into conflict with which is proposed as a solution that would lead the 'underdeveloped

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Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism" *Slavic Review* Vol. 53, No 2 pp.414-452

Central Asian' to modernity and reacted against the alien. But the result has not been a thorough assimilation, but an adaptation to these models, while retaining the traditional and informal political structures intact. The clash between the Soviet state and its stability and development projection on the one hand, and the traditional forms of government and social-political organization on the other, are claimed to be disharmonized. Similarly, after the collapse of the USSR, this disharmony, it is argued, has continued, this time the imposed Soviet identity to be replaced by a national identity and liberalization. In order to evaluate whether such clear distinction existed between the modern nation-state model and the traditional forms of tribal, regional patrimonial relations, the dissertation will try to provide a historical evolution of change of the Central Asian and Uzbek politics and society and therefore emphasize the unique socio-political structures, within which the generalized models of modernization, democratization and change intercepted with the *otherized* 'traditional', 'non-modern' and evolutionary society and politics.

Accordingly, theories of social change and the specific reference to modernization in Post-Soviet nation-building processes are not equipped well enough to analyze the Central Asian socio-political models, as they underestimate the influence of traditional structures well embedded in the Central Asian societies. Therefore, a research on the nation-building, the modern nation-state and modernization in line with these models indicates specific failures in the case of Uzbekistan, which could best be discovered via attention to the prioritization of politics (that is traditional) over

the political (which is formalized within the discourse of modernization).<sup>39</sup> The change had to be analyzed through a more peculiar conceptualization of the Uzbek socio-political structures in accordance with the distinction between the two, and their internal hierarchy.

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<sup>39</sup> Chantal Mouffe (2005) *On the Political* London; New York: Routledge

## CHAPTER 3

### EMERGENCE OF UZBEKS<sup>40</sup>: PRE-MODERN ERA

An analysis of the emergence of Uzbeks as an ethnically-mixed and complex community necessitates a theoretical distinction between the Uzbek title and what it represented until the formation of the Uzbek nationality at the beginning of the Uzbek USSR. Therefore this dissertation equips an evolutionary approach to the formation of Uzbeks concerning the *pre-modern* era. Pre-modern vs. modern era distinction is necessary, not in the sense that pre-modern era is *a-historical* and inadequate considering the modernization that began with the Russian conquest, but such a distinction will provide us with useful historical background so as to present its social and political peculiarities.

The so-called pre-modern era as a categorization for the Central Asian peoples does not necessarily mean backwardness of these peoples. Modernization assumes a beginning point from which onwards the society concerned meets progress towards socio-political, economic and mental transformation. During the pre-modern era, it is hard to talk about a group called Uzbeks, and therefore to talk about a common historical experience. However, considering the contemporary politics, those pre-modern social and political features still has their influence as part of a response to modernization, specifically after the Tsarist conquest.

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<sup>40</sup> Shirin Akiner (1983) *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union* London: Kegan Paul, pp. 266-274

The modernization of the Uzbeks, beginning with the Soviet delimitation policy corresponds to an identity construction period, which tried to abandon the pre-modern Central Asian identities and social structures. At the beginning of the Soviet era, Uzbekness was limited to the territorial-ethnic boundaries. Uzbekistan, the land of the Uzbeks<sup>41</sup>, is therefore a modern-artificial geographical space created under the Soviet policies. However, until that time Uzbeks' evolution as a distinct group was influenced mainly by the Russian penetration of Central Asia. The living space, the language, socio-political organization, economic activity and even communal (not individual) identification types had been multi-dimensional. This dissertation does not undermine the primordial origins of the Uzbeks, the socio-political characteristics of which are still prominent today in modern Uzbekistan. However, this primordial and pre-modern evaluation of the modern Uzbeks could not be classified as a source for modern Uzbek national identity, since the traditional/pre-modern social organization had different origins and different categorizations, which did not emerge as an internal dynamic in the Uzbek tribes.

The following section will try to present the emergence of modern Uzbeks, their encounter with the Russians penetrating into Central Asia, the methods of the Russian conquest, its reasons, the reaction of the Central Asian to Russian arrival and the consequences, particularly with reference to its contribution to evolving Uzbek-identity.

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<sup>41</sup> For an evaluation of the concept "land of the Uzbeks" from a geographical perspective, which puts Uzbekistan as a modern concept related to the modernist views of Lenin and the Soviets; James Critchlow (1991) *Nationalism in Uzbekistan: A Soviet Republic's road to Sovereignty* Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press, pp. 4-6

### **3.1 Socio-political Evolution of Uzbeks in the Pre-modern Era**

The name Uzbek appeared in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in Dasht-i Kipchak, first in the name of a distinguished Khan of the Golden Horde, then as the name of certain tribal groups. Accordingly the term Uzbek only indicated those who assume to be followers of Uzbek Khan, the Khan of the Golden horde, who ruled in the second quarter of the 14<sup>th</sup> century in Dasht-i Kipchak. A more linguistic theory dedicates the term Uzbek as referring to “independent *begs*”. As will be discussed the tribal-kinship affiliation and genealogical structures are critical reference points for an understanding of the historical evolution of Central Asian people. Still Uzbek as denoting the contemporary Uzbek population in the Post-Soviet Uzbekistan emerged as a modern ethnicization of Turkistan by the national delimitation project in 1924. Therefore, Uzbek is essentially a modern categorization, which at the same time has primordial, pre-modern roots.

The emergence of the Uzbeks as primarily a political community (followers of Shaiban Khan) rather than as a group sharing the elements of a common culture or other elements as to constitute an ethnic group, can be attributed to the Central Asian socio-political heritage even prior to *Chinggis* Khan, who also felt the need to modify that heritage to be able to base his political structure on relatively permanent basis. For it is clear that the ease and flexibility of the Central Asian communities to form and to dissolve political alliances sometimes giving way to the rise of relatively permanent societies, created a “tradition” that hindered the formation of simple ethnic communities.

There are diverging views on the numbers that compose Uzbek tribes and clans.<sup>42</sup> The composition of Uzbek tribes and clans was further complicated by the emergence of new descended clans and kinship units and also by the formation of new combinations from the continuous confederation building attempts.

When, the great Central Asian Turkic conqueror *Timur*, known in the West as *Tamerlane* (1336-1405) gained control of the lands which had previously been under the domination of other Mongol hordes, including the White Horde, Uzbeks emerged in the White Horde as a distinct group composed of several tribes. As will be seen there are differing views on the formation of this Uzbek group, which mainly revolves around three major propositions:

- i. *Dasht-i Kipchak* nomadic Uzbeks, who mainly migrated to Central Asia in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century
- ii. Local Turkic tribes and clans, which joined the former, from the so-called *Chaghatai* (Çağatay) and *Oghuz* (Oğuz) Turkic tribes and clans
- iii. The *Sarts*, including the settled Turkic (primarily urban) population (descending from the Turks, who diverged from nomadic life style and who lost their tribal/clan affiliation) and the Turkified Tajiks.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Alisher Ilkhamov (2004) “Archeology of Uzbek Identity” *Central Asian Survey* Vol.23, Numbers 3-4, Numbers 3-4, pp. 289-326, p.293

<sup>43</sup> Ilkhamov (2004), p.290; Also for a more detailed analysis of Uzbek ethnogenesis, Zeki Velidi Togan (1992) “The Origins of the Kazakhs and ôzbeks” *Central Asian Survey* Vol. 11, No.3; For a more historical account “Formation of the Uzbek Language” in *Essays of Uzbek History, Culture,*

Zeki Velidi Togan argues that the Uzbeks were made up of 92 tribes.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, after the association with other Turkish tribes (settled and nomadic) and the indigenous Iranians (settled Tajiks), three main groups have emerged<sup>45</sup>: the Sart, or settled Uzbeks, namely “the Turkified Old Iranian population”, who form the majority of present-day Uzbek population. They are indistinguishable from the Tajiks and, like the latter; do not have any tribal organization. The second group is known as *Türki*, or descendants of the Oghuz tribes of the 11th-15th centuries, are the pre-Uzbek Turkic nomads. This group has retained its tribal affiliations; its members are known as the *Qarluq*, *Barlas*, *Jalayir* and others. This group is often termed *Türk/Türki* or Chaghatai.<sup>46</sup> The third group, the Kipchak, also has retained its tribal affiliations and has subdivisions such as the Qunqurt, the *Manghut*, and the *Kurama*. This group is the Eastern Kipchak Uzbek union, which are sometime called ‘*Taza Uzbek*’, “Pure Uzbeks”.<sup>47</sup> The Sart Uzbeks have a tendency to assimilate other nationalities. The assimilation of the Tajiks into the Uzbek fold is a clear example of this tendency. They are also in the process of absorbing the *Türki* and the *Kipchak* by gradually divesting them of their tribal ways and ushering them into the Sart culture.<sup>48</sup>

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*and Language* (1993) Bakhtiyar A. Nazarov and Denis Sinor (ed.) Indiana University Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies Bloomington, Indiana

<sup>44</sup> Togan (1992)

<sup>45</sup> Lawrence Krader (1963) *Peoples of Central Asia* Bloomington, Indiana University, p. 407

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

Alisher Ilkhamov argues that for the first time in history, the Uzbeks as a distinct group are mentioned in *Hamidullah Kazvini's* manuscript (born ca. 1280 CE).<sup>49</sup>:

In his 'Selected History' ('*Tarikh-i Guzide*') concerning Uzbek Khan's invasion of Iran in 1335 CE, he labeled Golden Horde troops as 'Uzbeks' and Uzbek's state (the Golden Horde) as 'Uzbek state' (*Memleket- i-Uzbeki*). Nizam-din Shami, who was the historian of the Tamerlane, reports in his narrative of Tamerlane's two emirs' escape in 1377 CE that both emirs 'left for the area inhabited by the Uzbeks and sought shelter under Urus-Khan', whom he called Uzbek Khan. Another historian of Tamerlane, Sheref-ad-din Ali Yezdi, while writing about the embassy of 1397 CE from Timur Kutlug (Golden Horde khan), called the arriving ambassadors 'Uzbeks'.<sup>50</sup>

Alisher Ilkhamov uses the above mentioned historical information and argues that "the term 'Uzbek' came into use during the reign of Uzbek Khan and, respectively, related to his name, people under his rule came to be known as 'Uzbeks' after his name."<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, the ethnonym has also begun to be applied to the subjects of the Golden Horde in the times of *Urus-khan* and *Yedighey*, and not only to Turkic-speaking but also originally Turko–Mongolic tribes, that had already formed the Uzbek *ulus* within the Djuchi ulus.<sup>52</sup> After the Tamerlane's invasion and the dissolution of the Golden Horde in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Uzbek *ulus* occupied the area between lower course of the Syr Derya and Ural, while 'as a state structure,

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<sup>48</sup> Arne Haugen (2003) "Traditional Identities: Uzbek, Tajiks or Sarts?" in *The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia* Palgrave Macmillan, Great Britain; Chapter II pp. 145-153

<sup>49</sup> Ilkhamov (2004) p. 291

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> V. A. Semyonov (1954) "To the question of Sheybani-khan's Uzbeks origin and composition" *Materials on History of Middle Asian Tajiks and Uzbeks* No 1, p.21; cited in Ilkhamov (2004)

became firmly established only in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. only a century after the death of Uzbek-khan himself.’<sup>53</sup> Then, the ethnonym Uzbek began to be associated with the names of a new generation of Turkic–Mongol dynastic leaders, whose roots dated back not to Uzbek-khan but to Mongol prince *Shaibani*, *Djuchi*’s younger son.

The structural complexity that the composition of Uzbek tribes offers is a sign of the complexity of evaluating modern Uzbeks under the theoretical umbrella of nationality or ethnicity. It is possible to locate the first uses of the term Uzbek in historical documents, as the term was used for indicating distinctive Uzbek ‘state’ and Uzbek people.<sup>54</sup> However, it is hard to consider an ethnically consolidated Uzbek group. It is observable that the term Uzbek and what it represents is a fluid evolution of the tribes and clans displaced and settled among diverse places shifting loyalties and names. The group called Uzbeks were a confederation of different tribes, as did the other ‘ethnic’ communities of Central Asia, while however they differed as the Uzbek population sedentarized in Transoxiana region, where most of the population having different clan and tribal origins were began to be called as Uzbeks.<sup>55</sup>

The composition of the contemporary Uzbek society is more complicated and heterogeneous due to these historical amalgamations and Soviet Delimitation Policy. The settling of the *Dasht-i Kipchak* during the rule of Shaibani Khan in the early 16<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ilkhamov (2004), p.292

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p. 291

<sup>55</sup> Togan (1993)

century can be seen as the beginning date of the emergence of the Uzbeks as a distinct group, still maintaining a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual character. Uzbek-khan, Abulkhair-khan and Shaibani-Khan played decisive roles in their unification under the patronage of a strong centralized state, uniting different Uzbek clans. Accordingly, “the authority of Abulkhair and his grandson Shaibani did not simply lie in their kinship relation with the Chinggisids but also in being leaders, supported and elected by Uzbek tribes.”<sup>56</sup> Their leadership skills made these powerful leaders succeed unifying these complex tribes under their rule, an achievement which was not seen during the isolation of the peoples of Central Asia between 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Thus, it can be argued that this lack of strong leaders after the 17<sup>th</sup> century led those people to dispossess unity, became more fragmented, localized and separated, a feature that made it easier for the Russians to penetrate into Central Asia. However, their penetration had complicated more the already existing mixed political structures.

In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, these mixed tribes, under Shaibani’s guidance, finally conquered the territory of *Mauverannahr*. Since then, the Uzbek Khans (the descendants of Uzbek Khan) reigned over the territory of Central Asia, drifting gradually from a nomadic to a settled life-style from the early 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards when the Ashtarkhanids dominated the region, until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and even continued settling during the Soviet rule. Neither the modern Uzbek population had the same pure origin of Uzbek ethnicity as it was named from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, or clan or tribal origins are the same, nor did they

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<sup>56</sup> Ilkhamov (2004) p.292

developed such an identity, but rather political relations of sub-national character survived in the tribal-clan level. Up until the Russian encounter followed by the Russian penetration of Turkistan, this complex structure remained the same. However, after Russian incursion, these groups were faced with the challenge of colonization; which had posed a threat to communal/regional/local/clan identity and power politics.<sup>57</sup>

### **3.2 Encounter with the Russians and Russian Penetration into Central Asia**

The societies of Central Asia and Uzbeks in particular were isolated and had limited interaction with the outside world in this period (16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century) that we were defining as pre-modern. This isolation had its specific reasons. The most important factor for this isolation beginning with the 16<sup>th</sup> century was the decreasing importance of the Silk Road because of the emerging sea-trade routes. Central Asian societies, specifically the sedentary populations that controlled the trade and that are culturally developed, lost their ways of communication with the outside world. Adding to that is the geographical features of the region, namely the series of mountain ranges that formed the southern border. The geographical barriers are strengthened by the geopolitical barriers by the Russians in the North, Persians in the West and the Chinese in the East.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Black (1991) pp.3-7

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. pp. 3-7

In relation to this isolation, the rise of the Russians in the North and British Empire reaching out India in the South had been the end of this isolation of the Central Asians. As early as 1826, by the advice of a Russian general, Tsar Nicholas I called urgently for the occupation of Khiva and the establishment of Russian imperial control over Central Asia. There are mainly two reasons for the Russian expedition (which has already began in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century but proved unsuccessful):

- i. to ensure the security of Russia's trade routes because of the increasing volume and importance of commercial contacts with Central Asia,
- ii. to forestall the continuing advance of the British into the area.<sup>59</sup>

Therefore, one of the main aims of the Russian conquest was to secure Russian interests in Central Asia. Moreover, Russian expedition played a "*mission civilisatrice*"<sup>60</sup> a modernizing role in Central Asia, not only because the Russian penetration compelled Central Asians to change, but also societies in the region naturally reacted to Russian expedition, by developing skills to react politically to the Russians. This reaction resulted in a relative transformation, at least of the formal political structures, but internal political loyalties remained at the core.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p.41

<sup>60</sup> Valery Tishkov (2005) "Self-Determination of the Russian Nation" *The Anthropology of World Politics* Volume: 3, Issue 2(8),

The Russian expedition mainly targeted the sedentary Khanates of Turkistan, after easily getting control of and through establishing fortresses in the Kazakh steppe. Three most important Khanates those centered in Bukhara (which was ruled by the Manghits between 1753 and 1920), Khiva (which was ruled by the Qunrats between 1717 and 1920), and Kokand (which was ruled by Quqan between 1710 and 1876) along with Tashkent (1865) and other important Uzbek cities that were established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, later came under Russian control in the wake of the Tsarist conquest of Central Asia. Russians created a governor-generalship of Turkistan, which placed under military administration responsible to the Ministry of War, which included the total land of Central Asia taken by Russians.

