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Prof. Mushtaq A. Kaw
Editor
The Journal of Central Asian Studies
Centre of Central Asian Studies
University of Kashmir
Hazratbal, Srinagar – 190006
Jammu & Kashmir, India
e-mail: mkaw@rediffmail.com
kawm_06@yahoo.co.in
Tel: +91-194-2422553 (Off.)
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METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES IN HISTORICAL STUDIES OF ETHNO-NATIONAL IDENTITY OF CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES

Valeriy S. Khan*

Abstract:
The identity of various ethnos in Uzbekistan gets complicated when methodological principles and criteria are substituted by ideological speculations during analytical studies. The stereotype Uzbek identity unless dynamic and glued to a set of behavioural expectation, heterogeneous or homogenous cultural setting, it remains abstract and static and eludes analysis. Historically Soviet period consolidated specific Uzbek identity and at present its characteristic is preservation and differentiation. Although ethnic and national identities have been incongruous, however, wrongly used interchangeably at different epochs of history. In those studies element of politico-administrative considerations were mostly left out. Likewise unity of natural historical and constructionist principle has to be given a serious attention while formulating components of Uzbek identity. In the last 30 years we witness substantial growth of ethno-national consciousness, expressed through effectuated national ideology intertwined with symbolic cultural revival.

Keywords:
Uzbekistan, Central Asia, Soviets, ethnic identity, Uzbek, Turkic, national consciousness.

Introduction:

History of Central Asian peoples and their ethnic roots is today the subject of academic discussions. Social scientists are debating the time of formation of their ethnic or national identity, (Tajik, Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kirghiz) the ethno genetic components and the ethnic nucleus of one or the other identity with arguments about the reasons of their transformation.[1] While speaking about the Uzbek identity, it is necessary to formulate methodological principles of the subject analysis which otherwise is frequently substituted for ideological speculations and myths. From our standpoint, there might be the following closely interrelated principles.

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* **Institute of History, Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan.**

1 In case of Uzbek identity, Dr. M. A. Halwai from University of Kashmir writes: "The present status of the problem of ethnicity and identity in Uzbekistan is somewhat confused; mostly due to wide divergence of opinion with regard to the origin, distribution and number of ethnic groups, owing to the varying criteria which each group adopts to distinguish it from the other"; M. A. Halwai, *Ethnicity in Uzbekistan: A Study in Culture and Identity*, Srinagar, 2008, pp.7-8. See also: Масанов Н. Э. Мифологизация проблем этногенеза казахского народа и казахской номадной культуры. - Масанов Н. Э., Абылхожин Ж. Б., Ерофеев И. В. Научное знание и мифотворчество в современной историографии Казахстана. – Алматы, 2007.

Principle of Historicism and Dynamic Nature of Ethnic Identity:

Since the 1990s, due to the orientation of the state policy of Uzbekistan toward the revival of national (ethnic) values, Uzbek identity (Uzbekchinlik – or Uzbekness) come into common use, which is understood as a traditional ethnic model of mentality, values and behaviour of the Uzbeks. This model actually represents an important part of the Uzbek identity; that is, it is not only a similar appearance, similarity of language or cuisine, but it encompasses the presence of identical paradigms in psychology (specific feature of national consciousness) and behavioural expectations. And this identity should be aimed at strengthening of national unity and homogeneous identification components in it.

It is noteworthy that ethnic identity is not abstract and static. It has a dynamic nature, existing in specific forms and within the limits of a certain historical context. Prior to the examination of identity of a specific ethnic group, it is a prerequisite to ask which identity is spoken about. Whether it is identity in historical context; under varied political system; of parent ethno or diaspora; of homogeneous or multi-cultural social setups; or specific age, sex and professional groups?

Regarding historical approach, in the 20th century, the Uzbek identity was impacted by the socio-political processes of revolution, civil war, collectivization, industrialization, World War II, new forms of national culture, by way of nativization, long co-residing with the Slavic and other non Muslim people and new structure of social stratification. In addition new language script emerged as a determining factor for transforming traditional Uzbek identity.

Within this framework traditional and modern Uzbek identity or its multilayer system can be studied in terms of time-related, territorial, social-stratification parameters, and even personality dimension.

As regards formation and development of modern Uzbek identity we come across two significant stages; a) formation and development of national Uzbek identity within the limits of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (1920s – 1980s) and b) development of Uzbek identity within the frames of an independent state of the Republic of Uzbekistan (1991-till date). The first marked for consolidation and the second for differentiation: characteristics of a preservation, modernization, revival, and transformation of traditional identity elements.

Heterogeneous Nature of Ethnogenetic Components:

The territory of modern Uzbekistan, as well as of Central Asia at large, since the remote ages has been the zone of migration flows for being transport corridor between western and eastern frontiers of Eurasia;

resulting in multiculture contact. On the one hand, there was forming a unique ethnocultural distinctiveness of Central Asia on the other hand, the succeeding ethnocultural layers brought about the new transformations in the ethnic mosaic and identity of the region. The blending of a multiple and diversified character can be seen in types of co-existing writing or replacing each other (Khorezmian and Sogdian writing systems, the Greek script and Indian Kharoshti, the Arabic script, Cyrillic and Latinic alphabet), polyconfessionalism (tribal cults, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity with Islam in various versions, atheism) and polyethnicity of the region and a multitude of state formations in the given territory.

The principles of historicism and of the heterogeneous nature of ethnogenesis are closely related to one of the major methodological principles of current (synergistic) treating of complicated systems - a nonlinearity principle. With reference to ethno-national development, it implies the absence of direct and unequivocal (linear) dependence between this or that historical ethnic community and the nation. Ethnic and national identities being incongruous, however, in publicist and even academic writings they are used interchangeably which results in treating modern Uzbeks (the Uzbek nation) and the local population of the region in antiquity, first of all, in the territory of modern Uzbekistan, as one ethnos (one people), divided in time. [2] It contradicts historical format of ethnic communities and their heterogeneous nature, and is based on the out-of-date classical principle of linear consideration of social phenomena.[3] The population of the region prior to the 20th century

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[2] Making ethnic history to be of more ancient is one of characteristic features of historical science in the Central Asian countries. The state leaders were engaged in the process to justify the fact of thousand-year-old history. In particular, presidents of Tajikistan (E. Rakhmonov) and Turkmenistan (the late president S. Niyazov) in their writings and speeches repeatedly declared that the history of the Tajiks and Turkmen accounts for 5,000 years (http://www.turkmenistan.gov.tm/ruhnama/ ruhnama-rus.html; http://www.prezident.tj/rus/vistupleniy040906.htm). Taking into account the features of political systems of these countries, it is not difficult to imagine, that these figures start to be duplicated in textbooks and scientific editions. However, the renowned archeologist E.V. Rtveladze, academician of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, in his article "The Historical Science and Pseudo-History of Central Asia" writes the following regarding this figure, "However, it completely contradicts all the data of historical and other sciences. Up to now, the science has no data at all not only on the language of tribes of Central Asia at that time, but also about the names of the peoples living here, which appeared as early as the 7th and 6th centuries BC and were mentioned in "Avesta", in works of Ancient Greek historians and in petroglyphic inscriptions of the Achaemenid kings. As to names of the modern peoples of Central Asia, they appeared only during the Middle Ages". http://www.uzbekistan.de/ru/2003/r_n0908.htm

[3] The nonlinearity principle assumes that: "To the multiplicity of decisions of a nonlinear equation there corresponds a multitude of ways of evolution of the system

represented a mosaic of various Turkic as well as non Turkic clan-and-tribal formations[4], united in the unions, in the first instance, not according to the ethnic identification, but politico-administrative consideration.

As the historical-ethnologic studies have shown, before the arrival of the Russians to Central Asia in the second half of the 19th century, self-identification of the regional population was formulated in accordance with different grounds, which were not reduced to ethnic identity. These are class, religious, economic-cultural, regional, clan-and-tribal and other grounds.[5] "In each state formation and in each region there was their own nomenclature and hierarchy of status positions or categories into which the population was divisible".[6]

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described by these equations". - Князева Е. Н., Курдюмов С. П. Синергетика как новое мировидение: диалог с И. Пригожином // Вопросы философии, 1992. № 12. – С. 9.

[4] See in detail on tribes, clans or families and sub-family groups Шаниязов К. Узбеки-карлуки (историко-этнографический очерк). Ташкент, 1964; Шаниязов К. К этнической истории узбекского народа (историко-этнографическое исследование на материалах кипчакского компонента). Ташкент, 1974; Файзиев Т. Узбеки-курама (в прошлом и настоящем): Автореф. дис. канд. ист. наук. Ташкент, 1963; Ахмедов Б. Государство кочевых узбеков. Москва, 1965; Каюмов А. Узбекские племена и рода. // Этнический атлас Узбекистана. 2002. – С. 320-338; Ильхамов А. Археология узбекской идентичности // Этнический атлас Узбекистана. 2002. – С. 303-311.

[5] Describing the multitude of the identification grounds, Russian scholar S.N. Abashin writes, "The main and daily necessary identities were based on estate (a "white bone" and a "black bone"), religious (Sunnites, Shiites and Ismailites, adherence to various Sufi orders), economic-and-cultural (sedentary, nomadic and seminomadic, mountainous), regional (dwellers of Bukhara, Samarkand, Khodzhent, Darvaz, etc.) kindred, clan-and-tribal and other subdivisions. (S.N. Abashin, Z.Kh. Arifkhanova, I. Dzhabbarov, A. Ilkhamov, J. Schoeberlein-Engel), J. S. Schoeberlein-Engel *Identity in Central Asia: Construction and Contention in the Conceptions "Ozbek", "Tajik", "Muslim", "Samarqandi" and Other Groups*, Ph. D. Dissertation. Harvard University, 1994; Шоберлайн-Энгел Д. Перспективы становления национального самосознания узбеков // Восток. 1997, № 3; Ильхамов А. Археология узбекской идентичности // Этнический атлас Узбекистана. Ташкент, 2002; Абашин С. Н. Население Ферганской долины (к становлению этнографической номенклатуры в конце XIX – начале XX века) // Ферганская долина: этничность, этнические процессы, этнические конфликты. Москва, 2004; Абашин С. Н. Национализмы в Средней Азии: в поисках идентичности. Москва, 2007; Джаббаров И.. Узбеки. – Ташкент, 2007. – С. 34; Арифханова З.Х. Политические процессы 20-30-х г. и их роль в складывании узбекской нации // Отчет отдела этнологии АН РУз за 2009 г. по гранту «Этническая идентификация узбеков: формирование, особенности, трансформация». – С. 48.

[6] Абашин С. Н. Население Ферганской долины (к становлению этнографической номенклатуры в конце XIX – начале XX века) // Ферганская долина: этничность, этнические процессы, этнические конфликты. – М., 2004.

For example, in 1937, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic A. Ikramov characterized the situation with population self-identification in the territory of the republic before its formalized establishment as follows; "Toiling masses of Uzbeks did not realize themselves as a single nationality. The Fergana Uzbeks were usually referred to as Kokanlyks in accordance with the khanate' name; the Uzbeks from Zerafshan, Kashkadarya, and Surkhan-Darya were called the Bukharians. Nomadic Uzbeks from Kashkadarya, and Surkhan-Darya were not considered Uzbeks by the Uzbek population of our cities. The Khorezmians, for example, for some reason called all the Uzbeks coming from other parts of Uzbekistan as Tajiks, and Russian colonizers named all of them as Sarts". [7]

But if we speak of the Uzbeks as of the nation, they, as well as any other nation is the product of formation of the national state (the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic), which with all attributes (the same borders, the uniform legislation and economic complex, a literary state language, the educational system, the information space etc.) arises only in the 20th century. What is meant here is the formation of a unitary Uzbek national identity emerging out of the pluralistic ethnic clan-and-tribe identity.

Formation of the Uzbek nation gradually replaced clan-and-tribe formations and ethnographic groups from the registration statistics and passport categorization by the uniform ethnic categorization in passports in which it was written "Uzbek" as a national identity. An ethnocultural variety was becoming gradually to comply with logic of development of national integrity and unity. That tendency was shown in all possible areas: self-identification, anthroponymy, clothes, ceremonies, etc.