After the Tsarist rule in Central Asia was consolidated, a strategy for maintaining status quo in Turkistan was adapted, namely non-interference policy.<sup>61</sup> Russian authorities cooperated with the local elites, but did not try to integrate them into the Tsarist administration. Arne Haugen argues that Russians aimed to achieve “a maximum of control at a minimum of cost”, which they thought would be accomplished via non-interference.<sup>62</sup> The already existing political structure was a fragmented but transforming one, which however proved unable to develop adequate reaction to the expedition, making Russian control over the traditional political actors easier.

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<sup>61</sup> Haugen (2003) pp. 49-52

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p.50-51

On the one hand the complex socio-political structure of the region provided a rich and diversified (multilingual, multi-religious) cultural heritage, while on the other it complicated the political unification in favor of the Russians. Uzbeks were separated among the Khanates, which did not conserve homogeneous societies. This failure of the opposition groups like the Basmachi and others to challenge Russians caused Central Asian elites, as will be analyzed in the forthcoming sections, to change their course.

As the mixed ethno-tribal structure of Uzbeks show, there had been no unity among the Uzbek tribes and Khanates, which stemmed from the continuing human migration and the resulting unusually complex mixture of peoples and faiths. This complexity of the region made it harder to form a unified political will so as to answer Russian expedition in Turkistan. Russians turned this disunity to rivalry between the Khanates. The conflict between the Khanates was the result of power-consolidation efforts between them; the efforts for centralization to curb the independence of local families and centralize control within their respective realms. Accordingly, when the Russian expedition began in 1870s, that process of centralization was incomplete that made easier for the Russians to play one Khanate to another.

The Russian kept their non-interference policy during the Tsarist rule, in order to be able to keep religious or local reactions which were seen as potential threats to control and stability. However, their equal treatment and tolerance in the 19<sup>th</sup>

century, was later replaced with Russian superiority and their civilizing role, as the Russians began to emphasize the differences rather than try to integrate them. The population of Central Asia was given the status of *inorodsty* (of foreign origin) unlike the remaining population of the Empire, discriminating by subjecting them to lesser rights and unequal duties. Moreover, the civilizing mission and the discriminatory policies did not interfere with the Islamic education or rituals, since Russians thought that this would cause a destabilizing reaction from the Muslim Central Asian population in the form of opposition to the Russian authorities. Instead, Russians ignored religion, with the hope that Islam would gradually lose its significance (*ignorirovanie*). Arne Haugen gives two examples of this ignorance and isolation: first, Turkistan being kept out of the Muslim Spiritual Administration based in Orenburg, and second ban on all missionary activity of the Orthodox Church in Central Asia until 1917.<sup>63</sup> The Russian strategy of non-intervention did not aim to transform the region or its traditional identities, but to establish a relatively stable control over the population and the political elites. Until the Basmachi uprisings and the Jadid movement following it, Russian strategy remained one of non-interference, which however remained ineffective for maintaining stability in the region. Still, as will be analyzed in the coming sections, unification for opposition also had limited potential to effectively counter Russian expansion.

The question is whether the pre-modern Uzbeks had a sense of national/regional/ethnic/local identity adequate enough to sustain their cohesion in the face of a Russian threat. The ability to develop identity was not directly related

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid. p. 51

to the ability to modernize. Modernization in Turkistan has its peculiar conditions and motives. However, it is possible to indicate that encounter with the Russians had caused the people of Turkistan to become aware of the 'other', namely the Russian after an isolation that continued for three centuries, instituting a limited intellectual base for developing tactics for future reform and transformation of the Central Asian politics.

There were two effects of Russian encounter on the Uzbeks: first, Central Asians experienced an undeniable defeat by the Russians. This means the encounter with the Russians was not a neutral encounter, but which outrivaled the inhabitants of Central Asia. Second, Russian policies had been exclusive and exploitative so as to manipulate the strategic importance of the region as a battleground between the British and Russian Empires, which is called the Great Game.<sup>64</sup> The non-intervention policy continued to be the dominant policy until when the Russians were challenged by the uprisings in Turkistan. This meant that the non-intervention policy did not mean Russians were not intervening in the region; on the contrary, as will be seen, Tsarist expansion used its particular tools and policies to maintain control over Turkistan.

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<sup>64</sup> *The Great Game*, a term usually attributed to Arthur Connolly, was used to describe the rivalry and strategic conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. The term was later popularized by British novelist Rudyard Kipling in his work *Kim*. Peter Hopkirk (1992) *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*, New York: Kodansha International

Hence, this unequal and exploitative encounter with the Russians had generated two main responses: either resistance to Russian rule or adaptation to the conditions that are raised by the Russians.

1. Conservatives saw closer contact with the Russians would mean further contamination by the outsider, abandonment of the community to the source of decline and acceleration of Islam's disintegration.
2. Reformists<sup>65</sup> saw such an interaction as a chance to keep up with the techniques and knowledge developed in Europe, so that it would become possible to '*reestablish and secure the identity and viability of the Turco-Islamic community within the Russian empire.*'<sup>66</sup>

The conservatives, like the Basmachi movement, revolted firstly in the Ferghana Valley which later spread over all Turkistan between 1918 and 1920. Some of the Basmachi leaders like Mohammed Alim Khan (the Emir of Bukhara) used Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist ideas to mobilize opposition to Russian invasion, while the fragmented nature of Basmachi groups and infighting among some Basmachi groups made them weaker compared to powerfully-organized Soviet political establishment, leading to defeat and seizure of their leader, Emir of Bukhara.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> The Tatar community is the pioneers for reform as they are most dynamic community, the bridge between the Volga and Turkistan because of *historical* reasons.

<sup>66</sup> Black (1991), p. 49

<sup>67</sup> Anne Marie Broxup (1983) "The Basmachi" *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 57-81

Another wave of Basmachi uprisings started when in November 1921, General Enver Pasha, former Turkish war minister, arrived in the region with the task to conciliate the warring parties. However, instead of doing so, he joined the Basmachi leaders and rose against his former supporters, the Soviets, under the slogans of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism with the aim of creating a single Islamic state in the region. He managed to transform the Basmachi militiamen into a professional army of 16.000 men; by early 1922, a considerable part of the Bukhara People's Soviet Republic was under Basmachi control.<sup>68</sup> The Soviets decided political and economic reconciliation with the creation of a voluntary militia composed of indigent Muslim peasants called the *Red Sticks* and the engagement of regular Muslim soldiers to fight the Basmachi.<sup>69</sup> As before, Soviets' strategy was successful when, in May 1922, Enver Pasha rejected a peace offer and issued an ultimatum demanding that all Red Army troops be withdrawn from Turkistan within fifteen days, Moscow was well prepared for a confrontation. In June 1922, Soviet units led by General Kakurin, defeated the Basmachi forces in the Battle of Kafrun where Enver Pasha suffered his first major defeat. The Red Army began to drive the rebels eastwards and took back most of the towns and villages captured by the Basmachi. Enver himself was killed in a failed battle on August 4, 1922, near Baldzhuan in Turkistan (present-day Tajikistan). Another Basmachi commander, Salim Pasha, continued the struggle but

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<sup>68</sup> H.B. Paksoy (1991) "Basmachi: Turkistan National Liberation Movement 1916-1930" *Modern Encyclopedia of Religions in Russia and the Soviet Union* Florida: Academic International Press, Vol. 4, Pp. 5-20

<sup>69</sup> Martha B. Olcott (1981) "The Basmachi or Freeman's Revolt in Turkistan 1918-24", *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 352-369

finally fled to Afghanistan in 1923. Other Basmachi retreated to the Ferghana Valley (1923-1924) and were directed by the famous one-eyed leader Kurshermat.<sup>70</sup>

After the defeat of the Basmachi leaders and the defeat of the Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist mobilization, which had lost the chance to counteract the Red Army, Turkistan intellectuals that argued for reconciliation between the Soviets and the reformists took the platform. The pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist character had not been lost, but this time was used to mobilize support, not for opposition to Soviet rule.<sup>71</sup> The Jadid Movement shaped the ideals of a reformed Turkistan political unity taking a more adaptive character towards the Soviets in the short-run, only to establish an independent Turkistan in the long-run.<sup>72</sup> The Jadid movement also tried to internalize the externally injected political modernization process, which set the true basis for their positive attitude towards the Russians and the Soviet rule.

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<sup>70</sup> Alexander Marshall (2003) "Turkfront: Frunze and the Development of Soviet Counter-insurgency in Central Asia" in Tom Everett-Heath (Ed.) *Central Asia. Aspects of Transition*, Routledge Curzon, London

<sup>71</sup> Adeeb Khalid (1998) *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform* Berkeley: University of California Press

<sup>72</sup> Haugen (2003), p. 59

## CHAPTER 4

### UZBEKS UNDER SOVIET RULE: THE MODERNIZATION ERA

#### 4.1 Political Modernization and Politics of Persuasion

Modernization theorists from Karl Marx to Daniel Bell have argued that economic development brings pervasive cultural changes. But others, from Max Weber to Samuel Huntington, have claimed that cultural values have an enduring and autonomous influence on society. The problematic relation between the enduring cultural values and the social changes brought about by modernization in general and economic development in particular represents the major debate on the duality between the traditional and the modern. The modern represents change while cultural values and traditional forms are associated with a resistance to change. Modernization via economic, political and social reforms inevitably impose change on the consolidated forms of life, the most important being the cultural and socio-political forms. Still, the reason why cultural values seem to resist change is not because it is principally conservative, but culture is a sum of identity representation, which needs to be consistent and limited so as to differentiate between the self and other, which however did not resemble the modern national/ethnic identities evolved in the West, but as localized, fragmented and informalized socio-political forms.

Political modernization is therefore closely related with identity-building, its limits, its consequences and what type of sociality emerges from the process of identity-

building. Modernization shapes the boundaries of identity, by locating the individual in a web of social relations he/she is not affiliated with. Simmel's *Philosophie des Geldes* (Philosophy of Money) describes how individual and social relationships become more and more mediated through money.<sup>73</sup> Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Community and Society) argues that primary traditional relationships such as family bonds are loosened gradually in favor of goal oriented secondary relationships.<sup>74</sup>

Essentially, as modernization shapes and reshapes the boundaries of identities<sup>75</sup>, and redefines it in accordance with the Western ingredients, which however are mostly absent in the non-Western society, the process begins as an assimilating process. In that sense, modernization is a homogenizing process, in the sense that it initiates intense integration. Modernization produces tendencies toward convergence within and among societies that do not compose Western-like national/ethnic identities. This convergence had made itself visible in many aspects, generating a global cultural community<sup>76</sup>. Marion Levy maintains that: "as time goes on, they and we will

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<sup>73</sup> Georg Simmel (1990) *The Philosophy of Money*, ed. by David Frisby, London; New York: Routledge

<sup>74</sup> Tönnies explores the clash between small-scale neighborhood-based communities and the large-scale competitive market society. In so doing, he considers all aspects of life--political, economic, legal and family; art, religion and culture; construction of "selfhood" and "personhood", and modes of cognition, language, and understanding: Ferdinand Tönnies (2002) *Community and Society* (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft), trans. and ed. by Charles P. Loomis, Mineola, N.Y. : Dover Publications

<sup>75</sup> Fredrik Barth argues that ethnic group is identification, the boundaries of which are the defining element of the group itself. The content of the group and the cultural features are not the origin of the groups existence, rather the boundaries and the 'border guards' are the elements which perpetuate the community. Fredrik Barth (1969) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: the social organization of Culture Difference* Boston: Little, Brown

increasingly resemble one another because the patterns of modernization are such that the more highly modernized societies become, the more they resemble one another”.<sup>77</sup> The resemblance is an inevitable product of modernization, increasing the intensity of global consciousness of the world as a whole.<sup>78</sup> Modernization theory assumes that the process emancipates society and individuals from their traditional bonds and replaces them with the modern bonds, such as citizenship, nationality or ethnicity. Thus, modernization homogenizes the society as it transforms individuals to resemble each other, not in terms of their identity, but in their subjection to modernity. Soviet process of transformation of Turkistan via national delimitation policies was therefore a homogenization and consolidation project aimed to create control over non-modern socio-political structures in the region.

In the case of Central Asia, the transformation of Turkistan as a result of the Russian encounter forced the traditional identities to respond to external imposition of control. Therefore, modernization in Central Asia occurred mainly as a response to first the Tsarist and second to the Soviet domination over Turkistan. Just after the Civil War and the crackdown of the Basmachi Revolts, only one response was left for the Central Asian elites in the face of Soviet rule, to cooperate and adapt to the policies of the Soviet Regime. Jadids served as the native reformers, and cooperated with the Soviets, however to achieve a Turkistan independence in the future. Thus, analyzing

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<sup>76</sup> The idea of the emergence of the *global village* is a conceptualization by McLuhan; Marshall McLuhan (1960) *Explorations in Communication* ed. E.S. Carpenter Boston: Beacon Press

<sup>77</sup> Marion J. Levy (1967) *Social Patterns and Problems of Modernization* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, pp. 189-207, p. 207

<sup>78</sup> Roland Robertson (1992) *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* London: SAGE Publications p.8

the Jadid movement, its motives, its evolution and the influence on Central Asian political modernization is of great importance for understanding the Central Asian mobility during the Soviet era and the response to it.

## **4.2 Jadid Movement**

After the Russian control was established in Turkistan, Muslims of the Empire founded a basis to communicate and develop integration, at least in the intellectual level. There is a universal agreement that the Tatars played a major role in the development of the Central Asian reform movement and ideology, prior to Soviet rule and Bolshevik Revolution.

The Tatar movement emerged as an outcome and a part of a wider trend in the Muslim World in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The wider trend in the Muslim world mainly emanated from the expansion of the West in Muslim borderlands. John O. Voll has identified three primary responses in the Muslim world against the Western expansion: “adaptationist Westernizers”, militant reaction, a revivalist activism with no visible trend towards Westernizing reforms or Islamic modernism.<sup>79</sup> Tatar movement, the source for the Jadidists had been an adaptationist movement, while it sought Islamic modernism and pan-Turkism. As an intellectual movement that is influenced by pan-Slavism ideology, and which has its roots in the Ottoman Empire’s *millet* system, Tatar reformism dreamed of a great fictive community of all Turks.

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<sup>79</sup> John O. Voll (1994) *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World*, New York: Syracuse University Press.

These Tatar reformists searched for a “new way” of Central Asian political renewal by using new methods (*usul-i jadid*) for reforms. Ismail Bey Gaspiralı has been the most influential figure within among the Jadid movement, who opened a reformed *mektep* in Bahçesaray, and published his ideas in the newspaper he founded in the Crimea called *Tercüman*, the most important feature of which is its literary language making it readable throughout Kazan, Turkistan, Siberia and Caucasia.<sup>80</sup> The key element of the reform program that Gaspiralı and the Tatar reformists proposed had been education, the goal of which was to replace the traditional religious education with modern, secular mode of education. The aim was to undermine the role of the religious elites (*Ulema*) so that it would become possible to transform the society, centralize control, mobilize support and modernize.

Jadid movement arose from the Tatar intellectual movement, but the movement had minimal effect until after the turn of the century. Only after 1905, they became able to show increasing interest to reformist trends arising from Russia, Ottoman Empire and the West. The Russian defeat in 1905 by the Japanese had paved the way for reformists to challenge Russian power, while the Russians saw the conservatives the cure for a challenge to arise from the Jadidists. Tsarist administrations again chose to play reformists (*Jadid*) and the conservatives (*Kadimists*) against each other, while supporting the conservatives because of their sympathy for the status quo.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Zeki Velidi Togan (1965) *The Encyclopedia of Islam* New Edition, V.II, 1965, Leiden, E. J. Brill, p. 979–81 , 2 (1965) 2; pp. 979–981

However, this confrontation ended in favor of the Jadids, later when the Jadid elites began to work closely with the Russians, beginning in 1910s and after.

The most significant Jadids in Turkistan were Fitrat and Faizullah Khojaev. They thought that Central Asian society was in a state of decay, which arose from traditional socio-political forms, such as religious elites and the education system they control as the essence of the decay. Jadidists saw the ignorance and subordination to Russians by the *Ulema* as the major problem. This opposition to the religious elites and the traditional socio-political structures had been a major break with the Central Asian traditional political structures. By confronting the traditional Islamic education and Ulema, Jadids aimed to achieve a new form of reconciliation of Islam with Western-style modernity. Modernization in Central Asia, which has been a consequence of external imposition until that time, was tried to be internalized by the Jadid movement.