Principle of Unity of Natural-historical and Constructivist Factor:
During the Soviet period, the history of the peoples, as a rule, was considered in the natural-historical aspect, where stratifications and transformations in development of ethnic identity were viewed as a result of the natural evolution and necessary consequence of ethnocultural interactions (primordial approach). The recent investigations (constructivist approach) frequently underline the role of constructing in the ethnohistorical process and such circumstance that the vectors of ethnic identity development had been caused not only by the natural character of ethnocultural contact zones, but also by the direct

– С. 39. Он же. Национализмы в Средней Азии: в поисках идентичности. – М., 2007.

[7] Икрамов А. О проекте Конституции Узбекской ССР: Из доклада на Чрезвычайном VI съезде Советов Узбекской ССР 12 февраля 1937 г. // Революция и национальности. 1937, № 4 (86). – С. 42.

constructing, first and foremost, in connection with inclusion of the region in various state formations (the Persian Empire of the Achaemenids, Alexander the Great's Empire, Turkic Kaganate, Arab Caliphate, Russian Empire, the USSR, etc.) . The foundation of the given constructing was laid by the respective ethnocultural policy which together with constructible historical memory has affected multilayer structure and vectors of changing the identity of the people occupying the region.

By itself, the formation of the Uzbeks as the nation took place as a result of its construction within the framework of the national-state delimitation of Central Asia in 1924-1929 - the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (within the limits of a wider federation - the USSR). Among the most active participants of the process of new Uzbek identity construction at its initial stage, the researchers name the following three forces: the Jadids, national-communists and the Central Party-and-political machine.[8]

Among the factors of construction of national identity within the limits of the established Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, a specific place is occupied by censuses and pertinent techniques to account the population. As the ethnologists from Uzbekistan Z. Kh. Arifkhanova and O. Artykov write, "Necessity of the population accounting and taking censuses required a particular classification of peoples and unification of ethnic subgroups. The Soviet system continued the policy of the Russian state on liquidation of hierarchy of the polyethnic population. Modern standards of ethnic division of the population were introduced during the censuses accomplished in the first quarter of the 20th century, and simplification of the national structure took place".[9] Examining the statistical data from 1897, 1926, 1939, and 1959 censuses we can see how the registration ethnographic nomenclature changed. In the 1926 census the Sarts disappeared, though they were registered as the largest group in the census of 1897 and in all current statistics in the period between those censuses. Following the results of the 1939 census, such groups as Kipchaks, Kurama and Turks were excluded from the lists, etc. Finally, all tribe-and-clan and ethnographic groups were combined in one category - the Uzbek.[10]

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[8] Ильхамов А. Археология узбекской идентичности // Этнический атлас Узбекистана. Ташкент, 2002. – С. 288.

[9] Арифханова З. Х., Артыков О. Этнический состав населения Узбекистана в XX веке // Отчет отдела этнологии АН РУз за 2009 г. по гранту «Этническая идентификация узбеков: формирование, особенности, трансформация». – С. 43.

[10] See: Абашин С. Н. Национализмы в Средней Азии: в поисках идентичности. – СПб. – С. 94-176, 179-195; Бушков В. И., Зотова Н. А. Сельское население

Construction of new historical memory became another major factor of modern Uzbek identity and, as a consequence, of the nation-constructive historical symbols meeting the problems of the Soviet nationality policy and new national elites.[11]

It is also possible to see the Uzbek identity construction during the years of independence. It is the policy for revival of national values and ethnic consciousness. Based on the growth of national (ethnic) consciousness, this process began in the last years of the perestroika, and consolidated when the republic gained independence. This found its expression in revival of traditional value orientations, ritual ceremonies, and festivals, names of outstanding figures of the past and rehabilitation of their contribution to the history of Central Asia and world civilization, to religious revival, language adoption, and newly contemplated history.[12] The contemporary process of nation construction is based on the state effectuated national idea and ideology of national independence closely intertwined with the idea of traditional culture revival. Whereas during the Soviet period the process of nation construction was guided by transformation and, in a certain measure, criticism of traditional identity, in the period of independence it is associated with the idea of national rebirth.

The highlight in consideration of the modern national processes is the problem of correlation and interrelationship of the ethnic and civil nation.[13] The problem has become of current interest especially in conditions of globalization. Uzbekistan, in which nation genesis in the ethnic sense was brought to maturity in the 20th century, is faced with the problem on formation (construction) of the civil nation that is one of the basic requirement in the development of states in the 21st century.

Наманганского уезда на рубеже XIX-XX веков (по статистическим данным) // Ферганская долина: этничность, этнические процессы, этнические конфликты. – М., 110-137.

11 Ильхамов А. Археология узбекской идентичности // Этнический атлас Узбекистана. Ташкент, 2002.

12 See on construction of new historical memory in Central Asia today: S. Amsler, *The Politics of Knowledge in Central Asia. Science between Marx and the Market*, New York, 2007; Масанов Н. Э, Абылхожин Ж. Б., Ерофеев И. В. Научное знание и мифотворчество в современной историографии Казахстана. – Алматы, 2007.

13 See. Тишков В. А. О нации // Этнология и политика. Научная публицистика. М., 2001.

TAJIKISTAN AND CHINA
CHANGING IMAGES

Muzaffar Olimov*
Saodat Olimov*

Abstract:
Until recently, Tajikistan paid more attention to the development of relations with the countries lying in the north. However, the country is now establishing links with countries in the south and the east through the international transport networks. Construction of new roads, bridges and tunnels, growth of international trade, and migrations have helped interaction with the neighboring countries, in particular with China and Afghanistan. Since 2002 and until 2006 the volume of trade between Tajikistan and China grew 25 times. The largest projects supported by China in Tajikistan, in accordance with the framework of SCO, are the construction of a transport corridor and electric lines. However, restoration of the Silk Route has brought new challenges, such as Tajikistan's participation in "the new Big Game", religious extremism, illegal migration, lack of competition with the Chinese goods, etc.
Keywords:
China, Russia, Tajikistan, Transport corridors, Trade relations.

Introduction:

With the intensification of commercial, economic, political, and cultural relations with China, people to people contacts are tremendously growing with the country. What is the perception of China towards Tajikistan? This question cannot be answered without studying the Tajik perception of China. In this context, the image of the country is understood to be a set of stable, stratified, and dynamic understanding of political, historical, cultural and geographical space. At the same time, it is one of the ways of self-identification. Needless to say, that during the past two decades Tajik population went through large scale social transformation resulting in the change in Tajik perception of China. At the same time, many important archetypes, symbols and signs continue to persist in the new image, which creates difficulties in terms of the new reality. What is China's perception of Tajiks today? When we try to answer this question, the word "China" brings many contradictory responses which are caused by the complex history of Sino-Central Asian relations, as well as by the delicate ethnic history of the peoples of Central Asia. In the Tajik language, there are two geographical names of China - Khitoy and Chin. Chin[1] refers to China, Chinese Turkestan now

* **SHARQ Research Center, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.**

[1] In addition to the name «Chin» often used «Chin-u Mochin» - China and those countries which are outside it are civilizational area of China. There are different views among contemporary Orientalists of Tajikistan on the content of the title «Chin-u Mochin». Some believe that it includes other than China, Korea and

Xingjian, and Chinese. In addition to the uncertainty of geographical names, the image of China contains the notion of different time periods. For example:

a. The traditional recordings in the classical literature in Farsi are dominated by terms like: distant country, the seat of strange people and magical creatures, production of porcelain and tea, birthplace of skilled artists, craftsmen and beauties.
b. The second era was formed when Tajikistan was part of the Soviet Union. Its dominant concepts include brotherly people, Communist Party, struggle against imperialism.
c. After independence the basic concepts and associations include great neighbour, huge territory, successful reform, cheap low-quality goods, incomprehensible and alien culture, hardworking and unpretentious people.

In order to track these changes in the concepts associated with the Silk Route, it is necessary to recall the history of the Tajik-Chinese relations.

Historical Background:

Areas included in modern Tajikistan, maintained relations with China since ancient times. Izhan Qian was the first Chinese, who visited and wrote about the Pamirs, Davan (Fergana Valley), Tokharistan (Dahi), Kang (Khorazm) and Ansi (Parthia)[2] in 140-135 BC. Though relations with Tang China (618-907) were strengthened after the emergence of Silk Route, these came to a halt when the Arab armies defeated China in the battle of Talas in 751: apart from trade, there were no political or cultural ties, for almost one thousand years.[3] The relations with China were revised when China became part of the empire of Chenghis Khan and his descendants and during the Ming dynasty in China (1368-1644). The maritime route by the Europeans led to the abandonment of Silk Route, and the territories of the modern Tajikistan lost most of contacts with China. The Chinese invasion of Kashgar in 1760 and the subsequent long struggle of the people of Eastern Turkestan against China did not contribute to the revival of contacts. Since then, besides trade, the situation in Eastern Turkestan spontaneously slapped the Tajik

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Southeast Asia, and also Japan, while others argue that Japan is not part of the «Chin-u Mochin».

2 Viktor Dubovitsky, *Tajikistan–China: From Careful Relations to Strategic Partnership*, www.ferghana.ru 25.01.2007.

3 *Eastern Turkestan in Ancient and Early Medieval Period, Historian Essays,* Nauka Publishing House, Moscow, 1988, p.305.

perception of China. Added to this was the involvement of Khokand Khanate (1709-1876) in the affairs of Kashgar.[4]

Bukhara Emirate too had strong trade links with Kashgar[5] and was the second largest foreign trade partner after Russian Empire. The volume of trade between Bukhara and Kashgar is evident by the fact that within 2-3 weeks 700-800 fully loaded camels from Bukhara crossed the Terek pass in Kashgar.[6] The merchants from Bukhara, Kokand and Khujand exported to Kashgar fabrics, pearls, jewelry, furs, leather, sugar, metal products, and in return brought tea, porcelain dishes, Chinese silk, Chinese silver coins, etc.

Merchants used these coins to pay for goats' fleece, which they bought in Tibet and sent to Kashmir for the manufacture of shawls, which were then exported to other countries including Russia.[7] Thus, Bukhara and Kokand merchants, until the beginning of the 12th century, played the role of trade intermediaries between Tibet and Kashmir.

So, Khujand, Isfara, Ura-Tube (Istaravshan) and other territories that makes up today's northern Tajikistan and which were parts of Kokand Khanate and the Emirate of Bukhara, maintained contacts with China through Eastern Turkestan. At the same time, eastern Bukhara and Pamir, which are now in central Tajikistan, southern Tajikistan and Badakhshan, had no links with China from the 17th–19th centuries, since they were separated from China by inaccessible mountains and inhabited by the Turks. That is why Tajiks formed a picture of China as a distant country, lying beyond the "country of Turks".

Tajik-Chinese Relations:

During the Soviet period there were no direct relations between the Tajik SSR and China. However, after independence relations were limited to resolving border issues. This period lasted until 1997, when the civil war ended. From 1997 to 2002, relations between the two developed gradually within the frame work of Shanghai Five and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). They included a few small private projects, and assistance that China provided to strengthen the Tajik armed forces.

The events after 9/11 made China to re-draw its strategies towards Central Asian countries and as such Tajik-Chinese relationships look

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4 See: V. Nalivkin, *A Short History of the Kokand Khanate.* \\ *History of Central Asia*, Eurolins–Russian Panorama, Moscow, 2003, p.298.

5 See: B. Ismailova, *Bukhara Emirate under Emir Haydar*, State University, Khujand 2000, pp. 70-73.

6 E. K.Meyendorf, *Trip from Orenburg to Bukhara*, Nauka Publishing House, Moscow, 1975, p.128.

7 *Trip from Orenburg to Bukhara*, pp. 129-130.

different today. Since then China has strengthened its economic presence in Tajikistan, and has become one of the top five leading trade partner of Tajikistan. From 2002 to 2006, the volume of trade between the two countries has grown almost 25 times. In 2006 it reached 323 million US dollars. In January 2007, China and Tajikistan signed the 'Treaty on Good-neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation'.[8] The main element of the treaty is combined development based on the principle of mutual respect and mutual assistance in bilateral areas in the fields of political, military, economic, commercial, cultural and educational. Particular attention is expected to be paid to strengthen scientific and technological, agricultural, humanitarian and environmental cooperation between China and Tajikistan besides combating international terrorism, separatism and illegal drug trafficking.