By this detachment from the traditional forms, and adaptation to Soviet type modernization, Jadids aimed first to establish a Muslim Turkistan Independent State, and second to achieve this independence by the help of the Soviets. The emphasis on Turkistan as the basis of modernization movement was a sign that the Jadid claims on pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism proved to be limited with the Turkistan region. There is an emphasis on the link between the Turkistan as the land of an imagined community of Turkistanis, as the phrase “We Turkistanis love our homeland more

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<sup>81</sup> Paul Bergne (2003) “The Kokand Autonomy 1917-18: political background, aims and reasons for failure”, in Tom Everett-Heath (2003) *Central Asia: Aspects of Transition* Routledge Curzon, London

than our lives” suggests.<sup>82</sup> This emphasis on the link between the land and the people implies a reference similar to national identity in the Western sense.<sup>83</sup> Roger D Kangas argues that Jadids’ model of Turkistan emphasized a combination of Islam with the modern nation-state, which however proved to be a failure.<sup>84</sup> However, before the World War I, the Central Asian elites and Jadids as well, could not be successful in developing political consciousness or organize political mobilization, while the social and cultural fragmentation made harder creating such a common political awareness either in the form of Turkistan “nationalism” or an Islamic state.

There were problems in the efforts of the Jadids to provide a unifying political movement. The intelligentsia occupied by the Jadids was too small and was composed of urban elites who were alien to the masses in Turkistan. Their emphasis on the reformation of education returned limited response, while the number of Jadid schools in Turkistan remained also limited.

The ideal of pan-Turkism of the Jadids had been problematic, since the political loyalties were still with the local Emirs and the informal political networks, which made it harder for Jadids to make people detach from their traditional bonds and modernize them. The multilingualism inherent in Turkistan was a major sign of the fragmented nature of mixed population. Although efforts by Gaspıralı and others had

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<sup>82</sup> Abdullah Awlani in 1914, cited in Khalid (1998), p.209

<sup>83</sup> Haugen, (2003) p. 62

<sup>84</sup> Roger D. Kangas, (1992) “Faizulla Khodjaev: National Communism in Bukhara and Uzbekistan, 1896–1938”, PhD. dissertation, Indiana University; cited in Arne Haugen (2003)

been successful in raising an all-inclusive Turkic language, as Edward Allworth argues, of the 1000 individuals who subscribed to *Tercüman*, only 200 were located in Turkistan.<sup>85</sup>

Moreover, the pan-Islamism raised by the Jadids was also not helping, since the fragmented nature of Islam in this region had been a bottleneck for unity among the Muslims. Beginning with the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Islam had proved to be the dominant cultural force in the region, while it could not consolidate itself as a political force. Its diverse establishment in the several sub regions such as Turkmenia, Kazakh steppe and Kyrgyz Mountains or Ferghana Valley, as well as the varieties of its adoption in those areas due to the pre-Islamic influences had dramatic effects creating a disunited Islamic practice in the region. Although in the area now called Uzbekistan, there had been a more orthodox version of Islamic theology, the localization of Islamic practices and again the influence of other traditional political organization hindered any unifying effect of Islam from emerging in Turkistan. Adding to this fragmented nature of Islam in Turkistan was the Sufi orders, which emerged in the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

Islam in Central Asia does not have a monolithic structure. It had a mosaic structures which was also influenced by the distinct religious rituals and practices like Sufi order or even pre-Islamic faiths like Shamanism, Buddhism etc. Islam itself does not exhibit a monolithic structure as it is divided among Sunni vs. Shii, and their variants. Turkistan region inhibited most important Muslim brotherhoods like

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<sup>85</sup> Allworth (1990), p. 128

*Naqshbandi*, *Kubrowiya*, *Yasawiya* and *Kadiriya*, which are still among the most influential religious brotherhoods.<sup>86</sup> Anita Sengupta seeks the mosaic-like nature of Islam in the historical roots of Uzbeks, namely during the rule of Shaibani Khan, as his attempt to reconcile *yasa* (*Chinggissid* law) with *Shariat*, and his respect for the Sufi leaders paved the way tradition and religion coexist.<sup>87</sup> While Islam constituted a bond of unity, the Muslims as a community were not homogeneous. The institutional and elite hierarchy was complex and dispersed, as *madrassahs*, *mektep* and mosques coexisted, reproducing and controlling Islamic law (*Shariat*) and *rivayet*, while the elites were composed of *ghazis*, *mullah*, *sheikh*, *pir*, *ishan*, *ustad* etc.<sup>88</sup>

Neither Islam nor Turkic identities, developed mainly during the Jadid era as political forces, could provide the basis for adequate mobilizing force that would achieve their ideals of Turkistan as an independent political unity. Although their method had coincided with the Soviet projection of modernization, it was obvious that both Soviets and the Jadids mistreated the peculiar structures of Central Asia. Soviets realized their failure in grasping the nature of Turkistan before the Jadids had done, while their reaction has been to abandon Jadids and all other potential rival forces in the area.

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<sup>86</sup> Anita Sengupta (2003) *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-state: a Study in Transition* Lanham: Lexington Books pp.180-182

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. p.182

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. pp.180-184

### 4.3 Political Modernization in Uzbekistan as a Soviet Project

In 1917, February Revolution brought together the representatives of both the conservative clerical assembly (*Ulema Jamiyati*) and the reformist council (*Shura-i Islamiyah*) representatives. The result was the formation of the Turkistan Muslim Central Council, and an agreement to end Russian colonization in Turkistan. However, this and other bodies representing Autonomous Turkistan remained ‘fragile entities that did not sustain the test of wildly diverse internal divisions or external Russian and Soviet opposition.’<sup>89</sup>

Soviet rule in Central Asia aimed to transform the ‘primitive’ socio-political structures of these societies so as to ideologically transform them into Soviet citizens. In the first place this transformation seemed to take its roots from the Soviet ideology. However, as will be considered in the following sections, Soviet project of modernization has its particular political goals, which had specific consequences for the Turkistan that can be called modernization. The concept need not to imply modernization as progress, or becoming modern, but obviously the newly created states of Central Asia had experienced significant transformation at all levels.

In the case of Uzbekistan, political modernization emerged in the first place as a Soviet project. Soviet delimitation and nationalities policy, together with the centralization of the externally established institutional and political structures had a dissolving influence on the traditional bonds in the case of Central Asia. The

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<sup>89</sup> Black (1991), p. 52

traditional identities (religious practices, education in native language, and even pastoral nomadism as in the case of Kazakhstan) were forbidden, in order to be replaced by modernizing/civilizing Soviet identity, which implemented ideological and political control over the consciousness of Central Asian societies, trying to transform their identities and therefore social organizations. Still, it cannot be claimed that the Soviet initiative to destroy traditional forms had not been successful in their missions: traditional socio-political structures (religion, regionalism, tribalism etc.) prevailed in one way or another and reemerged –this time replacing the ideology of the Soviet state as the dominant ideology of the new nation-states- when the independence was won.

Theory of political modernization can give us a clue about the main principles of political modernization that the Soviets aimed to apply in Turkistan from a modernist perspective. Samuel P. Huntington identifies three main elements of political modernization:

Firstly, it involves the rationalization of authority: the replacement of a large number of traditional, religious, familial, and ethnic political authorities by a single, secular, national political authority... Secondly, political modernization involves the differentiation of new political functions and the development of specialized structures to perform those functions... Thirdly, political modernization involves increased participation<sup>90</sup> in politics by social groups throughout society and the development of new political institutions – such as political parties and interest associations- to organize this participation.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Karl Deutsch calls this kind of participation by the society as “social mobilization”, the process whereby people become uprooted from their traditions and become available for new patterns of communication and behavior: Karl Deutsch (1969) *Nationalism and Its Alternatives* Alfred Knopf Inc., New York, pp. 21-25

<sup>91</sup> Huntington (1966)

On the other hand, concerning development, Eisenstadt argues that political modernization would inevitably and in the first place require the centralization and intensification of political power. The political power in return would spill-over to the society and positively influence the individual citizens. The distribution and share of power would increase democracy and democratic participation, which are essential for modernization of societies.<sup>92</sup>

This dissertation will be dealing mainly with four characteristics of political modernization as outlined by the Western scholars.

1. centralization and intensification of power
2. rationalization of authority, namely bureaucratization
3. functionalization of politics, institutionalization
4. increased participation of society in politics, creation of a civil consciousness and citizenship

The aim is to show that the four formal requirements of political modernization took place in Central Asia by Soviets' promotion, but simultaneously the informal (traditional) political forms prevailed, and even transformed the modernizing forms.

### *Political Modernization in Central Asia*

In the case of Central Asia, it is hard to make a clear definition of the modernizing society, since political modernization itself necessitates the presence of a

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<sup>92</sup> Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah (1966) *Modernization: Protest and Change*, Prentice Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey

modernizing authority and society with the adequate power and resources to mobilize modernization project. The case is closely related with being a late-comer into modernization process. Even then, Central Asia does not seem to be moving towards an inherent modernization process, but it is externally compelled to adopt institutional, political and social requirements of modernization injected by the Soviets.

As a result of the Russian Revolution, Turkistan became a Soviet Socialist Republic in 1918 and Bukhara and Khiva both became People's Republics in 1920. During that time, however, there had been no clear and viable alternative political maturity to replace the Soviets in Turkistan. In an effort to overcome the aspirations of both the Muslim Communists, intent on setting up an independent Turkic republic, and the pan-Islamic forces behind the Basmachi revolts, Moscow subsequently divided up Central Asia into five Soviet Socialist Republics, one for each of the five dominant ethnic groups in the area. The Uzbek SSR was declared on October 27, 1924.

The early years of Soviet rule in Turkistan has experienced state-building as well as nation-building projects to mobilize consent for the new political and ideological regime. Although this dissertation mainly deals with the political aspect of modernization, it is evident that in the case of Central Asia, political, social and economic modernization was projected simultaneously, albeit with the use of different methods and motives. Moreover, in Central Asia, while the tsarist rule was concerned more with economic development, which they expected would bring

about social and political transformation, Soviets gave much emphasis on self-determination rights and relative decolonization of Turkistan in earlier periods promoting political modernization. However, the new Soviet regime was shaken by a civil war, which was deeply felt in Central Asia. On the other hand, legitimizing consent to Soviet regime was not so easy, while the traditional structures were kept alive or even promoted within the early years of Soviet rule.

This has different reasons. Soviets put themselves in opposition to the Tsarist imperialism, which was a colonization of Turkistan in accordance with the imperialist objectives. Thus, Soviet revolution had to abandon any imperialist claim on Turkistan, or had to seem like abandoning. Relative autonomy of the societies in Central Asia did not pose a threat in the short run for the consolidating Moscow-based Soviet regime. Soviet claim was still fractured if compared with the anti-colonization rhetoric, since the claim depended on “total support from the people who were disillusioned with the feudal system of the Tsars and the tyranny of the local Emirs.”<sup>93</sup> The *mission civilisatrice* first began with the Tsarist expansion was perpetuated by the Soviets, but this time with another ideological background.

After the Revolution and Civil War following it, the urgency for control and stability in Central Asia made Soviets abandon any autonomy for the native elites. Any traditional organization was seen as a threat to Soviet control of Turkistan. The traditional structures had to be replaced by the modern/functionally differentiated

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<sup>93</sup> Sengupta (2003) p.83

and controllable structures. Soviets tried to establish the desired control mechanisms via construction of a new ideologically-oriented identity, namely the Soviet identity.

The political transformation that Soviets needed to control and to stabilize Turkistan aimed to transform traditional identities, limit and consolidate them, or replace the traditional identities and loyalties with artificial ones in order to mobilize societies in accordance with Soviet ideological and political objectives. The injection of a new Soviet-type education, culture and Russification was intended to create economic functionalism, bureaucratization, centralization of political power, and the process of imposition of creation of new native elites, namely nativization (*Korenizatsiia*). In that way, traditional social and political organization would replace the religious and sub national identities with assimilated and functional identities. Soviet modernization of Turkistan therefore tried to get under control any possibility of conflict in the form of reaction to Soviet transformation. They realized that political modernization had become a prerequisite for their strategic aim of controlling Turkistan and transforming the region into functional and efficient economic factory even if there existed no serious political threat. This required creation of political participation structures –namely bureaucratization so as to centralize control-which is the decisive element of whether confrontation or evolution will be the answer to Soviet domination.

Evidently, in the phase of modernization, mobilization of resources and people through identity becomes particularly relevant. As has been evaluated in the

previous section, the societies of Central Asia and Uzbeks in particular did not have a common identity that is centralized by a state and which can mobilize (control) people. The two mobilizing factors, namely Islam and Turkic genealogical leadership, had limited effects for the Central Asian societies to respond to the challenges raised by the Russians and Soviets. Other potential mobilizing sub national identities, such as affiliation with the clan, tribe or kinship relations had also been fragmenting rather than uniting. Islam was locally fragmented. Political leadership on the other hand was predominantly local and concerned more with stability than change. Soviets needed change in the first place in order to control and incorporate Central Asia. Clan, tribe and regional identities were so much fragmented that it was impossible to mobilize Central Asians.

Concerning the Uzbek case, political modernization of Uzbeks as a political community began when Uzbeks came under the control of the Soviets, and their political systems were interrupted by the Russian elites in order to reshape the political structure of the area. The control was to be implemented via the bureaucratization, intensification and centralization of the governance. Even though the tsarist regime did not try to change the ethnic composition, it rather tried to classify it, since “attaining as much knowledge as possible on the newly incorporated subjects would enhance possibilities for control.”<sup>94</sup> Soviets on the other hand failed to maintain the established system, which was shaken up by different factors, most important of which is the assimilation of traditional forms into the modern institutional structures. Sovietization or Russification in order for the

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<sup>94</sup> Haugen (2003) p.30

establishment of political control and modernization tried to create an alternative identity for such comprehensive but disintegrative identities, with an artificial ideal of strategic importance.

#### **4.4 The Conditions in Central Asia prior to Bolshevik Revolution**

As has already been noted, the Western-oriented approach by modernization studies however may undermine the peculiar conditions eminent in different late-modernizers. Soviets remained silent after the Civil war, until when they recovered from the Revolution. In the early years after the revolution peoples and leaders in Central Asia therefore experienced relative autonomy<sup>95</sup>, which however did not last long. When the native reformers of Central Asia, namely Jadids, located in Turkistan began to seek ways for establishing a Turkistan independent Muslim republic, while at the same time hand institutionalizing Islam-based representations, Soviets perceived these developments as serious threat for their effective control in the region. Although Lenin and his followers were aware of the fact that the Soviet has to differentiate from the Tsarist rule, and autonomy and even Muslim or Turkic Soviet would be possible, neither Soviet/ Russian rule nor the Jadids were popular among the peoples of Turkistan. Thus basing the Soviets upon Islamic and for Turkic national ideology could jeopardize the Soviet control over Turkistan. Thus political modernization inevitably has to transform or totally replace the traditional forms of political organizations by creating its own institutional structure. The problem was whether the traditional forms of political organization were adaptive

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<sup>95</sup> The instrument for this policy was Narkomnats for the internationalist education of nations. D'Encausse (1978), p.42 cited in Azrael (1978)

for Soviet model of modernization or not. Obviously, Soviets felt threatened by the traditional forms of political identities, namely Islam and Turkic identities. Although Islam or genealogical leadership structures (kinship, tribe, clan etc.) as traditional forms of political organization did not work as uniting factors for peoples of Central Asia, they at least provided a solid base from which a more consolidated form of political unity can emerge.

Therefore, Central Asians had inherited a weak sense of identity beyond kinship and tribal levels. They had traditionally organized political systems and institutions with limited ability to unite people on a common basis in larger politics. Furthermore, the political structures in the region, before the Soviets were not able to develop efficient bureaucratization and legal systems. Although during the Tsarist era there had been modernization attempts undertaken by either Slavs or the native Jadids, these had remained ineffective in comparison to the following Soviet era. Socially, there was a scarcity of educated and trained people necessitated for developing political institutions, while organizational structures focused predominantly at the kinship and tribal levels with little organizational capacity to cultivate a society-wide political cohesion. This specific feature had the particular effect of impeding the development of a response against the threat by the Red Army and later against modernization process imposed by the Soviets.

The main problem for the Russians has been to establish control over Turkistan, while transforming/modernizing it in accordance with the requirements of the new

Soviet regime. Moreover, even traditional structures were used in order to build modern ones, while other traditional structures were either attacked or totally destroyed. Russian intervention before 1924 occurred in different dimensions, such as the replacement of a large number of traditional, religious, familial, and ethnic political authorities by a single, secular, national political authority, differentiation of new political functions and the development of specialized structures to perform those functions, increased participation in order to centralize and intensify control.

The major example of Tsarist control over the traditional forms in Central Asia has been the specialization in the production of raw materials and not processing, leading to an excessive degree of dependence on the Tsarist center. The collectivization of production (cotton in Ferghana Oblast, natural resources in Kazakh Steppe and Turkmenia) and their administration by the Tsarist authorities were monitored through increased immigration of Russians to Central Asia. After in 1919, the core oblasts of Turkistan –Syr Darya, Ferghana and Samarkand- were opened for immigration, Russian population, in for instance Bukhara rose from some 12150 at the time of the Russian census, to an estimated 27000 in 1910, and 50000 in 1914.<sup>96</sup> Russian immigration to Central Asia did not only brought people in the region, but their perception of the land, water, natural resource and economy, the most important determinant of which is the ‘ownership’ The incoming Russian population was supported by the new regulations and laws imposed upon the

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<sup>96</sup> Seymour Becker (1964) *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bokhara and Khiva 1865–1924* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press p.193, cited in Gerard O’Neil (2003) “Land and Water ‘Reform’ in the 1920’s” in *Central Asia's Transition* ed. By Tom Everett-Heath, Routledge-Curzon (2003) p.66

indigenous peoples, transferring most of the land to the Russian/Slav farmer. Later the impositions of such practices were extended to the indigenous people.<sup>97</sup> This also marked Russians' perception of Central Asia was one of an economic colony, later to lay the basis for further integration in the Soviet Empire.

One of the major resources in Turkistan that Russians exploited was the cotton production. Russian involvement in cotton production was not without reason. American Civil War led to an increasing demand in the European markets for cotton. When in 1884, Russians began to experiment American cotton in Turkistan; it proved successful, since the conditions in Central Asia provided a very suitable environment for cotton production. Traditional institutions such as *Waqf*, *Mulk* and *Emlak*, as well as higher levels of control of the production were began to be replaced by Russian control, by either setting tax system that would strictly control the development of land ownership, or establish the only trading links and opportunities so as to control increasing volumes of cotton production.<sup>98</sup> This dependence and control over traditional forms of production and administration of this production was barely controllable by the Tsarist authorities, which lead to strict opposition such as that came from the Basmachis. However, even the reaction to Russian domination had limited potential, for the socio-political reaction to Russian rule could not mobilize popular support effective enough to confront these policies.

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid. p. 65

<sup>98</sup> O'Neil (2003), in Heath (2003) pp. 66–67

The divisions among the people of Central Asia were such that it was nearly impossible to erect a unifying political structure that would present a united front after the revolution even against the Soviets. The political loyalties were spread among the Khans, begs, or Mullah. Moreover, the lack of a socio-political unity based on national or ethnic, and even religious consciousness was absent due to the peculiar socio-political structures eminent in Central Asia. The dualities of responses, namely those who are against the Russians (Basmachi) and those for the Russians (Jadids) were both native *elite* responses. The Jadids cooperated with the Soviets, and the Soviets recognized them by their potential role as revolutionary examples for the socially and economically backward ethnic and religious communities. In Uzbekistan the rising of Faizullah Khojaev, one of the Jadidist elites, or Frunze, a most renowned Soviet soldier who took control of Turkistan region prior to Bolshevik revolution, to power are examples of this cooperation.<sup>99</sup> Donald Carlisle has suggested that the close relationship between Khojaev and the central authorities in Moscow especially after 1924 was key to understanding the delimitation: Faizullah's loyalty to Soviet central authorities was rewarded during the national delimitation when the republic of Uzbekistan was deemed a Greater Bukhara with Khojaev as its leader.<sup>100</sup> Frunze was the commander who defeated the Basmachi during the 1922 uprisings, when the movement was at its height composing of 30000 soldiers. Frunze later on became the head of Revolutionary

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<sup>99</sup> Donald Carlisle (1994) "Soviet Uzbekistan: State and Nation in Historical Perspective" in Manz, Beatrice (ed.) *Central Asia in Historical Perspective* Westview Press: Boulder CO, p.111

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

Military Council (*Revvoyensoviet*) in January 2005, which was the supreme military authority of the Soviet Russia, until he died in October 1925.<sup>101</sup>

Although Lenin gave support to those reformer elites in Turkistan for the generation of native Soviets, the threat of Pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism predominated. Soviets used this duality in order clash them over and to attack all traditional structures, and abandon nativization policy. The attack on the fundamental institutions, structures and elites of the traditional society was an attempt to eradicate the traditional cultural markers and characteristics of the local society. In that way, Turkistan was cleared in favor of the “internationalist” patterns introduced by the Soviets. This attack on the traditional structures and elites was followed by the purging of the indigenous elites and the imposition of Russification as an element of assimilation into the Soviet system. The disappearance of Bukharan Faizullah Khojaev and Ekmel Ikramov (Tashkent)<sup>102</sup>, who occupied highest posts in Bolshevik Uzbekistan were the most important purges, which transferred political power in the Soviet regime.

Other means that the Soviets used to attack traditional forms could be seen in the injection of Soviet model of education. The immediate literacy campaign after the creation of the new Uzbek republic served two main purposes: first, it would produce a more efficient workforce, and second, it would help politicize the

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<sup>101</sup> Alexander Marshall (2003) “Turkfront” in Heath (2003) pp.9-14

<sup>102</sup> Olivier Roy (2000) *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations* New York University Press, New York

population and thereby integrate people into the Soviet system.<sup>103</sup> On the other hand the introduction of Russification through the implementation of a new education system aimed to reinforce the status of the Russians across Uzbekistan. Those who wanted to attain meaningful political, economic or professional status in the Soviet Uzbekistan were required to prove their proficiency in Russian language. As the regime was trying to establish its power and legitimacy throughout the former Russian empire, it went about constructing regional administrative units, recruiting non-Russians into leadership positions, and promoting non-Russian languages in government administration, the courts, the schools, and the mass media. The slogan then established was that local cultures should be “socialist in content but national in form.” That is, these cultures should be substantively transformed to conform to the Communist Party's socialist project for the Soviet society as a whole but have active participation and leadership by the indigenous nationalities and operate primarily in the local languages.

However, the strategic aim lying behind the Soviet campaign towards traditional structures in order to be able to manipulate the region was mainly injected via the Delimitation policy beginning in 1924.

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<sup>103</sup> Edward Allworth (1964) *Uzbek Literary Politics* The Hague: Mouton; Shirin Akiner in *Language planning in the Soviet Union* London: Minority Rights Group, (1997); Brian D. Silver (1978) “Language policy and the linguistic Russification of Soviet nationalities” in *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices* edited by Jeremy R. Azrael. New York: Praeger

#### 4.5 Delimitation Policy

It is claimed that the aim behind Soviet delimitation policy was to break the influence of pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism in the region. Rather they promoted policies encouraging “friendship of the people and proletarian,” “scientific atheism”, and “internationalism.” The new supranational identity promoted by the Soviets integrated ‘internationalism’ in order to initiate a kind of peaceful coexistence of different nationalities.<sup>104</sup> All those “narrow identities” of clan, tribe, Islam, or regionalism would be replaced by the modern Soviet identity. On the one hand, Soviets tried to create a homogenized Soviet nation, while on the other they granted those nations with the opportunity to differentiate themselves from others in different states.

Soviet ethnic engineering combined the primordialist and modernist view on ethnicity. Stalin’s book *Marxism and the National Question* lays out the basics of this engineering by proposing *narod* (not nation but ethnical community) as “a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.”<sup>105</sup> Thus, *narod* is not based on a contract but on objective and natural commonalities eminent in a community.<sup>106</sup> Olivier Roy argues that the ethnic

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<sup>104</sup> Shirin Akiner (1997) “Melting-pot - salad bowl - cauldron?- Manipulation and Mobilization of Ethnic and Religious Identities in Central Asia”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 20, 2 p. 381

<sup>105</sup> J.V. Stalin (1913) *Marxism and the National Question* <http://www.marxists.org/>

<sup>106</sup> Roy (2000)

engineering was not a categorization of the Soviet ethnographers<sup>107</sup> in order to define the status of the ethnic republics, but the status itself, namely the political and social conditions in a community, had played a decisive role for the ethnographers to categorize the ethnic boundaries.<sup>108</sup> The title Uzbek is recognized as the dominant ethnic group in a territory, and the other ethnics were subjected to becoming Uzbek within this territory.

After 1924, Soviets understood that if control is to be established successfully, a transformative project was necessary, which would be able to shift the basis of pre-existing identities. Therefore, Soviet delimitation policy aimed to create national identities in order to mobilize societies of Central Asia to get free of identities. The idea behind this was that in order to get rid of the national identity, first one had to create one. Before the establishment of the Soviet Union, the Central Asian people did not exist as “nations” but rather as loose ethnic groups under clan leadership. With the Soviet policy of national delimitation (*natsional’noe razmezhevanie*) implemented between 1924 and 1936, the five Central Asian republics were created with separate boundaries. This was the first time the concept of territory-based

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<sup>107</sup> Francine Hirsch (1997) “The Soviet Union as a Work-in-Progress: Ethnographers and the Category *Nationality* in the 1926, 1937 and 1939 Censuses” *Slavic Review* volume 56, Number 2, Summer

<sup>108</sup> Olivier Roy (1994) *The Failure of Political Islam* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts; Yuri Slezkine “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism” *Slavic Review* Vol.53, No. 2, Summer; Rocky L. Rockett (1980) “Ethnic Stratification in the Soviet Union: A Preliminary Analysis” *Ethnic Groups*, Vol.2, pp. 327-341; Marcus Banks (1996) *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions*, Routledge, London, pp.17-24; Zvi Gtelman (1992) “Development and Ethnicity in the Soviet Union” in *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR* ed. By Alexander Motyl, Columbia University Press: New York, pp. 220-240

nationality (*natsionalnost*), as introduced by Stalin, was implemented.<sup>109</sup> This stage, however, would be only temporary because the final goal was to create the new Soviet person (*novy Sovetski chelovek*) for whom national attachments would not be meaningful. Accomplishing this goal would result in the emergence of the Soviet people (*Sovietski narod*) i.e. the emergence of a common identity for all of the Soviet peoples including the Central Asians.<sup>110</sup>

Soviet perception of the Central Asian communities denotes continuity between the Tsarist era and the Soviet era. The perception of the populations of Central Asia is defined along two main characterizations: peoples (*narod*) and nationalities (*natsionalnost*). However, as no consensus existed as to what constituted a ‘people’ or a ‘nationality’, Russians used ethnonym, race, linguistic practices, territorial affiliations, socio-economic differences etc. Thus the scholars of the Soviet state were more concerned with the ethnonym rather than with the practical political organization in these societies.<sup>111</sup>

Concerning the Uzbek identity, Soviets included both Turkic and non-Turkic (Sart) speakers, as well as people with or without tribal identities.<sup>112</sup> However, the Turkic

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<sup>109</sup> Roy (2000) p. 64

<sup>110</sup> Rafis Abazov (1999) “Central Asia’s Conflicting Legacy and Ethnic Policies: Revisiting a Crisis Zone of the Former USSR” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2

<sup>111</sup> Khalid (1998) p.199

<sup>112</sup> Shoerberlein-Engel (1991) p.13

element can be considered as being the dominant element of this identity, as it provides ‘a distinction along the Turkic-Iranian boundary.’<sup>113</sup>

The Soviets failed to grasp the true nature of the Central Asian populations, as it became apparent that the control has to be established via creating different identities, that are easy to manipulate and safer than identification along genuine and complex identities. Arne Haugen points out to the puzzlement on the part of the Soviet scholars who found it difficult “to identify the true nationality of the Central Asian,” while she argues that the distinction between the “Sart”, “Tajik” and “Uzbek” was at the core of their problem.

In response to this ambiguity, the Soviet Union policy was not bound by the narrow limits of Pre-Soviet identities (clan, tribe, region, national, Islam, etc.) and saw Islam and Turkic identities as potential threats for the Soviet ideology. Rather, it tried to promote equal, free friendships based upon the principles of friendship among peoples, proletarian internationalism and scientific atheism. In fact, national delimitation policies were just milestones on the way of creating a Soviet identity. Official concept was the “New Soviet Person”: Soviet nationalities would come closer to each other and then completely assimilated to the New Soviet Person, making the policies of national identity building short-lived and tactical. Indeed, it was through pursuing the nationalities policy, the Soviets tried to overcome

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<sup>113</sup> Haugen (2003) p.33

nationalities<sup>114</sup>, which would culminate in an increased awareness of the burden of their narrow national identities and an increased willingness to get assimilated into the Soviet identity.

The territorial divisions in the newly created Soviet Republics also aimed to divide, thus not to consolidate the ethnic identities. This is most obvious in the formation of the Uzbek SSR, where the Tajik population of Samarqand was given to Uzbeks, while Osh city with an Uzbek majority was left to Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, Samarqand was mostly populated by Turkmen. This division prevented any kind of unification among the different communities, but moreover, created states that were based upon a delicate balance of forces and thus easy to control from the Soviet centre. The division also made the republics dependent on each other for both political stability and economic specialization.

However the Soviet identity did not emerge. The aim was behind the Soviet identity-building was not to create ethnically based identities, but to fragment and dissolve the traditional forms and supranational potential of Turkic and Islamic identities. Modernization/Sovietization of identity was essentially the destruction of religious, genealogical, regional, local or tribal identities in order to replace them with artificially created identities which would help mobilize Central Asians and control them. Moreover, despite what was told on the surface, the main aim was not the creation of the Soviet person, but there were strategic and political aims behind the

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<sup>114</sup> Helene Carrere d'Encausse (1978) "Determinants and Parameters of Soviet Nationality Policy" in *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices* edited by Jeremy R. Azrael. New York: Praeger, 1978; p.39

delimitation. Soviet ideology of assimilating sub-national and/or national identities by promoting them, helped Central Asian nationalities to consolidate (a paradox) ethnic identities, while wanting to eliminate these and escalated the resentment of ethnic majorities against Russification and Russian minorities living in those countries. After the Soviet umbrella disappeared, these resentments became obvious, so that it was not Soviet supra-national identity challenging state-building process but the artificially-built Soviet legacy.

Obviously, in order for a project of political modernization to be successful in transforming the host society, the principles mentioned above have to be met accordingly. In the case of Turkistan however one aspect must be clarified: the motive for modernization in Central Asia and Turkistan to a great extent resulted from Soviet imposition of external political mechanisms and administrative structures together with the particular political culture associated with the Soviet (i.e. Russian) model. Therefore the major motive behind the political and other kind of modernization is based on Soviet intentions for Central Asia, namely to control and transform the region to the benefit of the Soviets. There are other deeper causes of Slavic perception of being superior over others, but these will not be dealt with for the purposes of this dissertation. Reformists of Central Asia were an exception, as they developed a reactionary ideology for modernization, in order to become independent and modern, which however depended on the Soviet regime for power.

#### 4.6 Consequences of Modern Era for Uzbekistan

Apparently, the Soviet objectives of establishing strategic and political control in Central Asia by delimitating the peoples achieved a relative success. During the Soviet era, Uzbek political modernization evolved around creation of native elites, increasing number of Communist Party membership, intensification of Soviet-type of education<sup>115</sup> together with the Russification, destruction of most of the traditional political and social structures such as those concerning water management and agriculture, bureaucratization of the native population and the creation of a cotton monoculture regime. Uzbek traditional socio-political organization, which was based on regional, local and kinship ties rather than the modern Uzbek ethnies, has either gone underground (the religious rituals were restricted, creating different rituals like *mazar*<sup>116</sup>) or were transformed so as to adopt the modern forms imposed by the Soviets, namely clan structures and religious rituals.