Border Demarcations and New Beginning:

The 430-kilometer long Tajik-Chinese border was drawn in the Pamirs between the Russian Empire and Tsin China and revised several times in the middle and late 19th century. But the geographical indications, which established the boundary line, were inaccurate. It led to several misunderstandings and claims and counter claims by the two states. China claimed three disputed sites in the territory of Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region (GBAO) with a total area of over 20 thousand square km.[9] In 2001, after much deliberations, Tajikistan transferred more than one thousand square km to China following which in June 2006, the border demarcation work began, and continued until the end of 2008 despite the fact that the people of GBAO protested over the transfer as they lost their pastures after the demarcation (of the border)[10] while there were others who expressed concern over the transfer of Rangkul mines to China.[11]

The resolution of the border problem resulted in the emergence of direct transport corridor between China and Tajikistan through Tashkurgan-Khorog via Kulma pass (4363 m) at Sarykol Ridge. It provides Tajikistan direct access to Xinjiang and Pakistan to reach to the Indian Ocean. The net result is the rapid development of border trade between Xinjiang and GBAO and accordingly, in 2006, Tajikistan-China trade turnover was of more than 4,250 thousand dollars. The volume of

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8 The treaty will be effective for 25 years (Article 18) with the possibility of extension for subsequent five-year periods; http://www.mid.tj/index.php?node=article&id=315/www.mid.tj/index.php?node= article&id =315истанhttp.

9 Viktor Dubovitsky, *Tajikistan–China: From Careful Relations to Strategic Partnership*, www.ferghana.ru , 25.01.2007

10 Tajik herders leave 37 mountain ravines to China, I. Rahmon, May 27, 2008, http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1211964420

11 http://www.centrasia.ru/newsA.php?st=1211964420

transferred goods (in 2006) amounted to 9166 tons.[12] Keeping in view the difficulty of shipping along this mountainous route these numbers are significant.

Economic Relations:

Tajik-Chinese relations began to develop rapidly after the signing of this treaty (on 15 of January, 2007). With the help of China infrastructure projects were started in Tajikistan within the framework of the SCO. For instance in 2006, Tajikistan obtained from China a preferential loan of 608 million dollars, mainly used for the construction of high voltage lines LEP-500 South-North and LEP-220 Lolazor-Khatlon in the Khatlon region, and also for the construction of a tunnel under Shar-Shar pass on the road between Dushanbe-Kulyab.[13] The Export-Import Bank of China loaned to Tajikistan funds to build a highway from Tajikistan to Uzbekistan. The project includes rehabilitation of the road Dushanbe-Aini-Istravshan-Khujand-Buston-Chanak (border of Uzbekistan); the construction of new detour roads in the settlements, new bridges and a new tunnel *Shahristan*, which is more than 5 km long.[14]

In the area of hydropower development China is the main partner of Tajikistan among all Central Asian states. There are currently plans to build several hydro and thermal power plants with the participation of China. Besides high–level business meetings, the state visit of President Emomali Rakhmon to China, contributed to the growth of mutual trade within the framework of the Second Eurasian Economic Forum in Xi'an. In 2006- 2007, the trade with China increased by 62% - from 323 million to 524 million dollars.

The increasing activity of the Chinese capital owners to develop the Tajik market and opening of the State Development Bank of China in Dushanbe affected the growth of private Chinese business in Tajikistan. More than 50 joint projects were undertaken in Tajikistan besides over 40 enterprises with Chinese assistance. The number of these enterprises is growing[15] is evident by the fact that 80 Chinese companies were operating in Tajikistan, in 2008.

As a result of these developments, the immigration of Chinese citizens in Tajikistan is growing day by day. In 2007, more than 4000 Chinese citizens (2006 - 1316 persons, which is 205% increase) obtained visas to enter Tajikistan.[16] Most of them work in the Chinese companies to build roads, bridges, factories, etc. Besides they also come from

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12 *Tajikistan–China: From Careful Relations to Strategic Partnership*.

13 See: http://www.mid.tj/index.php?node=article&id=315/www.mid.tj/ index.php? node=article&id=315истаннttp

14 The reconstruction of roads to the tunnel under "Anzob" pass is being completed with the help of Iran.

15 Tajikistan Ambassador in China: Tajik-China Trade-Economic Relations are Increasing, http://russian.china.org.cn.

16 Tajikistan Embassy data in China: http://russian.china.org.cn

neighbouring countries like Kyrgyzstan. According to the Migration Service of the IOM, in 2006, the number of Chinese in Tajikistan was more than 3 thousand people while in July 2008 it was more than 10 thousand.[17] Similarly, business and labour migration of Tajik citizens into China is also growing and there were more than 8 thousand Tajik citizens working in China during the period 2006-2008.[18] This result was an increasing number of people travelled by air which in 2007 was 29700 (25360 people in 2006, an increase of 17%), consequently additional flights, new air routes linking the cities of Tajikistan and Urumchi were operational.

China has also shown interest in history, culture, tradition and language of Tajikistan. The number of Tajik students in Chinese universities is increasing gradually and by 2008 there were about 200 Tajik students studying in China. Most of them study Chinese language besides the subjects like economics and traditional Chinese medicine. China also helps Tajikistan in training workers in various sectors of economy, culture, in addition imparts training to armed forces, border troops and National Guards.[19]

The Components of the Tajik Perception of China:

To understand the Tajik perspective of China, public opinion polls have shown that the people of the Republic of Tajikistan have positive attitude towards China and its people (the table below shows the results of the poll).

Attitude to Tajiks towards China & others[20]

Attitude	**China**	**Russia**	**Iran**	**France**
Very friendly	33.6	79.5	69.6	16.3
Rather benevolent	48.2	18.0	26.4	63.2
Rather not benevolent	16.1	1.9	3.1	12.9
Very unkindly	2.1	0.3	0.2	0.9
Don't know	-	0.3	0.7	6.7
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**

17 Report of deputy head of Migration Service of Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan at the Workshop on Labour Migration in Dushanbe, June 19, 2008.

18 Report: *"Migration and Development"*, ILO–Research Center SHARQ, Dushanbe, 2008.

19 Tajikistan Ambassador in China: http://russian.china.org.cn.

20 The survey materials, May 2008, Research Center SHARQ, Dushanbe; Survey on the basis of national representative sample, 1000 respondents, percent of error – 2.5%.

To compare the results with similar surveys conducted in 2006, we can see some interesting trends. In 2008 the number of respondents who had earlier felt well about China fell by 7% while as whose attitude was very friendly decreased as well. [21] This was because Tajikistan transferred to China more than 1000 square km of her territory in the process of resolving border disputes. In November, 2007 public opinion poll, more than 90% of respondents believed that China has positive impact on Tajikistan wherein 41.1% indicated that the impact of China is very positive, 49.8% felt it was rather positive, 6.8% rather negative, 1.4% very negative. What these polls show is that most of the people regard Russia as the best partner (89%) followed by Iran (9%) and China (8%). But people opine that the greatest impact on Tajikistan in the coming 10 years would be that of Russia (50.8%); followed by China (22%) and Iran (16.7%).

The people of Tajikistan believe that China is playing a stabilizing role in international relations: 87% of respondents mostly like Chinese serene behaviour in the international arena; 32% of respondents mostly value Chinese economic system; 11% admire the culture of China; while there are about 9% who like the political system of China.

However, Tajiks do not trust the military image of China as only 6% believe that China is the closest ally of Tajikistan, while 59% hold Russia as closest ally and 11% hold Iran.[22] At the same time, they do not believe that China is a threat to Tajikistan's security and stability in Central Asia as just 3% fear China while 13% fear Russia. It seems that the Tajik society is not fully aware of the growing presence of Chinese in the country and has not yet formed an attitude toward the new reality. Referring to the image of China, reflected in public opinion polls, we should not forget that there is an enormous difference between the general public and that of political, economic, military and intellectual elite. It is caused by the difference in the levels of interaction of different social groups with Chinese. The Tajik ruling elite has the most positive attitude towards China for which the common attitude towards pan-Turkism also plays very important role. The political elites of Tajikistan, which is an Iranian-speaking country in the region, are afraid of Turkish ethno-political community thus identifying itself with China against the Turkish national movements.

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[21] In 2006, 89% respondents referred rather positive impact of China. The survey materials, October 2006, Research Center SHARQ, Dushanbe; Survey on basis of national representative sample, 1800 respondents, percent of error – 2.5%.

[22] The survey materials, November 2007, Research Center SHARQ, Dushanbe; Survey on the basis of national representative sample, 2000 respondents, percent of error – 2.5%.

The pro-Iran intelligentsia from northern Tajikistan has the most negative attitude towards China. They have not forgotten China's claim to the Farghana Valley and her brutal policy towards the Kashgar ruler Yaqub-Bek (1865-1877).[23] Another group which has negative attitude towards China and her increasing influence in Tajikistan is of Islamists which will become a major obstacle for China's interests in Tajikistan. Because Tajikistan is entering a period of post-secularism, it now identifies itself as an integral part of the Muslim world.

Conclusions:

The people in Tajikistan hold the image of neighbouring countries and particularly of China as was established during the Soviet era. It seems that present Tajik society will take time to form a collective understanding of neighbouring peoples and countries. This process will have a profound impact in changing Tajikistan's identity.

[23] A. D. Vasilev, "Interrelations: Ottoman Empire and State of Yaqub Bek", *Journal Vostok\ Oriens*, No.2, 2007, pp. 15-22; E.V. Bunakov, "On issue political and economic contacts of the Central Asian properties of Russian Tsar with Eastern Turkistan under government Yaqub-Bek (1865-1877)", *Bulletin Uzbek SSR of the Academy of Sciences*, No.5,1945.

ANCIENT NISA
CENTRE OF SYNERGY ALONG THE SILK ROUTE

P. L. Dash*

Abstract:
Emancipated from decades of Soviet rule, independent Turkmenistan looks forward, in a soul searching quest to play a pivotal role in Caspian energy politics and shape the regional scheme of political developments to its best pursuit and advantage. While energy reserve, particularly natural gas, has remained Turkmenistan's major asset in a largely energy hungry world, its more valuable asset is its cultural heritage which has significantly contributed to the assimilation and synthesis of the cultural ethos of the Orient and the Occident. Located at the confluence of various civilizations in Central Asia along the ancient Silk Route, Turkmenistan and its ancient cities of Merv and Nisa were famous trading centres. MIRAS, the Cultural Directorate of the Turkmenistan government, organized an international conference on 5-7 December, 2007 to revive the past of these cities along ancient Silk and Spice Routes that connected India, China and the rest of the world with Central Asia.
Keywords:
Nisa, Turkmenistan, Iran, Khorassan, Merv, Central Asia, India, Mongols, Silk Route.

Introduction:

Nisa an ancient city was famous for its urban settlement in 2nd and 3rd millennium BC. Situated not very far from the present capital Ashgabat, in the Kopet Dag valley in the Ahal velayat, it became the first capital of the Parthian empire. The Parthian emperor, Arsaces I, 250-211 BC, founded the city, and it was called Parthaunisa.[1] The city was the royal necropolis for successive Parthian kings. The archaeological excavations at Nisa have revealed a whole new world of information. What was hither to unknown became known as a city centre of yore famous for its common cultural complex, providing a common trade space for India, Central Asia, China, and Iran and beyond to Egypt and the Roman empire. Similarity in the style of governance and management of social life implied that Nisa shared with others in the neighbourhood the ambience, mores, architectural designs, religion and above all major inventions and achievements of life in the fields of science, mathematics and medicines. Nisa represented in the 2nd millennium a globalized cosmos on a regional scale in and around Central Asia.