One of the ways to undermine and develop a response to Soviet rule was closely related to bureaucracy and power relations in the Soviet system. It is argued that the native elites had found ways of subverting the *nomenklatura* system of appointments in the oblasts and *raions* beginning with the de-Stalinization period. Thus Moscow's attempt to reimpose control met with only partial success.<sup>117</sup> Obviously, one of the

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<sup>115</sup> J.J. Tomiak (1972) *The Soviet Union*, World Education Series, David & Charles: London, pp. 11-38

<sup>116</sup> Sengupta (2003) p.180

<sup>117</sup> Michael Rywkin (1985) "Power and Ethnicity: Regional and District Party staffing in Uzbekistan" *Central Asian Survey* Vo.4, No.1, pp.3-40. Rywkin argues that "an objective observer visiting Uzbekistan cannot fail to perceive the growing signs of importance and self-assurance on the part of native Muslim cadres... Local Uzbek officials leave the impression of being masters of their own affairs."

major consequences of Soviet era modernization in Uzbekistan and Central Asia has not been the assimilation of the traditional political forms into modern institutions, but vice versa, namely the adoption of traditional political loyalties to the challenges of modernization. Soviets controlled nearly all the political decisions and institutions in Uzbekistan<sup>118</sup>, while political relations within the community could not be penetrated. This in turn brought about an adaptive and flexible political structure. This may provide an answer for why the Soviet Central Asia was so passive during the fall of the Soviet empire. The political elite structure continued their web of relations within the modern institutional structures. They were incorporated into the Soviet institutions, not in the form of their traditional identities, but with the hope that this kind of integration would loosen their loyalty to the traditional links.<sup>119</sup>

Another point of adaptation was the shifting of loyalties in form, while the content of the power politics remained the same. Donald Carlisle gives a detailed analysis of regional and local loyalties in Soviet Uzbekistan between 1938 and 1983, and argues that “it is the politician’s local loyalties and regional roots –ties for instance, to Tashkent, Ferghana, Samarkand or even Khorezm- that may be the key to his or her orientation and perspectives. He further proposes the term “group politics” as a key concept for understanding Uzbek politics.<sup>120</sup> The key division here is the Central

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<sup>118</sup> Michael Rywkin (1985) “Power and Ethnicity: Party Staffing in Uzbekistan (1941-46, 1957-1958)” *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 4, No.1, pp 41-73

<sup>119</sup> Even the purges of 1984 in Uzbekistan could not overcome growing native influence, while the Uzbeks facing charges in these purges were mostly blamed of nepotism, local favoritism and even of following religious practices. Rywkin (1985) p.10

<sup>120</sup> Donald Carlisle (1986) “The Uzbek Power Elite: Politburo and Secretariat (1938-1983)” *Central Asian Survey* Vo.5, No. 3/4, pp.91-132

Asian vs. European division, but such loyalties to the region has two determinants: first the traditional politics and the political and strategic importance given to one region over the other. Olivier Roy explains how the Soviet regime excluded Bukharan Jadids, namely Khojaev and his followers from the political administrations and injected those figures of Ferghana origin. Thus, after 1937, Carlisle argues, Ferghanis rose until 1959, to be replaced by Tashkent again.<sup>121</sup> When the cotton scandal occurred in 1983, Soviets tried to overcome this tribal political structure, this time trying to inject new Slavic cadres instead of the native elites, which however created huge opposition. The rise of Islam Karimov in that sense in 1989 was an attempt to reinstitute the interregional balance (if ever existed) in favor of Samarkand-Jizzak faction.<sup>122</sup>

It is obvious that the underlying traditional forms of political organization survived, and proved to be capable of being transformed by the influence of Soviet suppression into a more institutionalized form. Collins gives two forms of adaptation to Soviet institutions that the traditional social structures were able to survive through:

1. Most local villages and settlements remained in place, by an adaptation to *kolkhoz* (collective farm) and *sovkhov* (state farm),
2. These two institutions were transformed into tribal and clan *kolkhoz* and *sovkhov*.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Carlisle (1986)

<sup>122</sup> Roy (2000) p.159-162

The same organization of the institutions along clan and tribal lines was true also for the Communist Party cadres. The Communist Party cadres and power positions, specifically three most prominent positions (The First Secretary of the Communist Party, the Presidency of Great Soviet, and the Prime Minister) and the sharing of the regions in these three positions defined the political balance within the major clans of the republic as the defining factor of stability. Uzbek SSR's leaders were chosen among the mainly two clans, namely Tashkent and Ferghana, until when Sharof Rashidov came into power in 1959 until 1983, the Cotton Scandal, who was from the Jizzak clan (the same clan as Islam Karimov is originating).<sup>124</sup>

Artificially created nations gradually became to be part of the reality during the Soviet era, despite the fact that they lack an effective modern political discourse, which was needed to transform them into a proper nation-state in the independence era. Religious, tribal or local divisions have survived in the form institutionalized positions. In Uzbekistan, this has been the most prominent consequence of Soviet modernization and the underlying reason for post-independence politics. Uzbekistan rose from the Soviet domination as one of the most isolated and centralized regimes in Central Asia, oscillating between real politics and the political transformation enforced by external pressures. Tradition in Uzbekistan could not pose a threat or an impasse for Soviet-oriented modernization, but rather became integrated into the system, creating its own particular socio-political organization with relative

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<sup>123</sup> Collins (2006) p. 86

<sup>124</sup> Collins (2006) p.109

assimilation: formally modern, but as for its internal dynamics, rather traditional. Frequently Soviets had also promoted the informal socio-political structures within the Soviet system. However, this does not mean that Uzbek nationalism or ethnic consciousness did not emerge in the Uzbek society. The Uzbek SSR experienced signs of emerging Uzbek nationalism in the Soviet era.<sup>125</sup> The *Birlik* movement and its emphasis on language, history together with anti-Russian tendencies can be seen as examples to the emergence of Uzbek nationalism under the Soviet rule. This marked that the Soviet creation of ethnic republics seemed successful, as their aims were not to modernize and civilize Uzbeks, but to control and strategically organize them. The traditional and the strategically modern collided with each other, and did not get into conflict but became interwoven processes. Modernization during the Soviet era has therefore occurred in institutional and legal bases (formal), but not on the socio-political level (informal).

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<sup>125</sup> James Critchlow (1991) *Nationalism in Uzbekistan: A Soviet Republic's Road to Sovereignty*, Westview Press: Oxford

## CHAPTER 5

### POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA AND THE CHALLENGES OF POLITICAL MODERNIZATION: CLAN POLITICS AS THE LOCUS OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN UZBEKISTAN

Soviet system was a *sui generis* case, which has a powerful transformative and modernizing effect on all levels of social, political and economic organization throughout the Soviet space. When the Soviet system collapsed in 1991, the remnants of the Soviet political dominance emerged as distinct examples of regime change compared to those transition regimes of scholar interest.<sup>126</sup> A further distinction between the post-Soviet experience of the Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) and Central Asian regimes is also necessary, as the two differed significantly in their response to the collapse of the Soviet regime. Most of the CEECs have become a part of the democratic Europe, after 14 years of transition to relatively stable democracies. Those CEECs were the most reactive Soviet republics against Soviet regime.

However, Central Asian regimes were disappointed with the failure of the Soviet regime, showing high dedication to Moscow and opposing the dissolution, which however proved inadequate. Like other republics of the former Soviet Union,

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<sup>126</sup> Claus Offe presents three groups of countries within the transition paradigm of scholar interest: the post-war democracies (Italy, Japan and West Germany), the Mediterranean democratic processes of the 70s (Portugal, Spain, and Greece), and the collapse of authoritarian regimes in South America (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Chile, and Paraguay). Post-soviet regimes became of interest just under recently, while most of the works on Post-Soviet regimes are mainly concerned with Central and Eastern European countries, while the cases in Central Asia are disregarded: Claus Offe (1991) "Capitalism by democratic design? Democratic theory facing the triple transition in East and Central Europe" *Social Research* vol. 58, no.4, Winter 1991, pp. 865-892

Uzbekistan had also declared its “national sovereignty” in 1990, but the national sovereignty was a peculiar one, meaning not more than a sovereignty within the confines of the USSR.<sup>127</sup> The Central Asian republics did not want the Soviet regime end; “republican elites and the native intelligentsia were ... prepared to remain in the Soviet Union.”<sup>128</sup> The unexpected independence of these states was defined as “premature birth” because the optimistic atmosphere replaced by pessimism and it is understood that independence of these states did not create easy and quick solutions for their economic and political problems.<sup>129</sup>

Obviously, the theoretical perceptions on the continual of the Soviet regime were built upon a misguided interpretation of the Soviet regime both internally and externally as if it would never be dissolved. Social sciences, and specifically the discipline of Sovietology, which had been evaluating the USSR for over 40 years had succeeded neither to predict nor even to utter the dissolution of the Soviet state.<sup>130</sup>

Today most of the Central Asian regimes are categorized as authoritarian political regimes with highly centralized and instable political conditions showing no signs of progress. According to a report prepared by *Human Rights Watch*, entitled “Violations

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<sup>127</sup> Gregory Gleason (1997) “Uzbekistan: the politics of national independence” in *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations* edited by Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 580

<sup>128</sup> Shahram Akbarzadeh (1996) “Nation-building in Uzbekistan” *Central Asian Survey* 15(1), 23-32

<sup>129</sup> Martha Brill Olcott (1996) *Central Asia's New States*, U.S Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC

<sup>130</sup> Michael Cox (1998) *Rethinking the Soviet Collapse: Sovietology, the Death of Communism and the New Russia*, London and New York, Pinter

of Media Freedom in Uzbekistan”, today there is a tension between official government policy toward free speech, which allows the *principle* of free media, and the stark reality for journalists and media consumers who cannot enjoy the *practice* of free media because of government harassment.<sup>131</sup> The role of non-governmental organizations and civil society are seen as weak, and socio-economic conditions are poor.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, according to a recent report by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace entitled “Failed States Index 2007”, Uzbekistan is counted as one of the worst performing states, which are ruled by long-serving strongmen “who presided over their nations’ collapse.”<sup>133</sup>

These categorizations, although justifiable, must not prevent us from analyzing the peculiarities of Central Asian regimes. Kathleen Collins criticizes the Western-oriented approach by arguing that transitions school, which tries to understand the post-Soviet independence experience, ‘fail to explain why democratic ideology resonates in some societies and not in others, why some leaders matter and others do not, or how society may constrain transitions.’”<sup>134</sup> It is clear that despite the existence

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<sup>131</sup> *Violations of Media Freedom; Journalism and Censorship in Uzbekistan*, Human Rights Watch, Vol.9, No.7 ,July, 1997

<sup>132</sup> According to the “Uzbekistan Report of World Bank”, GDP per capita of Uzbekistan is 520\$ whereas GDP per capita of Europe and Central Asian States is 4.113\$ and %26 of Uzbek population is living under national poverty line. When Uzbekistan is compared with the average of Europe and Central Asia, its per GDP is one eighth of Europe and Central Asia and the ratio living under national poverty line is %26.

<sup>133</sup> *Failed States Review 2007* Foreign policy Magazine  
[www.foreignpolicy.com/story/files/story3865.php](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/files/story3865.php) Last Access: 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2007. Foreign Policy magazine is published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think tank. The Fund for Peace is an independent research group based in Washington, and is devoted to preventing and resolving conflicts.

of institutions legal and economic adaptation to world politics in some Post-Soviet states, those states tend to adopt authoritarian regimes, which, indeed, should be read as the resurfacing of the structures of the informal politics indigenous to those countries. Under the enforced modernization, these societies had to develop modern institutions, political and legal structures and their populations were “enforced” to adopt themselves to those structures. But even under the Soviet regime, the pre-existing social networks of political power had already begun to penetrate into and transform the very dynamics of those structures. So that when the regime collapsed the local elites in those countries did not make dramatic modifications in the formal modernized structures, which had already assumed the functions of perpetuating the indigenous power relations, which is a process called as “authoritarian” from the perspective of a Western observer.

There were external pressures both for and against reforming the regimes in Central Asia; however, at a deeper level those operated an integral and informal politics which the Western oriented democratization/transition school fails to examine. For Collins, other school of transition studies, the modernization school (or ‘preconditions’ school) fails to determine the basics of transformation taking place in Central Asia. She makes a distinction between the formal and informal politics, while describing informalization of power and politics in Central Asia as the most critical problem facing the post-Soviet political development. For a sound analysis of Central Asian regimes, there has to be ‘an alternative approach that puts *clans* at the center of a

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<sup>134</sup> Collins (2006) p.10

theory of political development', which focuses on the informalization of politics in Central Asia.<sup>135</sup>

Given the current highly-centralized and static regime in Uzbekistan, it is observable that the political modernization era under the Soviet rule had a significant effect in shaping the political transition from the Soviet regime to independence. For modernization theory (or what Collins calls preconditions study), the political process in Uzbekistan under the Soviet rule has instituted the basis of further political development in the post-Soviet era. Most scholars call contemporary Uzbekistan as having achieved relative consolidation of nation with a strong central government.<sup>136</sup> In fact, there is an increasing Western literature on the authoritarian rule in Uzbekistan, the brutal crackdown of any kind of opposition and the failed state headed by the dictator Islam Karimov, who rules Uzbekistan for 18 years.<sup>137</sup> The dominant attitude of the social scientific studies on the process of transition in Central Asia regimes is that these regimes have inevitably involved in post-independence modernization and democratization, but failed to achieve success, since those complex

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Paul Kubicek (1998) "Authoritarianism in Central Asia: Curse or Cure?" *Third World Quarterly*, 19:1, Spring (1998) pp.29-43

<sup>137</sup> To name a few of them: John R. Pottenger (2004) "Civil society, religious freedom, and Islam Karimov: Uzbekistan's struggle for a decent society" *Central Asian Survey* (March, 2004) 23(1), 55–77; Joe Bob Briggs (2004) "Behind the Silk Curtain" *Despot Watch in National Interest*, Summer 2004, pp.129–135; Paul Kubicek (1998) "Authoritarianism in Central Asia: Curse or Cure?" *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 19, No 1, pp 29- 43; Andrew F. March (2003) "State ideology and the legitimation of authoritarianism: the case of post-Soviet Uzbekistan" *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 8(2), 209–232

ethnic, religious and local identities revived in the absence of Soviet hegemony, by filling the political void in the newly emerging republics.<sup>138</sup>

Either conflictual or progressive, the political modernization in Uzbekistan in the Post-Soviet era has its roots in the experiences of the Soviet era. This approach does not undermine the pre-Soviet/Tsarist experience of political change, but the model to be achieved in the end is still determined as the modern, namely institutionalized, rationalized, liberalized and even democratized. Thus the inclination towards political transition or consolidation is defined on the basis of the preconditions and the transformation of these conditions by the external influences. The endpoint of transition for newly emerging republics, the defining factors and political instruments of change in these regimes, the relation between the political (discourse) and the politics (reality) needs to be analyzed, so that we would be able to answer whether these transformations are processes of 'transition from the current regime' or 'transition to democracy'.<sup>139</sup>

When the Soviet regime collapsed in 1991, the Central Asian republics were left with no choice but to become nation-states overnight. However, legitimizing and consolidating the new regime was harder in comparison to the Soviet regime. Concerning Uzbekistan, this dissertation attempted to show the impact of traditional

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<sup>138</sup> William Fierman (1997) "Political Development in Uzbekistan: Democratization?" in *Conflict, Cleavage and Change* ed. by Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott Cambridge, U.K.; New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press

<sup>139</sup> Schmitter Philip and Chris O'Donnell (1986) *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press

local and clan-based identities on the political modernization of the republic. It was claimed that these traditional forms of political organization have prevailed and even assimilated the Soviet political projection, which had modernizing effects on the political regime of the republic. Yet, these *informal networks* have provided the society trapped in Uzbek ethno-territorial state the means to resist and overrun the Soviet dominance, while the clan relations has the primary role of keeping the powerful political structures to counteract the Soviet state. Moreover, the Soviet state institutionalized the complicated and problematic nature of Uzbek politics (as one of the most sedentarized and conservative regimes in Turkistan) and injected the national delimitation to suppress the power of informal political organization. However, as the political experiences during the Soviet regime showed, these networks had persisted. This last section will try to analyze the reasons, the conditions and implications of Post-Soviet political development, by referring to the modern challenges raised by the independence and the responses from within the Uzbek society.

### **5.1 Political Modernization and Transition Paradigm**

The main problems that the new regimes experienced as defined by the transition paradigm can be listed as follows:

- the creation of democratic institutions – parties, elections, constitutions;
- the introduction of a market economy –privatization, the removal of state subsidies and price controls, and the establishment of the economic institutions of a free market;
- social problems –unemployment, inequality, crime;

- ethnic problems;
- coming to terms with the past – dealing with the crimes of the former communist regimes.<sup>140</sup>

Thus the dominant transition paradigm begins with the assumption that the new republics will follow a regime change “away from dictatorial rule toward *more* liberal and often *more* democratic governance.<sup>141</sup>” More importantly, the transition to democracy, liberal market, and nation-state in particular are presented as challenges to these regimes, but not as solutions to post-Soviet problems. What makes them problematic in the minds of the transition scholars is the problematic nature of the confrontation between the modern and the traditional forms. As this dissertation tried to demonstrate, this problematic confrontation and the resulting perception on the nature of post-Soviet conflict in specifically Central Asian regimes is a misleading one. The institutional and legal necessities, the basic structures, namely the Parliament, the Constitution, the Judiciary, or the Presidency are all present in Uzbekistan. Institutionally and legally, the autocratic regime of Uzbekistan is formally pro-democratic and tends to adopt the liberal economy based upon the principle of free market. But the political power, its centralization, opposition to that power and the government of that power are all managed and controlled by the structures that are all beyond the restricted analysis of democratization or modernization paradigms.

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<sup>140</sup> K. Henderson and Robinson, N. (1997) *Post-Communist Politics*, Chapter 7 London: Prentice Hall.

<sup>141</sup> Thomas Carothers (2002) “The End of the Transition Paradigm” *Journal of Democracy* Volume 13, Number 1 January, p.5

Another failure on the part of modernization/transition paradigms is the overgeneralized emphasis on the identity politics, namely the potential of ethnic or religious conflicts to emerge as old antagonisms, which will thwart modernization. There are two problems with the analysis: (1) the failure to grasp the peculiar nature of political organization eminent in Uzbekistan, (2) the failure to locate the problematic nature of that political organization in the post-independence Uzbekistan. This failure is compelling to make a redefinition of modern categorization on what is *political* and the essence of the *politics* as a reality in contemporary Central Asia.

The main issue of concern is not the identities phenomenon, since political power and the control is not located in identity politics in Uzbekistan. It is clear how Islam or Turkic identities failed to provide communal identities to counter Soviet domination, while the Uzbek identity, even today, has its roots in the artificial ethno-territorial delimitation policies of Stalin. Modern national or ethnic identity is not a political reference point for contemporary Uzbekistan; it is a problem to be overcome by and for the nation-state building process. Collins argues that most Uzbeks identify themselves with reference to their provincial names, which however is based on a clan or on interrelated clans led by particular strongmen or notables, such as the case with the Alimov clan in Tashkent, or Jurabekov clan based on Samarkand. Accordingly, they “typically refer to themselves as *Samarkandilik*, *Bukharalik*, *Tashkentlik*, *Ferghanalik* or *Khorezmlik*” rather than to their *Uzbekness*,

*Turkicness or Sartness.*<sup>142</sup> Since the Central Asian identities could not be categorized under the modern identity conceptualization the Soviet modernization imposed on the Central Asian people, the homogenization under the Soviet rule in the form of creation of a Soviet identity seems to fail. However, the flexibility of these heterogeneous identities to adapt to Soviet institutions and identities in form, while their ability to remain traditionalized is significant.

Moreover, the claim that the modernization of political structures avoids conflict if succeed, through evoking rationalization, specialization, universalization and institutionalization etc., so that economic development and political compromise go hand in hand is a failed argument. The contrast between the *traditional*, (which is positioned as constituting a preventive role for socio-political identity-building) and the *modern* is not that clear. Formalization of power as a result of political modernization could not provide enough space for penetration into socio-political structures and into informal politics. Political modernization could not be promoted by the nation-state and political elites, since the elites are bound with the informal political balance between the clans and are dependent on their own clan structures, while the external drive for political modernization continues to exert pressure for formal transformation. Political elites remodel socio-political organization, altogether with the economic and institutional structure, by ensuring centralization of state structures under the nation-state, and create nationalisms so as to legitimize their political rule in the face of political modernization. However, centralization is challenged by the localized power elites that control institutions, wealth distribution

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<sup>142</sup> Collins (2006) p. 254

and the socio-political organizations, which also empower their position in the system. The role of the nation-state as the agent of modernization in the post-independence era must be analyzed in order to understand its tools and actions, together with its response to the prevalent informal politics in Uzbekistan.

## **5.2 Nation-State as the Agent of Modernization**

The consolidation of political power in the post-independence era in Uzbekistan is closely related with the state building process. In order to understand the compliances of nation-state building and implications for Uzbekistan, it is necessary to make an overall evaluation of a theory of nation-state.

As the main political agent of political modernization, modern nation-state determines the aims, causes and methods of political development. Charles Tilly defines nation-state as an organization which controls the population occupying a definite territory insofar as

- 1) it is differentiated from other organizations operating in the same territory
- 2) it is autonomous
- 3) it is centralized and
- 4) its divisions are formally coordinated with one another.”<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Charles Tilly (1975) *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* Princeton University Pr.: Princeton

Classically, it is composed of a body of rules, a series of roles and a body of resources, which is committed to a distributive, unified and unifying set of interests and purposes. Yet the state is to differentiate itself from other organizations in terms of its secular principles, and its differentiation from the civil-society, and/or market, since it has to work as a guarantor rather than as an interested party of social-economic relations. Accordingly, the modern state poses coercive control for the sake of integrity, safety and freedom. The coercive use of power is monopolized by the state via its organs. Moreover, the modern state is sovereign within the boundaries of strictly defined and recognized territory. Another element of the modern nation-state is the centralization of power, and its unitary structure. The power must be orderly distributed and formally coordinated between its parts.

Considering these dimensions, the modernity of the state therefore lies in its rationality and its positivistic and legal definition.<sup>144</sup> Tilly defines the states as modern by its very nature, since it is at the center of modernism as a process acting as the core agent that transforms society, or provide conditions that help to transform (control – manage) social change<sup>145</sup>. Ernest Gellner insists that the national state is a modern phenomenon which historically began to occur only after the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For others, what made the nation-state modern lies in its conduct of political activities, namely in its intensity, continuity, purposefulness which follow from entrusting activities to an

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<sup>144</sup> Lerner (1958)

<sup>145</sup> “Warwick Debate” <http://www.lse.ac.uk/> [Last Accessed 04/05/2006]

expressly designed, territorially bounded organization and so on.<sup>146</sup> In the end, in spite of the relative transformation of social, economic and political rationality, the state still remains at the centre of this change, its centrality remaining unchanged, making it an original tool of modernization.

In the independent republics of Central Asia, the project for nation-state building is mainly perceived as the most problematic challenge. The nation-state is the dominant institutional structure for achieving the presumed modernization in the independence period<sup>147</sup>, while modernizing state, forcing itself as the sole agency of the social reformation, still cannot liberate itself from the traditional structures, and has been infiltrated by influences what modern literature calls as tribalism, regionalism and even nepotism. What the transition studies fails to understand is that either gradually or by a shock therapy, the change is inevitable. However, the socio-political tradition, through which the individual is born into, forms and limits the individual actions. No matter how liberated, autonomous and *modern* the individual is, he/she will inevitably refer to these forms and boundaries. Nation-state only provides the formal institutional structures, and represents the Western understanding of political development. In Uzbekistan, as has already been analyzed, even the suppressive colonial Soviet type of modernization could not overcome the traditional and informal political structures,

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<sup>146</sup> Giovanni Poggi (2001) "The Nature of the Modern Nation-state" in *The State: Its Nature, Development and Prospects*, Cambridge, Polity Pres, pp. 19–33, 198 in "Modernity: Critical Concepts" ed. by. Malcolm Waters, Routledge, New York, p.270

<sup>147</sup> "Report on Torture in Uzbekistan" [www.eurasianet.org](http://www.eurasianet.org) , "Unrest in Eastern Uzbekistan" <http://www.rferl.org/> . According to the reports of RFE/RL's Uzbek Service, the Andijan uprising shows that more *prosaic* concerns are what brought ordinary people out into the streets, rather than a revival of the "wild-eyed religious extremists," since the general observation from a Western perspective would generalize any conflict as a result of the actions of religious extremists as "the stock characters for most discussions of potential unrest in Uzbekistan" <http://www.rferl.org/>

which shows specifically flexible and adoptive character peculiar to Central Asian societies.

### **5.3 The Establishment of the Modern Uzbek Nation-State**

Nationalism in Uzbekistan is purely a modern projection promoted by the Karimov regime. Given the lack of any historical and pre-colonial roots of Uzbek national identity, post-independence Uzbek nationalism rests on the political consolidation as constructed during the Soviet period, namely the ethno-territorial Uzbek identity to draw Uzbek national homogeneity. Karimov uses the Soviet version of Uzbek ethnic identity, and identity based on territorialized *ethnies* (emphasizing the homogeneity of the ethnic groups within Uzbekistan, namely of the Uzbeks; this implied that all those living in Uzbekistan were called Uzbeks.) which has significant effects on Uzbekness in the post-independence. Although Soviet political projection of Uzbek identity was a strategic move, it has been successful in raising an Uzbek consciousness, though not to the extent that could overcome and erase the traditional forms of identification altogether.

The emergence of an Uzbek national consciousness is mostly evident when we consider the nationalist movements before the dissolution of the USSR. The major opposition parties argued for greater attention to Uzbek cultural heritage with specific reference on the Soviet exploitation of Uzbekistan's natural resources and exploitation through cotton monoculture regime. Moreover, the major opposition group, *Birlik 'Halk Harakati'*, which is an elite movement and closely associated with Uzbek

literary elites, was mainly concerned with language. The head of the latter *Erk* Party, which was separated from the *Birlik* led by Muhammed Salih argued for a restoration of the ancient runic script of Central Asia. These intellectual opposition groups (*Birlik* movement claimed 500,000 supporters, while *Erk* claimed 3,000 and the People's Democratic Party –which is the successor of Communist Party of Uzbekistan- had 351,000 members as of 1991) felt responsible to draw on a national culture, basically in reaction to the political purges by Moscow in 1986-87 in Uzbekistan.

The formation of *Birlik* in 1988 was a specific sign of the emergence of Uzbek national consciousness itself. The main emphasis was to improve the position of Uzbek language<sup>148</sup> and to give an end to the 'unjustified denigration' of Central Asian historical figures. In essence the movement advocated a rehabilitation of Uzbek republic from the alien and exploitative Europeans (Russians, Ukrainians and others). On the other hand, the emphasis on health, ecology, language and economic deterioration made it popular enough to raise a significant opposition against the unpopular Soviet elite Karimov. The popularity of Muhammed Salih has also been influential, since *Birlik*, from the first day of its foundation had an especially close bond with the Uzbekistan Writers Union and literary elites.<sup>149</sup> *Birlik's* program specifically referred to language and literary rehabilitation, while however reciting

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<sup>148</sup> Yacoov Roi argues that 'the language issue became the detonator provoking an explosion of emotions.' Yacoov Ro'i (1995) *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, London, p.199

<sup>149</sup> Roberta Micallef explains how the literary elites in Uzbekistan became active in shaping national consciousness drawing from her own interviews and conversations with the writers., Roberta M. Micallef (1998) "Literature and Nation in Contemporary Uzbekistan" in *Post-Soviet Central Asia* ed. by Touraj Atabaki and John O'kane, Towis Academic Studies, Leiden, Amsterdam

issues such as human rights and other political issues, such as becoming an independent republic.<sup>150</sup>

“*Birlik*” movement advocated democratization, political pluralism and secularism. *Birlik* movement had operated as a political party but it was not registered as a party and banned in 1992.<sup>151</sup> The nucleus of *Birlik* movement was founded before the Karimov power in Uzbekistan. *Birlik* was founded at the meeting of an initiative group on November 11 1988. The new organization’s leadership was including writers, creative intelligentsia and scientists. The movement had a close bond with the Uzbekistan Writers Union. Muhammed Salih who was one of the leaders of *Birlik* was a popular poet as well.<sup>152</sup>

The program of the party was based on the political and economical development of Uzbekistan. In doing so, independence was the motto of the movement. Interestingly, they criticized Moscow-Tashkent relations very similar to the “world system” theory of Immanuel Wallerstein and argued that Uzbekistan is seen as responsible for providing raw material to the Soviet system. Uzbekistan’s role of raw material and cotton producer has to be abolished. The Soviet economic system is making Uzbekistan more dependent to the Moscow. Politically, *Birlik* was a strong advocate of individual freedoms and democracy. They were in favor of

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<sup>150</sup> Fierman, (1997) p. 367

<sup>151</sup> *Profile Series; Political Conditions in Post-Soviet Era* (1994) United States Ministry of Justice, September,

<sup>152</sup> Fierman (1997) pp 367

inviolability of freedom of expression, assembly, communication. Socially; they were opposing the eradication of Uzbek identity, especially Uzbek language, under Moscow controlled Soviet era.<sup>153</sup>

Later on, *Erk* party, leaded by Muhammed Salih, who is one of the most popular poets of Uzbekistan, started its own organization separating itself from *Birlik*, in opposition to the radicalism of the *Birlik* leaders, i.e. Abdurahim Pulatov, the head of the *Birlik* movement and scientist from Tashkent University. Like *Birlik* Movement, *Erk* was also banned in 1992. Muhammed Salih who ran against Karimov in 1991 presidential elections escaped Turkey in order to avoid facing a trial process.<sup>154</sup> The political program of *Erk* Party includes similar policies with *Birlik*. The general aims of *Erk* party are as follows:

- Creation of a new social state system in the form of a parliamentary democratic republic, which provides rights and freedom according to the UN Declaration on Human Rights;
- Establishment of a society open to all achievements of civilization in the field of state construction;
- Creation of a social market economy by use of intellectual potential, initiative and activity of citizens;
- Formation of a public education system and public health services, paying attention to the fields of science, culture and art.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid, pp 367

<sup>154</sup> Olcott (1996), pp 115

- The basic condition for the achievement of the set goals is the admission and guarantee of the person's individual freedom and rights (economic, political, legal, etc.)
- Each person possesses the right for well-warranted life and self-realization in a chosen field of activities. Our duty is to oppose any form of impingement of rights no matter where it comes from.
- We are for equality before the law, freedom of belief, political meetings and demonstrations, liberty of speech and press, independent political and social preferences. The purpose of the authority and state is to provide lawful dominion, personal rights and freedom, democracy and development of human values in the state.
- We consider social equality, based on the principle of social justice, as equality in opportunity for every person, but we argue against inculcating of equality in poverty and envy of wealth, if it was gained by fair means.<sup>155</sup>

On the other hand, while *Birlik* remained as a popular movement, *Erk* transformed itself into a political party, which provided the chance to erect Muhammed Salih to be raised as a candidate for presidency in 1991. Karimov became the president after a strictly controlled election campaign and manipulated elections, in the end winning 84% of the votes (with 94% turnout), in what international agencies generally judged to be a highly controlled election.<sup>156</sup> However, it became clear that both *Erk* and *Birlik*

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<sup>155</sup> [www.uzbekistanErk.org](http://www.uzbekistanErk.org) ( official web site of *Erk* Party)

<sup>156</sup> Collins (2006) p. 195

could raise popular opposition to the Karimov's shaky presidency by centralizing nationalist arguments.

Karimov's actions after 1991 until 1995 were strictly defined by the centralization efforts of both the political transformation and the nationalist mobilization in the country, which were mainly under control of the opposition groups. Karimov saw *Erk* and *Birlilik* as threats to Uzbekistan post-independence political stability, and Uzbek state banned both for charges of conspiracy to overthrow the elected government.<sup>157</sup>

The main challenge was Karimov's inability to control the use of nationalist mobilization to legitimize and stabilize the regime, as the opposition groups employed nationalism as a tool to oppose the regime not to transform it. Karimov's project of Uzbek nationalism did not emerge as a self-identification project but for (i) preventing foreign intervention in the transition period, and (ii) stabilizing internal politics. The legitimacy of the newly emerging Uzbek nation-state worked as a maneuver for establishing new forms of political control, while building an institutionalist veil.<sup>158</sup>

Karimov firstly identified Uzbek identity with reference to Islam. He was well aware of the influence of the loosening grip of Soviet regime on the Islamic resurgence. The numbers of mosques were increasing, while religious rituals drew increasing attendance from the population. Karimov realized the mobilizing force of Islam, as he tried to centralize the Uzbek nationalism and after the first presidential elections in 1991, he began to speak of the importance of Islam as part of the Uzbek national

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<sup>157</sup> Akbarzadeh, (1996) p.25

<sup>158</sup> Akbarzadeh, (1996) p.23

identity. Shahram Akbarzadeh points out to Karimov's prioritization of Islam in countering Soviet anti-religious campaign. Karimov's active involvement and sponsoring of the religious *bairams* and Islamic feasts, calling administrative apparatus and bureaucratic elite, i.e. hakims, to actively participate to these celebrations are significant policies worth to mention.<sup>159</sup> These *bairams* and feasts served as nationalizing efforts by the Karimov regime, not reviving but continuously renewing Uzbek national consciousness.<sup>160</sup>

Islam served as a way to manipulate the cultural and political change of identity for the Karimov regime in Uzbekistan, and as the ideological system to fill the void after Communism. Islam in Uzbekistan had been the locus point of cultural identity, while its political potential has always been limited. In the pre-independence era, Islamic identity was not a focus point for the nationalist literary elites, while the anti-Russian sentiments these nationalist movements provoked had deep roots in the Russian religious campaign as an example of Soviet exploitation. In the post-independence era, Islam has become a socio-cultural consciousness, as it has always been, but this time with a renewed emphasis on a we/they distinction in a modern context, which turned out to become an 'organized' potential force against the west, against the Jews", namely against those that are alien and exploitative, the West.<sup>161</sup>

Karimov tried to make a political identity out of Islam, as he tried to link Islamic

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<sup>159</sup> Akbarzadeh, (1996) p.27

<sup>160</sup> Laura Adams (1999) "Invention, Institutionalization and Renewal in Uzbekistan's national culture" *European Journal of Cultural Studies* Vol.2(3), pp. 355–373

<sup>161</sup> Zelkina (1999)

faith to Uzbek identity. On the day of his inaugural ceremony as the first president of independent Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov made reference to Islam in his speech and even held a Koran in one hand and the country's constitution on the other.<sup>162</sup>

Karimov's religious references had unexpected consequences for Uzbek nation-state building process. The fragmented character of Islamic faith and rituals in Uzbekistan (which has its roots (1) in the peculiar socio-cultural organization of Central Asian societies and (2) as a result of the Soviet oppression) proved to be the wrong method for asserting a homogeneous Uzbek identity, as is already explained in the previous sections due to the fragmented composition of Islamic organization in particularly Uzbekistan. What modern political analysts call as Islamic revivalism or religious fundamentalism, shows that Islamic identity and its fragmented nature possess a more comprehensive identity with high potential of mobilization and uncontrollable opposition for the post-Soviet Karimov regime.