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* **Professor, Centre for Eurasian Studies, University of Mumbai, Mumbai, India.**

1 Nisa kept its name high through various rulers. When Mithradates I ruled Nisa around 171-138 BC, he renamed the city after him. It became known as Mithradatkirt. Despite the change in name, Nisa continued as a centre of east-west activities. The cascading impact was widely felt across the confluence of cultures.

Soviet and post-Soviet excavations and discoveries at Nisa conclusively indicate the wider trade contacts and religious discourses of this city with the outside world while the art focus on the buildings indicate Hellenistic touch, the use of ivory in Nisa proves Indian connections, and possibly connections with Africa via Egypt. The structure of buildings and architectural designs evince a strong intermingling of Iranian, Oriental Indian as well as western cultures of the epoch. Traders and preachers from India used to travel to Kopet Dag to trade and preach and brought back the local skills of carpet weaving, sheep breeding and other artifacts which continued to prevail across the Indus valley. Thus Nisa had pre-Islamic contacts with India, Iran and China.[2]

With regard to India – one of the pre-Islamic civilizations - the mutual outreach was synergetic and symbiotic, indicating India's civilizational outreach was pervasive over distant lands including Nisa, which was just located in the periphery and even at one point of time called Nisapur. The ambit of interaction and mutual influence permeated to appreciation for art and style of building constructions, ceramic and bronze inscriptions, metal tools, weapons and instruments, religious ideology and value system, science and art, medicines and poetry. Form and style of dance, dress code for different occasions and marriage and burial rites were almost identical with a little regional variation. One thus finds many other similarities, including how they battled and how they conducted peace deals, besides sharing discoveries across a borderless space.

New Nisa:

Nisa grew to be one of the most famous medieval feudal cities characteristics by an urban life style, compact in itself, catering to the growing merchant demands travelling across, but at the same time, outreaching to the world through its growing commerce. It remained the largest economic centre of Central Asia and played a significant role in the political life of Khorasan. Pottery, weaponry and crockery manufacture facilitated further growth of Nisa. The city layout marked for new amorphous buildings was supported by a unique canal system, cultural palaces and other urban set-ups including distilleries.

The city was distinctly divided in to two parts: old and new Nisa. The former was famous for production of traditional items, and the later took case of new urgan needs. Soviet Archaeologist, Victor Nikolaevich

[2] The corroborative evidence is on display in the museum exposures at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. These exhibits are demonstrative of the fact that Nisa was once upon a time a great city, a cultural centre, and a trading hub.

Pilipko, has revealed a bright history of this city of 2500 years. Similarly other archaeologists have thrown light upon the genesis, rise and fall as well as the prevalent social customs, trade and commercial culture, which helped assimilate peoples of the peripheral regions.[3]

Famous as the granary of Khorassan, Nisa developed into an advanced agricultural zone of that time, with vast stretches of fertile land lying in the valleys and plains providing for agricultural activities. Since these fields ran through the very heart of the Silk Route, it served as an important trade link between the East and the West, both in terms exporting agricultural products, and in terms of commerce. The high level of craftsmanship, the meticulous designs painted on crockery and glass items of the period imply assimilation of beautiful ideas across a common cultural space on the cockpit of Asia.

Ancient Nisa was divided into two parts: northern complex and southern complex markedly differentiated from each other in layout. The northern complex had square houses. They had become the treasure house of Tsarist relics. The city was no doubt an economic warehouse, a repository of various artifacts carved into life by master craftsmen of that epoch.[4] The systematic arrangement of life in an orderly fashion further implies that the system of governance was strict and smooth. Further the discovery of ivory works and utensils tell us a tale that Nisa was a flourishing centres of commerce and trade and a hub of allied activities. Commercial establishments were the hallmark of northern Nisa.

On the other hand, southern Nisa was laced with palaces, temples and groups of buildings, thereby implying that that part of the city was unquestionably the administrative city centre. The rulers and the ruled lived apart in different parts of the city exhibiting a social hierarchy. The palace complex throws lights on the systematic arrangement of administrative machinery, included many chambers, a large audience hall, closed yards with porticos and guard rooms. The temples were

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3 The very name, Nisapur provides an Indian connotation, further accentuating the fact that the square size structures of old Nisa perfectly fitted into the Vastu Shastra. Various statues and ivory articles, terracotta figures, horse riders, sphinx, spacious palaces and many things associated with medieval India are reminiscent of the findings of ancient Nisa. The trident, a holistic Hindu symbol is among the excavated artifacts and preserved in Turkmenistan. There are many similarities of how women in rural India grind and pound millets today with those devices and instruments used in ancient Nisa.

4 The archaeological excavations have unearthed beautiful marble statuettes, imported glass, more than two thousand five hundred various types of rocks with inscriptions in Partian and Arameian scripts. The discovery of a throne and armaments clearly implies that the city had a developed system of governance with the king at the helm.

round and tower, surrounded by wide arched corridors. Thus Nisa is a representation of an antique township with country estates laced with gardens - characteristic of ancient cities having love for greenery and beautiful environs. The ancient Nisa residences also had their ecological sense reflected in town planning.

The Persian Connections:

Parthians traded with China and battled the Romans with the famous Parthians shots (mounted archers). Between 247 BC and 224 AD, the Parthian brought accolades to their rulers from across Persia. Hailing from the Steppes, east of the Caspian, these brave pastoralists, with their inimitable quality of cavalry, subjugated the region from Scythia in the north, Sogdiana across Amu Darya and Khorasmia (Present day Afghanistan). They travelled south up to Gedrosia and in the east reached India. The eastern edges of the Indus river to the western flanks of the Euphrates constituted Parthian habitat of trade and commerce, cultural assimilation and confluence of mores.[5]

The Iranians are indebted to the Parthian for having established the second Persian Empire between 247 BC and 224 AD. It is this Persian connectivity that provides a wider connotation to the Parthian heritage that both Iran and Turkmenistan must feel proud of. In the days of yore, when Mesopotamia and Indus valley were two bordering civilizations, ancient Turkmenistan was a contiguous territory not on the fringes; but on the very heartland of the Silk Route that took concrete shape as the main highway of commerce and culture in that area. A Soviet researcher T. Shirinov writes: "This was the huge continent shared by the first civilizations of the East and the basin of Amu Darya was its northern rim, where the civilization of Turan emerged."[6] Another Soviet researcher, V.M. Masson put the record straight by saying that "the emergence of early culture complexes in the Murgab delta was connected with those who came from the Oases of the ancient urban culture that was located in the sub-mountainous land near the Kopet Dag (Keleli Complex) and afterwards, with the coming of certain ethnic groups, which had migrated from north Iran (Gissar area).[7]

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5 "Iran: Born at the Crossroads and the Empire of Persia", *National Geographic*, August, 2008.

6 T. Shirinov, "Contacts between Central Asia and Indian Subcontinent in the Second Millennium BC", *India and Central Asia, Pre-Islamic Period*, Tashkent, 2000, p.11.

7 V. M. Masson, *Altyn Depe*, Leningrad, 1981, pp.130-31; Also refer to A. Asyrov, (General Editor) *Nisa: An Ancient Hearth of the World Culture Development*, Abstracts of the Conference Proceedings (5-7 December, 2007), Ashgabat, 2007.

Mongol Invasion:

As the Nisa continued to impact the region from Persia to Mongolia, the final turning point was the invasion by the Mongol hordes. From Mongolia via Russia through Central Asia and right up to India, the Mongols had in their agenda to lord over this vast and rich geo-cultural space. Since Nisa was a prosperous city centre right on the road of Mongol conquest, it was at the receiving end in men and material.[8] Nisa never recovered from this loss of men and materials. Although it started building anew its life in the $13^{th} – 15^{th}$ centuries, it could never regain the glory. The new constructions used white and blue China clay on the contours of the buildings and followed middle age architectural partners.

Destroyed over the period of centuries and ravaged by the vicissitude of time, Nisa has never failed to preserve its antique value in historic-cultural sense. The city is the physical symbol of Turkmen material culture.[9] Nisa and Merv – located in the confluence of cultures – produced scientists and scholars, writers and poets, religious pundits and political philosophers, whose contribution was outstanding and far outstretching. Invasion was no episode to arrest the spreading impact of the influential ethos of these people with intellectual orientation. The UNESCO has declared Nisa as a centre of cultural heritage and enlisted it among the famous centers of World Cultural Heritage on 23 August 2007 for its contribution to the realm of knowledge.[10]

The Mongol invasion caused an irreparable loss not only for Turkmenistan but also for a lot of other countries such as India, Pakistan, Russia, Iran, Iraq and so on – a region vexed in a cultural whole by the Parthians. The Mongols were thus a common enemy of the region since they destroyed the common cultural heritage and edifices of cultural significance including Parthian art of war.[11]

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8 Soviet historians estimate that 70,000 men were killed and many more thousands injured.

9 A cursory visit to the museum of Ali-Abu, the famous merchant, who lived in Nisa through $10^{th} – 11^{th}$ centuries, reveals many secrets of the Turkmen past. What distinguished Nisa and Merv – the present day Mary and the contiguous territory in that Velayat – was their cultural legacy that no invasion could have destroyed.

10 It is an established fact that many scholars and scientists who fled the Mongol invasion took shelter in Nisa fortress. By providing a sanctuary to the intellectuals of the epoch, Nisa rendered to the posterity a yeoman's service in preserving the Turkmen cultural and intellectual heritage forever.

11 The pictures of the Parthian epoch available in the museums depict horse riders opposing their enemy in the battlefront. The Parthian warriors were famous in two ways: for their light armored and heavily armed cavalry. Since Nisa was a fortress, it had fortified walls around it. With width of five meters, the remnants of these walls are visible today at the Nisa archaeological site located at a height of 12-13 meters.

Nisa was an ideal place to devise innovations to be applied in warfare and to peaceful cultural development. Nisa owed its prosperity to tremendous amount of skill in manufacturing, coupled with aesthetics of royal houses in a social milieu of blending and assimilation. The combination of all these attributes helped the residents of Nisa to embrace whatever was alien and blend it with the local besides geography providing Nisa an enviable locale which facilitated the flowering of a city centre at the juncture of the Silk Route to connect East with the West and North with the South.

The role of the state or urban centre with the king as its head in running the economy was recognized as a crucial element of governance. The kings, looked interested in the economic wellbeing of their estate and people and the state undertook building roads, dams, public buildings and many other facilities, collected taxes from the populace to support and run infrastructure of the kingdom. Nisa taxation system appears to be impacted by economic treaties of Kautilya of India and Confucius of China where we come across an equitable taxation system not very exorbitant but reasonable and proportionate to income. Strength of Nisa social system and state structure was its judicial system, based on *Nyaya* or justice. Periodic organization of *Nyaya Panchayats* was a regular feature. The fact that an aggrieved person can approach the highest authority of the land, the king, in his open durbar for justice was a clear sign of democratic dispensation of justice through a well organized judicial system. It consisted of judges to dispensate justice, lawyers to interpret laws, and prisons to hold guilty.

The kingdom had not only a sway over social, political and economic life, but evidently it had a rapprochement between the rulers and the ruled. The place of worship was central to dispensation of justice in as much as it was central to all social activities. Both the king and his subjects looked at the place of worship to imbibe strength for whatever they did. Much before the Church surrounded the kings in Europe to remain a part of the judicial system, the Central Asians had developed religious shrines as the pivot of their judicial life and source of legitimacy of their power.

Nisa was very strong in three other aspects: managing the environment, devising a healthcare system and developing science and technology.[12] They looked at climate change in a wider perspective and even connected the phenomenon of monsoon to the existence of arid desert climate in their region.[13] The people of ancient Nisa believed that

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12 Gaurav, "Rediscovering Asian Identity", *Zeitgeist Asia*, June 2008, pp. 10-16.

13 It is in fact true that the Central Asian deserts from Gobi and Taklamakan to Pamir and even Thar in India generated a cumulative heat in summer months that

they have to give to the environment more than take from it to ensure sustainable development. In ancient Nisa, therefore, farmers were used to a pattern of crop rotation so that enough bio-fertilizers and nutrients go back to the soil. This also avoided soil erosion and helped maintain soil nutrients intact for better crop.