Islam as a tool of mobilization of opposition that emerged after the Soviet collapse had provided a fertile ground for the politicization of Islam and creation of political parties and structures with Islamic-political ambitions for the new regimes. The Uzbek government strictly suppressed any group making reference to Islam, while in the form of politicized Islam, with its ideals directed at destroying the government in Uzbekistan and western type nation-states by establishing an Islamist state, these

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<sup>162</sup> Vitaly Naumkin (2003) *Militant Islam in Central Asia: The case of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan* University of California: Berkeley; Spring. p. 1

groups dissociated themselves from the possibility of an Islamist political system.<sup>163</sup> The reason why Uzbek government has been so anxious to suppress Islam and religion is not its attempt to eliminate a degenerated Islam and replace it with the good one in order to homogenize the fragmented religious structure, but rather to control opposition that took the form of Islamic fundamentalism so that assertion of an Uzbek political national identity would not be challenged. Olivier Roy characterizes political Islam, which claims for a return to the pure origins of Islam, is essentially the rejection of “its own historicity, and therefore its traditional, social characteristics.”<sup>164</sup> This claim is also true in the sense that Islamic fundamentalism and Puritanism could not find a popular base in Uzbekistan, since one of the main characteristics of Central Asian Islam is its impure but social, traditional organization, which also shows itself in the survival from the Soviet oppression for seventy years.

One such group that Karimov feel threatened by is the IMU (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan), which is one of the three key Islamic groups in Central Asia. It is a radical militant Islamic organization, which operated within the borders of Uzbekistan only. It has been argued that the IMU is ‘closely linked with international Islamic networks’, which use ‘armed struggle and terrorism in an effort to topple the regime of Islam Karimov, Uzbekistan's president.’<sup>165</sup> During ‘the war

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<sup>163</sup> Olivier Roy (1994) *The Failure of Political Islam* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. VIII

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Naumkin, (2003) p.3

on terror' in Afghanistan after the September 11 terrorist attack, IMU guerrillas and bases together with the Taliban had been either destroyed or they were forced to flee. However, it has been argued that IMU still has a social base in the Ferghana valley.<sup>166</sup> The limited ability of this group to mobilize people in Uzbekistan signals the failure on the part of political Islam to attract Muslims even in Ferghana.

Another group, the *Hizb-ut Tahrir* (Freedom Party) aims to recreate a pan-Islamic caliphate operating according to *Shariat*, which it proposes to accomplish without the use of violence', but through the use of educational means. *Hizb-ut Tahrir* interpretation of the thoughts and rules of Islam are disseminated 'through lessons, lectures, and talks in the mosques, centers and common gathering places, and through the press, books and leaflets.'<sup>167</sup>

Other groups consist of *Wahhabis* (the puritans of Islam), and *Sufis* (the mystic Islam).<sup>168</sup> Wahhabis, known as the puritans of the Islamic faith, believe in the establishment of a Muslim community similar to that which existed at the time of the Prophet Mohammed when Islam dominated every facet of the believer's life.<sup>169</sup>

Another group called 'Sufis' can be identified in the example of the most popular Sufi sect, the *Naqshbandi*, which has a liberal orientation. Presently, it is influential in Ferghana Valley, Eastern and Southern Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan. The sect

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Akiner (2003) p.105

<sup>168</sup> Haghayeghi, (1996) pp.82–83, pp. 92–95

<sup>169</sup> Haghayeghi, (1996) p. 92

originally has an ability to adapt to changing social and political conditions. Therefore, it is easily accessible literally. Its decentralized organization developed multiple centers, held together only by the common Sufi rituals.<sup>170</sup> Its membership system is exclusive, because of which the Sufi order is prevented from organizing coalitions for radical political action.

One other major challenge for Uzbek politics in the post-independence era is the issue of ethnic conflicts. As has already been analyzed in this dissertation, neither national nor ethnic identity categorizations are easily applicable to peoples of Central Asia. Only after the Soviet political ethnicization project, delimitation policy and continued assimilation of identities<sup>171</sup>, a relatively ethnic or national consciousness was able to develop in Central Asia. In the case of Uzbekistan, the ethnic conflict emerged as a part of the anti-Russian campaign within the national movements. The Russian domination, their migration into Central Asia and appointment to key positions, their high status within the titular republics<sup>172</sup>, together with language policies to assimilate native cultures had played an exploitative role. Ethnic Russians tended to settle in one particular region which

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<sup>170</sup> Haghayeghi, (1996) pp.82–83

<sup>171</sup> As Algis Prazauskas puts it, Russian language and Russian culture became dominant ‘whereas languages and cultures of non-Russian groups were ousted from the domain of public life and survived only in rural areas.’ Algis Prazauskas (1998) “Ethno-political Issues and the Emergence of Nation-States in Central Asia” in Zhang Yongjin & Azizian, Rouben (eds.) *Ethnic Challenges Beyond Borders: Chinese and Russian Perspectives of the Central Asian Conundrum*, New York : St. Martin's Press & St. Anthony's College, Oxford, pp 50-69, p.52

<sup>172</sup> Michael Rywkin (1986) “Cadre Competition in Uzbekistan: The Ethnic Aspect” *Central Asian Survey*, Vol.5, No.3/4, pp.183-194. For the Russian out migration /nativization in the republics: Valery Tishkov (1997) “The Russians are Leaving: Central Asia and Kazakhstan” in *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union: the Mind Aflame* London: Thousand Oaks Publ., California: Sage Publishing, pp. 115-134

would become richer, more industrialized, and more urbanized. Russians were left out of the cadre competition within the Uzbek state apparatus during the Soviet regime, which provided ethnic Russians to establish a technical and professional superiority. The number of Russian, well-educated professionals is decreasing today, while the dependence on ethnic Russians is still continuing.

In Uzbekistan the emergent national consciousness brought Russians to the fore as the European foreigners who exploit the Uzbek people, which must be immediately stopped by mobilizing people against the visible consequences of Russian domination, like Aral Sea disaster, cotton monoculture, linguistic and cultural degeneration. Feelings of hostility arose between Russians and the titular nations. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, socially and economically privileged Russians became a minority in the new Central Asian Republics. They remained in a vacuum in rapidly alienating countries. What affected them most were the previously mentioned nationalizing policies where there was a distinction between what is said and what is implemented. As Bohr puts it; “Certain nationalizing measures intended to secure the cultural and political resurgence of the titular nation have been openly promoted, while others have been ‘tacit’, informal practices carried out in accordance with the unwritten rules of the game.”<sup>173</sup> Everything that was once local turned out to be national. They had to speak Kazakh or Uzbek to find a job or get promoted. They felt as though they were second class citizens. These

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<sup>173</sup> Annette Bohr (1998) “The Central Asian States as Nationalising Regimes” in *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands*, Graham Smith, et al, eds., Cambridge Univ. Press: p.142

had a reverse effect for both inter-ethnic relations in the region and processes of nation and state building.

More than just being a minority-majority issue, attitude towards ethnic Russians in Uzbekistan also reflected the attitude towards modernization and the West. Ironically the Westernization process, namely the introduction of Western institutional and legal model into the newly emergent nation-state promoted traditional bonds of Islam, Uzbek ethnicity and Uzbek historical legacy. What has been rejected by the native population as being alien to the system, namely the modern legal and institutional model with a Soviet legacy, has begun to be projected by Karimov regime itself. Therefore, the political modernization and the institutional, legal and economic requirements of this transformation were used to transform the traditional political forms -informal politics- and took under control via creating its own version of traditional political forms of mobilization. This however also failed on the part of Karimov to create an alternative to informal politics and economics that are commanded by clans.

Therefore, it can be argued that, one of the most possible challenges to Uzbekistani politics would not be the radical movements or unofficial Islam on the rise, Wahhabis and Sufis, or other Islamist sects, or any possibility of ethnic conflict; rather, Karimov's references to Islam or his strict control of any religious conduct strengthens opposition to the regime in the form of several Islamic groups. As has already been argued in this dissertation, the flexible and adoptive character of socio-

political structures in Central Asian societies in general and Uzbekistan in particular are evolutionary political systems. Karimov's artificial and strict suppression of traditional forms of social identities, either religious or national, are challenged by a reactive and radical opposition. Both in the cases of nationalist mobilization and Islamic groups, it is evident that neither has a mobilizing potential, as was the case with the *Erk* and *Birlik*, and with the IMU and IRP etc. Karimov's insistence on the assertion of a national identity and emphasis on the Uzbek nation, *Vatan*, historical myths and legends<sup>174</sup> works as a destabilizing factor rather than a uniting and homogenizing factor that would overcome traditional political organization. The traditional forms of political power prevailed, while conflict that Karimov's policies caused still remains problematic for the time being.

#### **5.4 The *Political* in Uzbekistan: Clan Politics and Conflict in Independent Uzbekistan**

Given that the nation-state building efforts by the Karimov regime, its strict control over traditional forms of political power, the power centralization attempts and the assertion of Uzbek national identity, the political development in Uzbekistan seems to attain control and centralize it, while underestimating the organizational and mobilizational power of traditional politics. Therefore, the conflict does not emerge as occurring between the traditional and modern, or between Westernization and Traditionalism<sup>175</sup>, democratization and authoritarianism, economic liberalization and

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<sup>174</sup> Akbarzadeh, (1996) pp. 27–30

command economy. The nation-state model in Uzbekistan provided the institutional, legal, territorial and most importantly identity bases for countering the challenge of post-independence political development.

But since the most crucial issue for nation-building process was the institution of *legitimacy* among the citizens of an independent nation-state, Karimov regime tried to overrun the evolutionary traditional political forms, which do not pose a threat to political modernization, but present a gradual adaptability, which brought the traditional forms redefined by the state as radicalized (Islam) or reactionary (nationalist opposition) in conflict with the artificial and non-modern processes of centralization and control. In order to analyze this confrontation, it is necessary to look at the essence of political development, where the power is located within this development and the actors who control it in the Uzbek society.

Main problem is the exclusion and suppression of the traditional political forms from the allocation of power within the state structure. Karimov regime attacks to clan and kinship ties, while he himself is dependent on them. As the theory assumes, conflict and strife, if presented propensity towards for transformation, may produce progress in a society. However, in the case of Uzbekistan, the suppression by the Karimov regime prevents progressive political development and competition. The main reason is therefore the use of nation-state institutionalization to establish hegemony and control to prevent opposition, which however excludes the traditional

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<sup>175</sup> Evgeniy Abdullaev (2005) "Uzbekistan: Between Traditionalism and Westernization" in *Central Asia at the End of the Transition* ed. by Boris Rumer, M.E Sharpe: London,

and participative political forms from the decision-making and resource allocation, creating major regional, elite and local conflicts.

Then where is the real power located and how Karimov regime fails to keep the balance between the power-centers concerned? In contrast to regime transition studies and modernization theory assumes, in the case of Uzbekistan, the real power politics is executed not through the institutional and legal structures, which the modern era forces upon the nation-states of the newly emergent republics, but on the clan politics, namely the informal political networks. These informal political networks are not primordial and purely traditional bottlenecks for modernization in Central Asia, but have deeper socio-political meaning, which has been rationalized through the evolution of politics during the Soviet era. Obviously, there have not been national identities or modern state institutions in Central Asia with bureaucratic and legal structures operating, until the Soviet domination and strategic delimitation policies. Moreover, the aim of political modernization in Central Asia by the Soviet regime has not been the progress or rationalization of politics through development, but rather aimed to restore Soviet hegemonic control by dissolving the pre-colonial socio-political and traditional structures eminent in Central Asian societies. These strategic aims however had significant effects on the political modernization of Central Asia, which was revealed during Glasnost period before the end of the Soviet regime and during the independence era. New forms of institutionalization, bureaucratization and economic projections took place in the Central Asian political scene. These changes however could not overcome the informal and traditionalized

political forms, which adapted and continued to adapt to the modern state and economics. What have been persistent in the face of political modernization were not the traditional forms, but the “modernized tradition<sup>176</sup>”; which revealed the wrong assumption that the modern and traditional forms are diametrically opposed to each other. Clan networks in Uzbekistan presents a significant example of this mutual existence and interrelation between the two.

Considering the duality of tradition and modernization, the dominant paradigm of modernization presented a two-fold development cycle through which political modernization occurs:

- 1) the conflict is inevitable in the sense that the traditional forms, informal politics and socio-economic organization would challenge the requirements of modernization
- 2) which however would result in the transformation of the society in order to become modern, rational, bureaucratized, liberalized and developing.

Since the traditional is always located as static and persistent, the gap between the late-modernizer and the modern Western could not be overcome. Huntington stressing the challenges of clan, tribe and religious loyalties, argued that modernizing state policies would shift “loyalties from family, village, and tribe to nation.”<sup>177</sup> Therefore the endpoint of political modernization is portrayed as a shift

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<sup>176</sup> Lloyd Rudolph and Susanne Rudolph (1967) *The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967; quoted in Collins (2006), p. 13

<sup>177</sup> Huntington (1968) pp.140–141

of loyalties to modern forms away from traditional and informal organizations. However, clan politics proved to be prevailing over the modern forms, transforming them and instituting control by adapting them.

Clan politics depends on a rationally defined network relation, which prioritize kinship and extensive fictive kinship ties among the members to the clan.<sup>178</sup> The rationalized relation is managed through the promotion of clan members, thus creating dependency networks and concentrating wealth and power in their own group. Vaisman argues that as a rule “the clan entrusted clan relations with the most prestigious positions”, which in turn provides the extension of the clan network providing a more comprehensive access to power and wealth.<sup>179</sup> The rationality of the clan network stems from this promoting and distributive role of the clan. During the Soviet era, these clan networks learned how to use the system to their benefit, to establish their traditional informal methods and networks, which provided them to overcome the Soviet blockade to control of their own resources. Deniz Kandiyoti analyzes how these networks “developed informal methods and strategies of coping, especially when other avenues for participation (in economy or political decision-making) appear to be blocked or non-existent.”<sup>180</sup> Therefore, both the Soviet system played a repressive but constructive role that enhanced the rising of informal

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<sup>178</sup> Philip Khoury and Joseph Kostiner (1990) *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East*, Berkeley: University of California Press; Charles Linholm (1986) “Kinship Structure and Political Authority: The Middle East and Central Asia” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol.28, April, pp. 334-355

<sup>179</sup> Daniel Vaisman (1995) “Regionalism and Clan Loyalty in the Political Life of Uzbekistan” in *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies* ed. by Yacoov Ro’i, London: Frank Cass, pp. 109-113

<sup>180</sup> Deniz Kandiyoti (1998) “Rural Livelihoods and Social Networks in Uzbekistan: Perspectives from Andijan” *Central Asian Survey*, 17(4) p.576

networks, while the rationality of these networks provided a flexible and adaptive character to these networks to survive, and even to transform the transition/change occurring in Uzbekistan in particular and in Central Asia in general.

On the other hand, what make them so powerful in the course of political change in Uzbekistan are the ties that comprise the identity and bonds of socio-political organization in the society. Fictive extensive kinship ties that the clan networks hold on to goes beyond the actual blood ties while representing the subjective sense of identification so that these relations helps members to make use of the norms of kinship and protect its members, promote them within the political and social strata. Similar to ethnic identities, clans' boundaries provide vertical and horizontal relations, limits of which are not fixed and unchanging but difficult to permeate.