Located between the land of Ayurveda and Acupuncture, the Central Asian in general and those living in Nisa in particular applied various systems of medicines, including those of Chinese and Indian. Persia's contribution to ancient system of medicines is well known. When Ibn Sina compiled his "Canon of Medicine" in the 11th century, the territory of modern Turkmenistan was within the ambit of Persian influence in terms of science and technology.[14] The scientists of Nisa prior to Ibn Sina might have been aware of the Indian contributions of *Charaka* and *Susruta*, whose books on medicine and surgery were highly valued in ancient times.

From Khorasan to Khorezm the entire space was buzzing with mathematics, astronomy, developed literature and allied sciences. The pioneering 9th century mathematician, Al-Khwarizmi (Khorezm and Khorasan are derivatives of his name) introduced Hindu numerical, including zero and popularized algorithm in algebra. The place was also prolifically famous for language of its poetry. These contributions are well recorded in world heritage. It is to many of these fundamental contributions that the modern world owe a lot in terms of genesis and growth of seminal ideas, flourishing into modern day science and technology, astronomy and astrophysics.

Conclusions:

Reviving the Silk Route in the contemporary context has a valid connotation to trace out the significance of these routes that mutually connected India and Central Asia from the days of yore. The validity is further enhanced when each country studded on this region traces its roots and culture on a wider platform of activities based on communality of cultural traits and close relations established between ancient civilizations of this area that one cannot separate black from the white. It is assumed as a single cultural geopolitical and geo-economic space from

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subsequently invited cool air from the south resulting in monsoon rains through the following months.

14 Moreover, that book of Ibn Sina remained the primary textbook of medicine in Europe up the 17th century, which taught the world that tuberculosis was a highly contagious disease, and physical illness can affect emotional wellbeing of man. A copy of the "canon of Medicine is still preserved in the National Museum of Syria at Damascus for the posterity to see Ibn Sina's contribution to medical science.

the days immemorial because it was economic activities of artisans, commercial activities of traders and intellectual pursuits of scientists that served as the cornerstone of multilateral contacts.

While validity of the proposition to treat the area as unified entity has forceful resonance, what vivisects the region is a narrow approach to the understanding of civilizational heritage that linked peoples in their activities. Ethnic identity, religious dichotomy, territorial and boundary disputes and inter and intra-state bickering based on fissiparous principles take away the essence of that common heritage and pit one against the other along the same Silk Road that once united us. Prior to Islam, Buddhism as a religion had a forceful unifying impact on the whole region from Lumbini and Taxila to Bamiyan to Nisa to Kalmikia to Mongolia, China and beyond. Moreover, from horse riding to carpet weaving, from burial rituals to marriage ceremonies, there are too much common and similar evidence to be collectively ignored. In the growing context of a global village, when integration defies the logic of segregation, it is important that a small township like Nisa on the outskirt of Ashgabat could revive the memory of the past and inspire the youngsters to think anew about the common legacy of our heritage.[15]

[15] Refer *India and Central Asia: Pre-Islamic Period.*

THE GOLDEN AGE OF GENOA'S EASTWARDS TRADE (13^{TH} – 15^{TH} CENTURIES)

Valeria Fiorani Piacentini*

Abstract:
It is remarkable how little attention has been given to a period of great significance in the evolution of Eastern–Western relationships, and their individual / intertwining history and culture. During the 12^{th} century new developments took place, which deeply affected Europe and Central Asia, influencing – without changing the traditional basic structures – the attitude of their societies. On the Eastern Quadrant we witness the rise of new potentates and dominions, and the reorganisation of the regional political asset under new balances of power and institutional forces. On the Western Quadrant, new forces came to the fore: the Italian City-States. Gradually, a stronger, well-organised asset sprang up from the ruins of the past. But its vitality stemmed from a new synthesis between different values and concepts which swept through the Mediterranean Sea, heralding the end of Byzantium and its system, and introducing a new world order with its cosmopolitan knowledge and learning and its closely intertwining cultural and mercantile interests. Despite the competition from Venice, whose policy aimed at controlling the eastern waters of the Mediterranean Sea and achieving the monopoly of Euro-Asian trade by diverting its flow through the Red Sea, Genoa had succeeded in putting into practice a pragmatic policy, which allowed the republic to build up the most extensive and impressive political-institutional and financial-commercial edifice of the time. A skilled nautical experience and technology had brought a series of innovations both in sailing and warfare that soon significantly modified the traditional picture of maritime warfare developing combat methods that would give Genoa unprecedented superiority at sea and on the seas. It was in this span of time that an important trade-route to/from the Black Sea grew up, and significant commercial relations were opened up by the peoples settled in the Central Asian spaces with Genoese quarters (a sort of little "city-states") and their advanced bases of the Black Sea.

Keywords:
Genoa, Constantinople, Cyprus, Europe, Central Asia, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Euro-Asian trade.

Introduction:

The State Archives of Genoa[1] give a clear perception that, in the latter half of the 13^{th} century, direct trade between Genoese bases and the East

* **Chairperson, History and Institutions of the Muslim World, Faculty of Political Science, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy.**

[1] The documents I am dealing with are in the State Archives of Genoa, Milan - Sforza Fund, Venice and Rome (Italy). The missives refer to major and minor episodes. They are of notable relevance. ASMi - FS / Fondo Ducale Sforzesco, *Carteggio"Potenze Estere"*; ASVe: *Senato*, *Deliberazioni*, *Secreti*; *Senato Mar*; *Consiglio dei Dieci* et alia; ASGe: "*Notai Antichi"* (*Acta Notoria et Rogationes*) ; *Liber Gazarie* et alia ; Biblioteca Marciana, Civico Museo Correr. We had access to this correspondence and charts through the kindness of Dr. A. Corongiu, Dr. B.

was well established and was taking place on a regular base. Setting off from Genoa, Genoese galleys (*galerae*) sailed to Rhodes, Cyprus, Constantinople. Thence, imposing and well equipped ships sailed eastwards coasting the southern shores of the Black Sea to Caffa and Tana – Genoese commercial eastward outposts in the Crimean Peninsula. Caravans, frequented overland routes, crossed the southern valleys and mountains of the Taurus, cut to the north through the vastness of the steppes pushing eastwards to the rich markets of Central Asia, or crossed the steep ranges rimming to the south the Black See, and from Trebizond and Van set up for Persia. Tabrīz was the principal market of north-west Persia by reason of its strategic position along the main north-south / west-east routes from and to the Black Sea.

The Great Seljuqs' Interlude:

In the 11th and 12th centuries, the Caspian provinces had often served as a corridor for the passage of nomads from Central Asia.[2] Infiltrations from Khwārizm and Transoxiana must have began in the 9th century with the disruption of the Sāmānid power, when a powerful force, that of the Qarakhānids, streamed northwards all along Iranian territories. The fall of Gaznavids opened the way to the Seljuqs (al-'Utbī). The great cities of Khurāsān surrendered to the Seljuq brothers, Tughril Beg and Chaghrī Beg Dā'ūd, in 1037 (Merv), 1038-1039 (Herat and Nishāpūr)[3]. The lands farther west were now laid open to Seljuq attacks. On taking over

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Baldi, Dr. M. Vignola, and Prof. Dr. M. Milanesi, who brought to our attention some significant documents and marine charts. To them goes our deep gratitude for their helpfulness here. These relevant sources are under publication within the framework of a specific project sponsored by the Centre of Research on the Southern System and the Wider Mediterranean, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milano, Italy.

2 There, the infiltration of Turkish elements had begun much earlier. According to 8th – 11th Arab historians and geographers, in the 7th-8th centuries the region was already a battlefield, where the Iranian rulers were fighting for their survival against the Arab invaders from the south-west, and Turkish groups from the north-east, the Chinese keeping a watchful eye on the events taking place in the Central Asia.

3 It was around 1025 that the first Türkmen bands are mentioned as entering Khurāsān, raiding Afghanistan, and laying waste to both countries as far as Guzgān, Tukharistān and Sistān, harassing caravan trade and depredating those rich regions (pastures, cultivated fields and cities). It lasted around seven years. The Ghaznavids alternated punitive costly expeditions with attempts at conciliation and new *pacta* with the Seljuq leaders; See V. Fiorani Piacentini, "Dandānqān (AD 1040): the Pitched Battle Which Opened the Iranian Soil to the Turkic Dominion: Negotiations and Agreements, new Balances of Power", in Proceedings of the Second International Congress on Turkic Civilization, Bishkek, October 4-6, 2004, *'Role and Place of Turkic Civilization among the World Civilizations'*, Bishkek 2005, pp. 189-224.

Khurasan, the Seljuq leaders became rulers and acted as territorial sovereigns, they were no longer chiefs of nomadic bands. The intercourses they had had with settled peoples, traders, city-rulers had taught them how to negotiate and gained knowledge of the administrative traditions, practised in settled and urban states. It implied to change model of life, acquiring political responsibilities on a wider range and different scale.[4]

Chaghrī Beg's responsibilities in the East must not be underestimated. His campaigns were harsh and hard. But he succeeded in putting up effective resistance to the pressure of the Qarākhānids (who would be definitely humbled by Malik Shāh - 455/1063-465/1072) and the Qipchaqs, turning then towards the Ghaznavids, his main concern, and their renewed westward aspirations in Sistān and Khwārizm. The Ghaznavids' ambition was countered. Between ups and downs, according to Ibn al-Athīr, Jūzjānī and the *Tārīkh-i Sistān*, Seljuq suzerainty was at last firmly established in the second half of the 11th century. The local administration of the Sistān province remained in the hands of the Saffārid Abu al-Fadl, who stood faithful to his Seljuq masters until his death in 1073, when his sons took over.

After the surrender of the "Great Cities" of Khurāsān, this province had been taken over by the combined forces of Tughril and Chaghrī (1042), who then turned to Khwārizm, defeated Malik Shāh and drove him from this province. Malik Shāh fled to Kirmān and Makrān (1040s), but he was unable to return to his former territories in the Oxus delta because they had been occupied by the Qīpčaqs.[5] The region was placed under Seljuq governorship.

Thus, in the decade between 1050 and 1060, the whole upper Oxus valley was under Seljuq control. In the course of these campaigns, the

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4 The sultans (Tughril, Alp-Arslan and Malik Shāh) adapted themselves (to some extent) to the Islamic-Iranian "monarchical" tradition, which implied: (a) to increasingly rely on the Iranian bureaucracy and their officials, (b) to adapt themselves to the settled model of life (irrigation systems and agriculture based on irrigation systems, which meant good relationships with the landed aristocracy), (c) to come to terms with the merchant-families and provide security along the main caravan routes leading to "markets" and maritime outlets. It was a difficult process, which witnessed more than one rebellion even from the "old" members of the family. With regard to the Türkmen bands, though they could enjoy a better status than that enjoyed when they raided in the steppes, though now nominally Muslims, nevertheless their attitude was incompatible with any settled model of life and government, attracted westwards and southwards by greed and desire/prospects of plunder.

5 It would seem that Malik Shāh was captured in Makrān by Er-Tash, who, in the meantime, had been securing Sistān for the Seljuqs; Malik Shāh was handed over to Chaghrī Beg, who put him to death.

"Amīr of the Qīpčaqs" submitted to Chaghrī Beg, converted to Islam and married into Chaghrī's family.[6] To the East, the Ghaznavid empire – despite internal feuds and counterattacks – at last concluded a formal peace-treaty with Chaghrī Beg and Ibrahīm ibn Mas'ūd's long reign marked a period of prosperity and consolidation for the Ghaznavid empire, and the frontier with the Seljuqs remained essentially stable during his life.[7] By that time, Seljuqs' dominions in Central Asia had reached their "natural limes".

The vastness of these territories were united under the rule of one energetic character and his "governors", rapidly evolving into a hierarchically organised model of statehood, supported by an Iranian bureaucracy, a "multinational" army under Turkish slave commanders and tribal local contingents, a powerful Iranian mercantile class and landed owners with their "villages".

Chaghrī's rule marked the stabilisation of Central Asia and the frontiers with the Turks of the steppes and neighbouring empires. For the Great Seljuqs, trade with Central Asia and the Qīpčaq steppe remained a central goal to be pursued and steadily defended. And there is no doubt that this objective was facilitated by the long, exhausting campaigns carried out by Tughril and Chaghrī Beg and the ensuing Seljuq firm rule and order, which alternated the use of force (when needed) with understandings and matrimonial alliances.

The final blow to Seljuq power would come in the second half of the 12th century from the Khwārizm-Shāhs, a new and aggressive power that arose in the north-eastern Iranian territories. A struggle with the Ghūrids had prevented the Khwārizmians from spilling into Khurāsān. However, after Sanjār's death, they became virtually independent, subject only to the Qara-Khitai's suserainty. It was only in the last years of the 12th century that the last Seljuq sultan was vanquished, and the Khwārizm-Shāhs could advance. But the distant pressure of the Mongols was already in the air, being well perceived and felt not only all along the borders of Transoxiana and Khwārizm.

This was the panorama, as unanimously recorded by written sources, which would be destined to play a central role also on the

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6 The main sources are still Ibn Funduq, Ibn al-Athīr and Mīrkhwānd. Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, Ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols., Leiden 1851-1876, specie Vols. 9 and 10; Ibn Funduq, *Tārīkh-i Bayhaq*, Ed. A. Bahmāniyār, Tehrān 1317 A.Hg. / 1938; Mīrkhwānd, *Rawdat al-Safā'*, Ed. Ridā Qulī Khān, 6 vols., Tehrān 1270-1274 / 1853-1856.

7 Husaynī, Ibn al-Athīr, Jūzjānī. Husaynī, Sadr al-Dīn 'Alī, *Akhbār al-Dawlah al-Saljūqiyyah*, Ed. Muhammad Iqbāl, Lahore 1933, pp. 59-61, 63 et infra; Jūzjānī, *Tabaqat-i Nāsirī*, Ed. 'Abd al-Hayy Habībī, 2 vols. Kabul 1342-1343/1963-1964, Vol. 1.

opening up of the rich markets of the region to Genoese enterprising initiative. The geo-morphological configuration of the Iranian plateau never seriously countered or hindered the passage of armies and other peoples from the steppes. The invaders were mostly nomadic/semi-nomadic communities/groups, linked to a pastoralist economy, whose peoples, flocks and herds had to live according regular cycles summer/winter from winter grounds to summer pastures, and vice versa. Thus, the terrain of Iran seemed quite well suited to their traditional style of life, the oases and rich pastures providing excellent camping for their armies and grazing grounds for their flocks. But the coastal lands of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea were unfamiliar to these bands and not suitable for any permanent settlement: the damp and malarial climate of the Caspian region, its dense vegetation and forests are mentioned by more than one Muslim geographer as "the graveyard of the people from Khurāsān".[8]

Thus, when Genoese merchants arrived to the Black Sea, they could soon sense the danger. To trip across the Caspian Sea was generally stormy and the boats unsuited. Dysentery and plague were commonplace; robbers and marauders were always in a stronger position. Hampered by these risks, they considered overland routes far more secure. Moreover, the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 had also afforded the Sultans of Rum an opportunity to re-establish their power. Antalya and Sinope were seized, and the port of Alanya (or 'Alā'iyya, thus called after Sultan 'Alā' al-Dīn Kay-Qubādh I) was constructed. Because of this well established control of the coasts, by the start of the 13th century Genoa firmly oriented its policy to north-eastern transit-routes either coasting the Black Sea or crossing the Anatolian plateau to Tabrīz, and thence pushing eastwards through the Khurāsān.

Despite the competition from Venice, whose policy aimed at controlling the eastern waters of the Mediterranean Sea and achieving the monopoly of Euro-Asian trade by diverting its flow through the Red Sea, Genoa had succeeded in putting into practice a pragmatic policy, which allowed the republic to build up the most extensive and impressive political-institutional and financial-commercial edifice of the time. A skilled nautical experience and technology had brought a series of innovations both in sailing and warfare, which soon significantly

[8] Tha'ālibī, *Latā'if al-Ma'ārif*, p. 113. See also the *Hudūd al-'Ālam* by Anonymous writer, Ed. V. Minorsky and W.W. Barthold, E.G.W. Gibb Memorial Series, Oxford University Press, Luzac and Co. publs., London, 1937, specie pp. 94-101, 131-137; Al-Muqaddasī, *Ahsan al-Taqāsīm fī Ma'rīfat al-Aqālīm*, Ed. M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, Leiden, 1906, pp. 353-373 et infra. The latter, in particular, provides valuable information.

modified the traditional picture of maritime warfare developing combat methods that would give Genoa unprecedented superiority on the seas.

During this period an important trade-route to/from the Black Sea grew up, and significant commercial relations were opened up by the Turkic people settled in the Central Asian spaces with Genoese quarters (a sort of little "city-states") and their advanced bases of the Black Sea. There, in these quarters, the Genoese behaved as independent condottieri and shrewd merchants retaining freedom of action, sovereigns on distant provinces crucial to the state of affairs of their motherland, with which they maintained regular contact. They soon learned to negotiate with the rulers of other settled states, with tribal elements and still unsettled, nomadic/semi-nomadic princes. They gained knowledge of the administrative, traditional techniques practised in those remote lands. They acquired a new ability and political responsibility, adapting themselves in some measure to the local practices and to the Iranian-Islamic settled models of sovereignty, authority and power still very strong in some Central Asian regions. Thence, with their naval superiority and political strength secured, they could push eastwards through the lands of the steppes where these merge into the "lands of the Tatars" and China, or southwards to Tabrīz. From Tabrīz, they could push to the very heart of the Iranian plateau (Lār and the Lāristān up to Harmuz as far south as the Gulf itself), or to the east, as far as Nīshāpur, Herat, Merv, Bukhārā and Samarqand – the "pearls" of the Silk Route.[9]

By the start of the 13th century, Ibn al-Athīr records that the sense of security and prevailing justice at the time were such that people dared openly to display their wealth.[10] By the same time, the Genoese had established a solid trade network.

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9 M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise(XII – debut du XV siècle)*, 2 vols., Paris 1980; *Idem*, *Génois et Pisans en Orient (fin du XIII-debut du XIV siècle)*, in "Genova, Pisa e il Mediterraneo tra Due e Trecento. Per il VII centenario della battaglia della Meloria", pp. 179-211. See also G. Costamagna, *Cartolari notarili genovesi (1-149)*, *Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato*, Vols. 1-2, Roma, 1961 (this inventory has allowed the compilation of a list of Genoese notaries who wrote their acts outside Genoa, in the "eastern colonies", such as Famagosta, Soldaia di Crimea, Savasto, Laiazzo d'Armenia, Pera, Tiro, Tarso). Cfr. also A. L. Lewis, *Nomads and Crusaders*, specie pp. 170 ff. Toqta Khān (1291-1312) was a ruler of the Golden Horde, successor to Töle-Buqa (1287-1291). Before his accession, he had launched two large-scale raids across the Caucasus against the Īl-Khānids' Iranian territories: cfr. in this respect Barhebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abû'l Faraj*, 2. vols., tr. and Ed. E. A. W. Budge, London, 1932.

10 Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, Ed. C. J. Törnberg, 13 vols., Leiden 1851-1876, vol. X, pp. 30 et infra.

The Mongol Period; Not for Trafficking Alone:

The 14th century was also a period of great expansion of knowledge in artistic, scientific, and geographical spheres. Nature had placed human beings upon a stage to be actors, not mere spectators, where they could learn to know and contact new worlds, where Mongols and Turks were not as "barbarous" as travellers and historians had formerly depicted them. Then, let us complement the records from the National Archive of Genoa with other sources (such as chronicles in Arabic and in Persian, commercial codes of the time, geography, numismatics, etc.), and we have a vivid, realistic fresco of the extent of Genoa's cultural interactions and economic and commercial business.

Special mention deserves Rashīd al-Dīn Fadl Allāh of Hamadān – eminent historian, rich merchant and celebrated politician of the 13th century and his "Correspondence" (the *Mukātabāt-i Rashīdī*). We get vivid glimpses of Tabrīz, its lifestyle, its role as one of the main junction-cities of the time, its grandeur characterised by monumental architecture, private and public buildings such as imposing religious and ceremonial edifices, a city provided with civic amenities as baths, gardens, orchards and market-places, centre of arts and culture, and, above all, its bazaar always replenished with all sorts of merchandise from the East and the West, it's beautiful storehouses and caravanserais, and the lucrative traffics heading there. Rashīd al-Dīn revealed great talent and won respect as administrator who built his own quarters, in Tabrīz and Hamādān, (*Rub'-i Rashīdī*) with houses and palaces, gardens and baths, libraries, hospitals, religious bodies and institutions, caravanserais, storehouses, mills, bazaars, shops and workshops where one could meet craftsmen, artisans, men of learning, excellent calligraphers from every town and country in the world.[11] He was also a great patron of arts, letters and sciences. Retaining his office until Abū Sa'īd's reign (1316-1335), his commitment did not, however, save him from court intrigues, acrimonious disputes, suspicion and jealousy. Discredited by his enemies, he was accused of having poisoned the Īl-Khān's father, Öljeytü, and alleged to have personally administered the poison. On July 17th, 1318, being then over seventy years of age, he was put to death.

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[11] Rashīd al-Dīn, Fadl Allāh of Hamādān, *Mukātabāt-i Rashīdī*, Ed. Muhammad Shafi', Lahore, 1947, specie letter n. 51. In a letter to his son Sa'ad al-Dīn, governor of Qinnasrīn, he describes the completion of the *Rub'-i Rashīdī* at Tabrīz, and the magnificence of the city with its 24 caravanserais, 1,500 shops and 30,000 houses, with its gardens, baths, stores, workshops and mint, its workmen and artisans brought there from every town and country, its 6,000-7,000 students, its 50 physicians from India, China, Egypt and Syria, each of whom was bound to give instructions to ten pupils, the hospital with its oculists, surgeons and bone-setters, to each of whom were assigned as pupils five of the writer's servants.

But Tabrīz was also one of the main Genoese quarters and route-junctions to the East. The first Genoese merchants had settled in Tabrīz in 1280, -an active community that would reach the apex of its prosperity at the start of the 14th century. Therefore, no wonder that we have a vivid picture of this bazaar in the *Cartolari notarili genovesi*, which will complement the "international" image given by Rashīd al-Dīn.[12]

Rashīd al-Dīn invested his enormous fortune in trading enterprises and journeys, to learn, to improve his scientific knowledge and his capacity as administrator and statesman, in his writings he records interviews with the most famous scientists of his times. During an interview with the famous scientist Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzī in the Vān area, during the late summer 1290, the latter showed him a map of the Mediterranean coast. He also refers about embassies and envoys despatched to European rulers (Pope Honorius IV[13], Pope Nicholas IV, Edward I of England, Philippe le Bel of France).[14]

His numerous works, written in a comparatively simple style, deserve special attention for the extensive field of interests they cover, and the originality and conception of history. Rashīd al-Dīn, himself a bureaucrat from the middle class and firm supporter of the centralised policies of the Īl-Khāns, had at his disposal all the state archives and the services of those who were most learned in history. In his great chronicle, the *Jāmi'al-Tawārīkh* ("Compendium of Histories"), he provides us with a wealth of information on personalities, facts and events of the Mongols' era, drawing on Chinese sources (written and oral), Turkish accounts, Persian, Mongol, Arabian and European materials, lingering on the social and economic matters of the Mongol rulers, their cosmopolitan attitudes, their connections with such differing cultures as those of Christian Europe on the one hand, and Turkic

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12 See for example G. Costamagna, *Cartolari notarili genovesi 1-149*, in "Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato", Vol. 1.2, Roma, 1961, and V. Polonio, *Notai genovesi in oltremare. Atti rogati a Cipro da Lamberto di Sambuceto (2 luglio 1300 – 3 agosto 1301)*, Genova, 1982, pp. 479-480, "cloths of *tela Alemanna* to be traded in Tabrīz (*Taurisium*)".