Observably, clans constitute networks which are powerful and rational enough to undermine regime consolidation, while making regime changes and ideological dissolutions (like the dissolution of Soviet) relatively superficial. The outcomes are not shaped by the clans, but they are able to shape and constrain the preferences and decisions of individual actors of the regime changes. Considering the Uzbek independence, clans played a very adaptive role in regime change, constituting the balance system of the new independent regime and defining its new governments' earlier preferences of political transformation.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Collins (2006) p.21

Concerning the political transformation in the independence era, clans were able to hinder nation-wide growth and economic wealth of the individual citizens. Rather the clan played a distributive role, which is assumed to be played by the nation-state in modern Western states. Therefore, as opposed to the state building projection of the inevitable modernization of the independence era, clans played a determining role in the course of defining the actors of state building, their political preferences and choices concerning the regime change. The democratization or modernization efforts on the part of the new regime are easily undermined by the powerful clan networks, since “at both elite and mass level, clan networks impede both post-transition regime and state consolidation and longer-term viability.”<sup>182</sup>

Uzbekistan is today portrayed as one of the most authoritarian, and even totalitarian, regimes of the world, by the Western countries and media. The political modernization, which was seen as an inevitable outcome of regime change in post-Soviet Central Asia, does not seem to bring expected consequences, while Karimov regime’s continued to suppress decentralization efforts in the country and still dominate contemporary politics in Uzbekistan. This Western-oriented approach fails to grasp the true nature of Uzbek politics and its heritage of political modernization, and underestimate informal socio-political structures paving way to centralize power in the hands of a few clan elites, who then come into conflict with each other to attain power. The resulting political situation has been the state repression of these informal groups by the Karimov regime in Uzbekistan. The Western-oriented

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

approach labeling the regime in Uzbekistan as authoritarian or totalitarian is misleading not in the sense that the regime is not repressive but the conditions that pave the way for the assertion of increasing state control are underestimated so as to label it authoritarian. The state repression in the end chokes the natural and gradual evolution of the system, causing conflict between the state and the clans.

The influence of clan politics is significant in that failure to transform, not because the clan networks took a static and unchanging attitude to changing conditions, but the regime remained static under the control of Karimov's policies. After the Soviet collapse Karimov depended enormously on the clans that had brought him the position as a broker of clan interests. The Jurabekov and Rashidov (Sharaf) clans of Samarkand, the Alimov clan of Tashkent, the Sultanov clan of Tashkent, the Gulomov clan of Tashkent/Ferghana, and the Azimov clan of Tashkent/Ferghana, which comprised the most powerful clans of the Soviet Uzbekistan in the beginning of post-independence era, all backed Karimov's candidacy to presidency, and as will be seen, consequently benefited.<sup>183</sup> Karimov's this dependence on clans however returned out to have constraining effects for Karimov rule. Hence, while trying to take these clans under control, he also had to deal with and appease them.

This dependency has particular reasons. First, Islam Karimov was unpopular and belonged to a weaker clan which is not powerful enough to assume the control of the state by itself. This made him an ideal candidate to play a "neutral broker" of clan interests. Second, informal politics was a political organization more powerful than a

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<sup>183</sup> Usman Khaknazarov (2003) "Kandidaty v presidyty Uzbekistana" February 21 [www.centrasia.ru](http://www.centrasia.ru)

regime change could bring about. Clans knew the political durability of the regime was mainly based on a balance between them. The transformation of the regime, the preferences had to be shaped accordingly. In supporting Karimov the clans was again guided by strategic and political considerations. In the post-Soviet era, the two of these clans emerged as the most powerful among other clans: the Tashkent clan led by Timur Alimov (dubbed “the Grand Timur”); and the Samarkand clan, led by Ismail Jurabekov, called the “Grey Cardinal” because of his role in masterminding Karimov’s ascent.<sup>184</sup> Kathleen Collins claims that there are multiple smaller clans that compete for influence, while somewhat less powerful groupings also existed among the Ferghana clans, of which only a few families are able to influence politics.<sup>185</sup> Moreover, Khorezm still suffers from Karimov’s hatred against Muhammed Salih, one of his most influential opponents before his flee from the country.

Karimov faced the challenge of maintaining a balance between those clans, while trying to establish full control over the state, parliament, ministries, political parties etc. It was obvious that his efforts for relative centralization did not pose a threat, but a chance for further access of the clans in the state apparatus. Karimov had to return clans’ political support, only for providing them with more support. Karimov’s dilemma was therefore the consolidation of autocracy without inciting opposition from powerful clans. In order to keep each clan satisfied, he did not allow any one to

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<sup>184</sup> Usman Khaknazarov (2003) “Vozrozhdenie ‘serago kardinala’ uzbekskai politiki” February 21 [www.muslimuzbekistan.com](http://www.muslimuzbekistan.com)

<sup>185</sup> Collins (2006) p. 255

seize too much control. The two challenges for Karimov was (1) the battle for cotton and (2) parliament's control. Since 1992, Karimov established a strict control of the parliament via his client *Erkin Khaliliov*, while Karimov's continued crackdown on the electoral processes in 1994 and after, and his suppression of opposition blocks of *Erk* and *Birlík* are significant signs of Karimov's dilemma.

Karimov's power was mainly based on cadre policies, but still prioritized two major clans of Jurabekov/Samarkandi and Alimov/Tashkenti together with his own Samarkand-Jizzak/Rashidov clan. Jurabekov (Grey Cardinal) clan has the control of most of the natural resources of Uzbekistan including the gas and oil export company Uzneftgas, the bazaars and the vast cotton complex. Alimov of Tashkent clan occupied the post of secretary for cadre politics, owned the central bank and many joint venture banks based in Tashkent, which made Uzbek banking system "a front for a prosperous shadow economy run by the same clan."<sup>186</sup> Rashidov clan has also been rehabilitated, by returning many state assets, such as Bukharan or Samarkandi *hokimiats*, to Rashidov's kin or more extended clan, an attitude which later on reversed as Karimov sought out to remove KGB head Abdulaziz Kamilov, as Rashidov relative to a lower position to Foreign Minister.<sup>187</sup>

This dilemma together with the effect of Tajik civil war (between the regional, clan and tribal powers), and then the Islamic fundamentalism as threats to regime stability,

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<sup>186</sup> International Crisis Group "The Failure of Reform in Uzbekistan: Ways Forward for the International Community" *Asia Report* No. 76, March 11, 2004

<sup>187</sup> Collins (2006) p. 254

forced Karimov to begin with establishing control over key positions, while at the same time satisfying clan networks. Throughout the 1990s, Karimov promoted those who lacked strong clan connections, had technocratic skills, and were likely to be loyal to him and to the Uzbek state's centralization efforts. Rustam Azimov's and Sadyq Safaev's appointments as NBU head and as Foreign Minister respectively however had little influence in the shaping of centralization efforts. Karimov also tried to use the constant shifts of *hokim*, which however provoked them, since the *hokims*, as they knew their position is a temporary one tried to benefit from it as much as possible in a limited period of time.

Other centralization efforts has been the strengthening and foundation of security forces, namely of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) and the National Security Services (SNB). With the help of these powerful institutions under his control, Karimov struggled to maintain state power apart from clan domains, and has waged an ongoing battle with the clans who seek to disperse executive power and channel resources to their own control.<sup>188</sup> Pauline Jones Long argues that “the process of drafting an electoral law, drafting a law on parties, convoking elections, and assembling the new national *Oliy Majlis* and the local soviets was primarily directed at increasing the power of the central government under Karimov.”<sup>189</sup> In addition, Kathleen Collins claims that it also “aimed at *decreasing* the power of local and provincial clan bosses and their networks.” Karimov's creation of a multi-party

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<sup>188</sup> Collins (2006) p. 253

<sup>189</sup> Pauline Jones Luong (2002) *Institutional Change and Political Continuity; Power, Perceptions and Pacts* New York: Cambridge University Press

system and pro-government parties (ex. *Fidokorlar*, *Vatan Tarakkiyati*, *Adolat*, *Milliy Tiklanish*) became a strategy for undercutting the power of clan elites in the parliament. By the creation of a multi-party system, Karimov tried to maintain the political party system under control, albeit still without room for opposition parties, and by introducing an electoral law that allowed the continuation for nonparty, independent candidates as well as party nominations, giving them a strong hold in parliament.<sup>190</sup>

### **5.5 Failure of Karimov's Inter-clan Balance**

Different than a democratizing and politically modernizing Uzbek nation-state building project, legitimacy in Uzbek politics is not identified by the artificial cultural reproduction of Uzbek identity, or institutionalization of the state and legal systems, but rather is closely associated with the role Karimov's rule played in harmonizing inter-clan balance of power distribution. Until the end of the 1990s, Karimov tried to suffice this role by his cadre policy, his political choices and threat-based national projection. By the late 1997, Karimov began to lose his legitimacy by cutting some clans from power, largely abandoning his attempts to harmonize clan interests by decentralizing certain state powers.<sup>191</sup> However, this attempt has its limits too, as it became apparent when he tried to remove the "Grey Cardinal" Jurabekov from the post of prime minister, which lasted for only a few months after Karimov hardly escaped an assassination attempt in 1999. Besides, what has been

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<sup>190</sup> Collins (2006) p. 257

<sup>191</sup> Collins (2006) p. 255

threatening for the clans has been the rise of the Karimov family after 2001, when Gulnara Karimova began to shape informal politics by taking control of Uzdurobta (the major state telecom company worth 51 million \$. Gulnara also made significant deals with Russian Lukoil Company in 2004, while other clans were increasingly excluded from resource allocation.

For Collins, there are three major challenges to the Karimov regime: first, shrinking resources and a shaky clan pact; second, rising social discontent; and third, Karimov's use of Security Forces as a tool to suppress clans. The economic failure on the part of Karimov is significant, which was fed his actions to keep the balance of power between the clans. Now that the clans are beginning to be excluded from economic power and ways to establish control over state resources, it is argued that Karimov is promoting his own family network in the resource wars in Uzbekistan. However, this promotion of the family, and exclusion of the clans creates a discontent both among the clans and the society whose economic conditions are deteriorating. According to a recent IMF report published in 2006, the annual GDP growth in Uzbekistan has become 4.1% in 1998 to 7.0% in 2007 only. The external debt is about the 25 % of the GDP, which was decreased from 45% in 2002, mainly by the help of the new energy concessions given to Russia.<sup>192</sup> Despite the increasing discontent and inter-clan imbalance, Karimov continues to promote the family, not the state, while in order to stay in power; he is beginning to depend extremely on the security forces. Moreover, he tries to balance the two major security services,

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<sup>192</sup> "Regional Economic Outlook: Middle East and Central Asia" *World Economic and Financial Surveys* September 2006 IMF

namely the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs – the Police) and the SNB (National Security Service) against each other, and established his own Presidential Security Services (PSS).<sup>193</sup>

Similar examples revealed an intense effort on the part of Karimov to begin to leave aside his role as a clan dealer, which however is not directed towards overrunning clan system for the sake of economic development, fighting corruption, democratization or establishment of the rule of law in the country. This in turn brings about a potential for conflict for power, as all the channels for power sharing are began to be closed to clans. Collins even points out to Karimov's attempts to clash two big clans against each other.<sup>194</sup> She adds that Karimov is in control of the country, with the future possibility of conflict. The conflict is visible in Uzbekistan today, as the Karimov regime seems more stagnant and fragile.

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<sup>193</sup> Collins (2006) p.275

<sup>194</sup> Collins (2006) p 275

## CONCLUSION

Obviously, modern versus traditional contrast is not at the essence of conflict in Central Asia. The social-political structures that are meant/expected to bring about conflict in Uzbekistan and Central Asia, namely religious and ethnic conflicts, rising fundamentalism, authoritarianism, clientalism, corruption and economic underdevelopment are not the core problems, but only consequences of political modernization. The political in the case of Central Asia, is beyond the common categorizations concerning the essence of conflict in Uzbekistan. The peculiar traditional structures of political organization in Uzbekistan are the adaptability and flexibility of clan politics that is capable of surviving within the confines of the modern forms, its distribution of economic wealth, its channeling of political balance and social order. Moreover, the traditional and informalized clan politics does not create conflict with the *political modernization*, which is either externally or internally imposed on the society. What does or would possibly create conflict within the particular Uzbek politics is disequilibrium within the political system. Informal politics is evolutionary, but only when the system finds a channel to direct its resources, to adopt and assimilate the upper institutional *modern* structures. If however, the informal politics is barred from the ongoing political balancing system, as in Uzbekistan during in the Karimov era, then conflict becomes possible, which creates further pressure and repression among the system. The authoritarianism of the state is a consequence of its inability to manage internal political balance, while Islam-based opposition to the regime is a limited response of those who are unable to affect or be represented in the political arena of Uzbek politics.

We tried to locate Uzbek political transformation with specific reference to the modernization discourse, its premises and failures concerning the peculiarities of the Uzbek case. We tried to present the relation between history change and strife, in order to give an overall understanding of modernization theory, the place of tradition in it, its Western-based ideology and problems with this approach. Accordingly, there are three critical features of modernization discourse that are specifically related with the Uzbek case.

1. Modernization is perceived to be a Westernization process. Formalization of politics, the establishment of political parties and the emphasis on the national identity in Uzbekistan is seen as an attempt towards Westernization, which however fails, while Karimov is seen as a dictator who failed to initiate successful transformation.
2. This creates an unclosing gap and therefore hegemony between the modernizing/traditional and the modern. Western countries are increasingly trying to establish relations with Uzbekistan, especially after the German Presidency of the European Union and the introduction of a Central Asia Strategy for the EU. However, incidents such as Andijan, keeps the West hesitant towards Uzbekistan, as the EU, UN and Us institutions categorize Uzbekistan as a failed state similar to Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan.

3. The traditional remains backward and naturally is needs to develop, by the imposition of institutions, judicial system, economic rules and political mentality. This dissertation aimed to show that the contrast between the traditional forms and the modern is not so distinctive.

All three classifications present the inevitability of a modernization process for progress. What created Uzbeks and made them experience the modernization is the inevitability and obligatory character of an impossible progress towards an end point, which the modern countries externally define as the traditional countries should follow.

From this classification arrives another important point, which puts the traditional against the modern, which creates conflict and result in favor of the modern. Throughout this political modernization process, the traditional is either totally destroyed or transformed by the modern, so as to make it a tendency for further modernization if possible, or assimilate it in the modern system.

We tried to give an historical account of the evolution of contemporary Uzbeks, their socio-political evolution and their traditional identities. Political modernization compels societies to form a response to modernization process, in order to make them adopt the process and mobilize the resources accordingly. These identities were presumed to be shaped by the colonization threat or as a result of an internal modernization –as is in the Western nation-states-, which however has hardly been

found in the case of Central Asia. Neither the colonization of the Tsarist rule nor the ideological delimitation of the Soviets had succeeded in creating common identities and relative political mobilization. Furthermore, political modernization in the case of Central Asia is not externally imposed to achieve progress but to consolidate control from above. The result has not been the conflict between the traditional loyalties and identities, but the assimilation of the modernizing system to the traditional and vice versa.

The dissertation dealt with the political modernization experience under the Soviet rule, the evolution of artificially and externally imposed identities, their influence in political transformation of Soviet Uzbekistan, and the failures of Western-oriented modernization, transition and preconditions theories to understand particular political structures and their impact in Central Asia and specifically Uzbekistan. It was concluded that the Uzbek experience under the Soviet rule has inevitably transformed the society and achieved relative success in changing the traditional forms into ostensibly modern ones. On the other hand, informal Uzbek politics had evolved within the system surviving the main political organization prevalent in the Uzbek society. By the end of the Soviet dissolution, Uzbekistan emerged as a formally modernized but politically traditional country.

We tried to analyze the evolving political conditions at the end of the Soviet rule which provided the basis for post-independence political transformation in Uzbekistan. What laid at the essence of Uzbek politics is not an institutional,

technological, rational, bureaucratic, legal or economic modernization of the country, but to keep the informal political organization intact within the formal political structures of modernity. At the core of this process is the clan politics in Uzbekistan, their mutual relations, the balance between these clans and the distribution of power with the newly created nation-state.

The clan politics that is prevalent in Uzbek political organization presents the *traditional* political forms in the face of political modernization the Central Asian societies' experience. Despite what the major the premises of modernization offered as these post-colonial countries would experience, the political transformation in Uzbekistan followed a different direction of change, which makes the traditional and modern distinction and possible confrontation between them irrelevant. The traditional political forms in Uzbekistan showed an adaptive and flexible character in the face of political change experienced during Soviet rule and the independence following Soviet era. Therefore, the dissertation concludes that the general perception that the change would follow a path-dependent change, which is aimed towards modernity at the end, is a misconception, since the relation between the modern and the traditional does not seem to be put forward adequately. This problem is closely related with the hegemonic use of modernity to define tradition for its own strategic and hegemonic domination over the developing world. However, as the case of informal politics based on clan structures suggests, traditional forms are more flexible and adaptive than the Western scientific approach suggests. The role of religion or ethnicity is limited, while other political loyalties

have stronger influence to mobilize and motivate people in Uzbekistan, even transforming the modern institutions, policies and ideology externally imposed.

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