13 A Latin version of the letter sent by the Īl-Khān Arghun to Pope Honorius IV in 1285 is preserved in the Vatican Archives. Cfr. A. Mostaert and F.W. Cleaves, Trois documents Mongols des Archives secretes vaticanes, in "*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*", Vol. XVII, 1954, pp.3-4. On this issue there is an extensive literature. I. de Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys to the Great Khans*, London, 1971; D. Bigalli, *I Tartari e l'Apocalisse. Ricerche sull'escatologia in Adamo Marsh e Ruggero Bacone*, Firenze, 1971; J. Richard, *La Papauté et les Missions d'Orient au Moyen Age (XIIIe-XVe siècles)*, École Française de Rome, Paris – Torino 1977; Cl. Cahen, *Orient et Occident au temps des Croisades*, Aubier, Paris, 1983.

14 A. Mostaert and F. W. Cleaves, *Les Lettres de 1289 et 1305 des ilkhan Aryun and Öljeytü à Philippe le Bel*, Cambridge – Mass, 1962, pp. 56-57.

peoples living in the Central Asian vastness, China, India and the Far East on the other.[15]

No less remarkable are other works by Rashīd al-Dīn, amongst which particular attention should be given to a collection of letters, the above mentioned *Mukātabāt-i Rashīdī*, 53 dispatches and letters mostly on political and financial matters, addressed to his sons and others who held various offices under the Mongol government.[16] These letters – whose authenticity has been confirmed by scholars – are of extraordinary interest not only on account of the light they cast on the character and manifold activities of this personality and the range of his activities, but for the world they depict and illustrate, with its mobility, curiosity, knowledge and learning: a frantic, cosmopolitan, globalised world. They are a real mine of information, which, once again, perfectly matches and complements Genoese archival records on this period.

Despite warfare, intrigues and internal struggles for power, the Īl-Khānid period was a prosperous one, which witnessed a reconciliatory process between the Mongol-Turkish ruling class and the Persian subjects. It also witnessed European emissaries and ambassadors, responsible for relations with the Turkish and Turkish-Mongol world and its culture. The Īl-Khānid capitals of Tabrīz and Marāgheh became great centres of learning, with the natural sciences and historical studies particularly favoured, within a fresh intellectual, commercial and artistic atmosphere.

The Italian City-States were the first European potentates to engage directly in this trade, and to go to the roots of these civilisations and to deal with their peoples and rulers. During the decades of the "Mongol period", there was considerable hostility and rivalry between Genoa, Venice and the Aragonese, which often took the form of naval engagements. But none of them was able to eliminate the others from any particular trading area. Conversely, by the 14th century a curious pattern developed. Within this pattern, Genoa was predominant in trading goods, like "mastic" (*luban*), silks, precious stones, horses, furs, which the republic was in use to sell to all Europe. Genoa's "Notarii" were also renowned for their competence and skill, so that even the Arabs were in the habit to request their services.[17] Undoubtedly, the Īl-

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15 Rashīd al-Dīn, Fadl Allāh of Hamādān,, *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*, Ed. A A. Alizade, Baku, 1957.

16 Rashīd al-Dīn, Fadl Allāh of Hamādān, *Mukātabāt-i Rashīdī*; Cfr. also E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, 4 vols., Vol. III, Cambridge, 1956, pp. 80-86.

17 These documents even tell us of Arabian presence in Caffa through the mention of a certain "Assanus Sirianus burgensis Caffe" who settled there and possibly owned a house. In particular, see Iacobo de Guisulfo from Camal Tacmagi, June 14th, 1289, "Notai Antichi" 124/ II, c.75r-v.

Khānid period marks a magic moment for Genoa. Pera, Caffa and Tana along the Black Sea were amongst its main colonies, as many little "Genoas" in their architectural and institutional organisation. Wealthy Genoese communities were also settled and prospered at Sinope and Trebizond. By that time, Tabrīz hosted a "Genoese Quarter", a major market of its time and a central route-junction of this prosperous trade.

Details of the commercial structure of Trebizond (Trabzon - *Trapezundae*) and Tabrīz (*Taurisium*) as the main starting points of Genoese eastwards expeditions across Iranian and Turkic controlled territories go back to the "Treaty of the Ninfeo" (1261) signed between Genoa and the Emperor of Byzantium, Michael III Palaeologus.[18]

The *Regesta* and the *Acta Notoria* (*Notai Antichi – Notai Ignoti*) studied by Dr. Marco Vignola provide a wealth of information where goods are concerned and capitals are moved (payments, remittances, quantities of pure silver sent eastward, etc.).[19] In the *Acta Notoria et Rogationes* we can also find a long list of *notarii*, well known and reputed for their talent, who acted in eastern bases: Lambertus de Sambuceto, Dominicus de Oddonis de Quarto, Donatus de Clavaro, Laurencius Calvi, Iohannes scriba, Fredericus de Platealonga, Bartolomeo de Fornari, Corrado di Castello, Petrus de Bargono, Manuel Locus, Johannes de Rocha, Benvenutus de Bracellis and many other. This documentary evidence gives further knowledge of the strong, articulated mercantile contacts that Genoa held with the Eastern world through Damascus, Aleppo and Alexandria of Egypt (15th century AD), and the durable mercantile contacts between Genoese colonies along the Black Sea region and Tabrīz.

The *Liber Gazarie* – a register of rules and regulations issued by the *Officium Gazarie* (which office, based in Genoa, supervised any commercial activity) – is the main source in this respect. Obviously, the markets where such goods could be found, and bought, are kept secret. Nevertheless, these registers give a precise picture and excellent

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[18] Details of the commercial structure of Trebizond (*Trapezundae*) and Tabrīz (*Taurisium*) can be found in the pages of the *Liber Gazarie*, which contains a list of regulations imposed on Genoese merchants trading in that region: the golden age of Genoa eastwards trade. See also the archival records at the State Archive of Genoa, in particular the folders "Notai Antichi".

[19] With regard to this subject, of special relevance are the *Acta Notoria* drawn up by the notary Lamberto di Sambuceto, and the *Collana Notai Liguri dei secoli XII-XV*, still preserved in the National Archive of Genoa: NA 124/II, cc. 70 r-v, 75 r-v, 86 r, 88 r, 125 v; NA 125, c. CCXXI r-v.; *Antico Comune* – sec. XI-1528; *Galearum marinariorum rationes*; *Notai Antichi; Liber Gazarie*; *Banco di San Giorgio*; the private collection of manuscripts and documents referring to Genoa's financial affairs and business: *Documents of the Maona of Chio*; etc.

information on the expansion of Genoese mercantile economy. At the same time, they become precious indicators of the wide range of affairs of Genoese merchants, their main markets, intermediaries and sources. Within this general panorama, the Eastern world and Central Asian markets appear as Genoa's main commercial partners.

Trebizond and Tabrīz stand out as two of the most relevant intermediaries of the time and prospered as great trade centres and main route-junctions throughout most of this period. Byzantium continued to flourish as the centre par excellence (the "metropolis") of Hellenism and Christendom, enjoying a vigorous intellectual life; bulky administrative structure, it was front line and "buffer" between East and West, crucial trade centre and communication crossroads. Genoa had full control over markets of Trebizond and Tabrīz, and the main caravan route connecting them was "the outpost" of Genoa towards Central Asia, the Gulf and all Genoese intercourses with the Iranian/Arabian world and the lands of the Gulf on the one hand, and with the Turko-Mongol courts and their dominions on the other.

Despite the breakdown of the Īl-Khānid empire (second half of the 14th century) and new waves of invasions from the north-eastern steppes, which laid waste in the region, the Genoese Government reacted and – by negotiations and signing truces – maintained and consolidated its positions. Giorgio Stella does not fail to report about Al-Ashraf's Ambassadors to Genoa (Giorgio Stella's *Annales*). At Genoa, the Genoese merchants elected a *Consul* as their representative to the Eastern "colonies", supported by a Council of 24 (sometimes 25) Genoese personalities. At Tabrīz, this cluster of far-travelling merchants had a quarter of their own, with a local Council of at least 12 members, one notary, houses, storehouses, and caravans always ready to start their way towards the rich markets attended by these businessmen.[20]

Although the markets were kept secret, the variety of goods and craft-products mentioned in the *Acta Notoria* reflect a network of inter-regional trade and/or exchange well established between the Genoese communities and regional markets. In this respect, Genoese sources well match and integrate Oriental sources in Persian and Arabic, providing precious side-views on Central Asia and its world and culture.

This reality is wonderfully mirrored in contemporary chronicles, which linger at length on internal struggles and fierce rivalries between

[20] The most precious source shedding some light on Genoese presence in Tabrīz is the so-called "Liber Gazarie", which contains information related to the regulations imposed on any Genoese merchant who settled in Trebizond and Tabrīz. This document is preserved in the State Archive of Genoa ("Manoscritti Membranacei", III, cc. 31 r – 32 r).

various groups and family members, the growing pressures of new invaders and incursions from nomadic peoples, the continual attacks along the borders with the steppes, the various waves of conquest sweeping the region up to the emerging power of the Tīmūrids. Despite internal feuds, banditry, robbery and a hostile environment – the image of Tabrīz as a flourishing city, and of Trebizond and the other Genoese advanced bases along the Black Sea as prosperous colonies and regional markets, show a fully developed and urbanised society, which was based on agriculture and trade under the military umbrella of Turkish armies.

Once again, contemporary literary sources in Persian and Arabic and Genoese archival records unanimously mirror a lively picture of the busy world of the time. Eastwards, the lands of the Turks stretch. There, horses, silks, furs, precious semi/precious stones, "girfalchi", "giovinetti" and "giovinette", ornamental small objects (like fibulae, bracelets, cameos, mirrors, little chests for jewels …) could be found and bought. They are minutely listed in the *Acta Notoria*, Arab geography does not fail to register these items as the main products of the "peoples" of the steppes. Only a few decades later, the same are recorded in the *Sforza Fund* (Milan, State Archives), as much wanted by the local court.

The Tīmūrid Upheaval:

The Tīmūrid upheaval did not spare the Black Sea and Tabrīz, too for which contemporary sources are confusing and often appear to be contradictory. Apart from court historiography – I refer in particular to the two "Book of the Victory" or *Zafar-nāmah*, respectively the chronicles of Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī and Nizām al-Dīn Shamī – interesting information may be gleaned from 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī (15th century), Hāfiz-i Abrū, Mīr Khwānd and the *Fārs-nāmah-i Nāsirī*.[21] However, in certain respects, the greatest historical

[21] Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Zafar-nāmah*, Ed. Muhammad 'Abbasī, 2 vols., Tehrān 1336 AH sh./1958-1959 AD; Nizām al-Dīn Shāmī, *Zafar-nāmah* , Ed. Felix Tauer, Prague 1937; Hāfiz-i Abrū, Shihāb al-Dīn, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*, Ed. Khān Bābā Bayānī, 2nd Ed. Tehrān, 1971 (of this author's life not much has been recorded. Born in Herat, he was educated in Hamadān. His proper name is generally assumed to have been *Khājji* Nūr al-Dīn Lutfullāh. Tīmūr showed him marked favour; after Tīmūr's death, Hāfiz-i Abrū attached himself to the court of his son and successor, Shāh-rukh, and his grandson, Prince Bāysunqur, for whom he wrote his great history, concluded in 829 or 830 AG / 1426 or 1427 AD. Hāfiz-i Abrū accompanied Tīmūr in several of his campaigns and was with him at the taking of Aleppo and Damascus. Beside his history, Hāfiz-i Abrū also compiled a great geographical work. The author's style is simple and direct, very detailed is the part dealing with events of that period. Free use of his work has been made by the younger contemporary, 'Abd al-Razzāq of Samarqand). Mīr Khwānd, Muhammad Ibn Khwāndshāh Ibn Mahmūd (m. 1498), *Rawdat al-Safā' fī Sīrat al-Auliyā wa al-*

contributions with specific regard to our subject are still provided by Nīmdihī, Ja'farī and Natanzī.[22] At this point, one precious European work also comes to our aid, the "Travel-journal" of the Spanish Ambassador to Tīmūr, Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo (referring to the years 1403-1406). The latter presents interesting pictures of the world and life of the time, providing a faithful description of the Tīmūrid administration, and invaluable details regarding the evolution and development of the institutional structure of the Tīmūrid empire.[23] One last but no less precious source is the famous *Shāh-nāmah* – a work in prose and verse – composed by one of the most glorious and unusual princes of Harmuz, Fakr al-Dīn Tūrānshāh II, patron of the arts and poet himself, who reigned approximately from the 1436 to the 1470-1471. Although his original version is sadly lost to us, we know the contents thanks to Pedro Teixeira and his *Relaciones.*[24]

Mulūk wa al-Khulafā', lithografed Ed. 10 vols., Tehran 1960 (of Mīr Khwānd's life very little is recorded. His father was a native of Bukhārā, who migrated to Balkh. Mīr Khwānd spent most of his life at Herat under the protection and patronage of the *mecenate* of the moment, Mīr 'Alī Shīr Navā'ī. His monumental history is divided in seven books, of which the fifth covers the Mongols and the Tartars down to Tīmūr, and only the sixth refers to Tīmūr and his successors (873/1468-9), whilst the seventh – continued by another hand – deals with a much later period. Beyond the florid and verbose style, the three last books, since they deal with author's period, are of historical worth and authority); Samarqandī, Kamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Razzāq, *Matla'u al-Sa'dayn*; *Khājji* Mīrzā Hasan, *Fārs-nāmah-i Nāsirī*, lithografed Ed., Tehrān 1313 / 1895-6. Cfr. Also, "The Timurid and Safavid Periods", *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol. VI; P. Jackson and L. Lockhart Eds., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – London – New York - New Rochelle – Melbourne – Sidney, 1986, specie H.R. Roemer, *Timur in Iran* vi, pp. 42-97.

22 Natanzī, Mu'īn al-Dīn, *Muntakhabāt al-Tawārīkh-i Mu'īnī*, partial Ed. J. Aubin, *Extraits du Muntakhab al-Tawārīkh-i Mu'īnī*, Tehrān 1957; Jafarī, Ja'far Ibn Muhammad Husaynī, *Tārīkh-i Ja'farī*, Ed. V.V. Barthold from a Leningrad ms., in "Zapiski Inst. Vost. Akad. Nauk S.S.S.R"., 5 (1935), pp. 5-42 – see also E. Hinz Ed., *Harmuz*, in "Quellenstudien zur Geschichte der Timuriden" – "Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft", 90, pp. 373 on*;* Nīmdihī, 'Abd al-Karīm, *Tabaqat-i Mahmūdshāhiyyah*, Ed. e comm. J. Aubin, in « Revue des Etudes Islamiques », 34 (1966).

23 Ruy Gozales de Clavijo, *Embajada al Gran Tamorlan*. Few notices of this embassy occur in the Persian historians, a brief mention is made in Sharaf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī's *Zafar-nāmah*, pp. 598, 633.

24 Pedro Teixeira, *Relaciones de Pedro Teixeira d'el origen, descendencia y succession de los Reyes de Persia, y de Harmuz, y de un viage hecho por el mismo autor desde la India oriental hasta Italia por tierra*, Hakluyt Society Publ., London 1902, repr. and En. tr. W. Sinclair and D. Ferguson, *The Travels of Pedro Teixeira, with the "Kings of Harmuz" and extracts from his "Kings of Persia*", Hakluyt Society Publ., 2nd series, n.9. Teixeira's book was first published at Antwerp in 1610. In the Sinclair-Ferguson edition we have also a second summary of a "Shāh-nāmah" by Tūrānshāh, which is probably the work of Gaspar da Cruz, a Dominican

Scholars today unanimously agree that the conquering campaigns of Tīmūr were, in a certain sense, different from a merely disorganised series of invasions followed by pillage, horrifying massacres and devastation of entire countries (they were sadly known for the pyramids of severed heads which Tīmūr raised and left in his wake as a fearsome sign of his power).[25] Undoubtedly, they marked a halt, involution and ruin for more than one country (including Mesopotamia and Syria). Once flourishing cities were reduced to rubble, their populations' decimated and traditional activity in tatters (Baghdad, Aleppo, Damascus…). Routes once frequented by caravans and travellers were closed for ever, the caravanserais destroyed, wells and cisterns dried up. However, apart from these undeniable atrocities, historians today see Tamerlane's action as forming a precise intent which went against neither politics nor economics: that of re-drawing the geopolitical map of his time on the basis of "his" reign, the very heart of "his" empire: Inner Asia, with its marvellous capital cities Bukhārā, Samarqand and Herat. Inner Asia had never known such a fame, such a glory and prosperity, such literary and artistic splendour, scientific vitality or economic wealth and power.

In this light, the systematic destruction of those cities which could threaten or compete with the Central Asian jewels may be explained to a certain extent, as may the more or less forced deportation of entire populations, of artists, craftsmen, scientists and writers, and the systematic closure of old transit routes which could have diverted mercantile traffic from Tīmūrid Inner Asia. Not to mention the devastation of the caravanserais and the activation of new "imperial" routes, this converged on the new political and economic centre of the empire. In this context, there is also an explanation for the closing of the "roads of the north" and the re-opening of the "southern caravan routes": a policy aimed at further elevating the heart of this new dominion towards which immense quantities of booty and riches of all kinds flowed unceasingly, together with artists, scientists, writers, merchandise and precious goods from all over the world.

Thus the nerve-centre of Euro-Asian commerce shifted from Baghdad to Central Asia without traffic being virtually interrupted. Instead, the commercial network created by Tīmūr could depend on an

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monk who stayed for three years at Harmuz on his way back from China around the year 1565: see C.R. Boxer Ed., *South China in the sixteenth century, being the narratives of Galeote Pereira*, Fr. Gaspar da Cruz O.P., Fr. Martin de Rada O.E.S.A. (1550-1575), Hakluyt Society Publ., 2nd series, n. 106, London, 1956, specie pp. 228-239: "Relation of the Chronicle of the Kings of Ormuz".

[25] See on the subject J. Aubin, "Comment Tamerlan prenait les villes", *Studia Islamica*, Vol. XIX ,1963, pp. 83-122.

exceptional organisation which gave further impetus to the movement of goods, even though they travelled along new routes. Severe instructions were issued to the effect that all foreigners travelling to or through Tīmūrid territories were to be treated with respect, themselves and their goods going unmolested. To this goal, a special police force was even created – the famous *qarāsūrān* – which had the task of accompanying and protecting all travellers. According to his biographers, Tīmūr was equally effective in building new and well-kept roads and constructing – or re-building – bridges, viaducts, caravanserais, wells and cisterns. An efficient and rapid postal-service was even introduced. The revival of certain urban centres – along the routes radiating out from the heart of the Tīmūrid empire – was also undertaken, which brought to a revival of arts and craftwork.

Tabrīz did not escape the devastation suffered by many other centres.[26] It was sacked twice, underwent wreckage, pillaging, massacres, but retained its beauty and economic power. According to some disquieting reports by Genoese officials, the Genoese Quarter and its storehouses were not spared the sad fate of a conquered city: they were devastated, pillaged, and the Genoese officials massacred. Despite the horror and the severe human and financial loss, the Council at Genoa deliberated not to indulge in impossible revenges or abandon this base of definitely primary importance as head-bridge towards the Turkic world and its wonders. A policy between "wait and see" and "tiresome, endless negotiations" was also deliberated. And soon, Genoa won its award.

All in all, the image of this pre-Ottoman world is alluring. Its cultural/mercantile dimension comes to the fore. Little space is left to military action and campaigns. Losses are registered; the conquest of new markets with all their magnificence is enhanced.

The Tīmūrid rulers and their "allies" could provide a new military order over the conquered regions. Under their military umbrella, transactions could still – if not better – take place. Genoese officers and officials were well trained to face new realities and dial with new comers. It was a challenge, and the *Concilio* (the Council) of the Republic decided to face it. The new Tīmūrid geopolitical and geo-economic framework (i.e. the tax-system and other administrative dues) gave renewed impulse to the city of Tabrīz and gravitating on territories.

It was in these years that Tabrīz rose to the role of main route-junction of the empire, the most striking feature being the continuity of its cultural development. "Not for trafficking alone": fine arts flourished again, the main palace and mosque "were so well built" that a

[26] Yazdī, Sharaf al-Dīn ʻAlī, *Zafar-Nāmah-i Yazd*, Vol. 2, pp. 266 on.

contemporary Venetian merchant regarded them as "outstandingly beautiful". Thus, this city enjoyed unprecedented significance and centrality, becoming the arrival and meeting point of travellers, merchants, caravans – and goods – from Anatolia, central-eastern Europe and the Mediterranean to the Turkic world. Thence, a network of caravan routes linked Tabrīz with – to the east – the Inner and Central Asian regions, to the south-west with Baghdad and Aleppo to the west, with Alexandria of Egypt to the south-west, with Shīrāz and Isfahān to the south-east and, still further, with Harmuz.

The minute inventory of goods listed in the Genoese *Acta Notoria* represents a significant pointer to the spirit and reality of Tīmūrid dominion. Harmuz duly paid its *rasm-i shihanjī*, *dārūghagāna* and *muqarrarī* dues to the Tīmūrid governors of the various cities and districts on the Iranian landmass, as well as other levies to Türkmen local rulers, tolled along the land routes.[27] Accordingly, the Genoese Quarter in Tabrīz and its merchants regularly paid without reservation their *tamghā* and the various taxes *de jure* and de facto exacted on a regular basis. Both enjoyed an unprecedented de facto prosperity.

By the second half of the century, the flow of trade still persisted and flourished. Ceramics and textiles were produced in Persia. Golden fabrics, vests of cloth, cloths of gold and silver, velvets, silks, pearls, diamonds and rubies could also be bought. The latter – the famous *yāqūts* – were highly in demand on European markets for their special colour, the "star rubies" and rubies from Badakhshān were also particularly valued. Carnelians, lapis-lazuli and turquoise, emeralds and sapphires from the lands of the Turks were increasingly fashionable as personal ornaments or to adorn little precious objects. Central Asian horses and furs were the special symbols of the European courts' regal power.

Under the military and financial order of Tīmūrid and Türkmen princes and governors, caravans, merchants and precious goods passed along the routes to/from Tana and Caffa. Genoese *notarii* based at Trebizond and Tabrīz regularly registered transactions.

[27] See B. Fragner, "Social and Internal Economic Affairs", *The Cambridge History of Iran – The Timurid and Safavid Periods*, pp. 491-567. See also, Part IV.

GLOBALISATION AND CENTRAL ASIAN SPACE
COSTS & BENEFITS

Mushtaq A. Kaw*

Abstract:
Globalisation defines a trend of transformation from local and regional to the global phenomenon, and characterizes the coexistence of a relationship based on surplus, trade, market and capital. Such a trend was, however, stalled by unlimited state control, excessive taxes and traditional means of transportation and communication during medieval times[1] besides two great wars and their corresponding anti-imperial 'nationalist' interlude in the 20th century. These unhealthy factors contributed to plummeting the foreign trade and capital investment in the developed and the developing countries. Nonetheless, the said trend picked up as a sequence of unprecedented technological advancement and the pro-activism of several leading trans-national financial corporation's (hereafter TNFCs) but suffered again in 1970s as a sequence of low returns of TNFCs. To tide over the crisis, the TNFCs mandated privatization of state enterprise, liberalization of imports, equitable resource sharing, soft borders, hassle free trade, regional and global infrastructural development, etc. A unified and flexible economic order based on the integration of national, regional (pan European, pan-Asian, pan-Arabic and pan-American) and world economies towards *laissez faire* and neo-liberalism, was the natural concomitant of above initiative of the TNFCs.[2] Consequently, indicators of socio-economic development progressed to an appreciable extent despite the belief of the "Cultural Imperialists" that "Globalisation is the reincarnation of the Western imperialism/colonialism"; hence, aimed at benefitting the developed rather than the developing countries across the world.[3] The Central Asian space was no exception to above global phenomenon. Though the region registered unprecedented progress, it was juxtaposed subject to several complications. In fact, the present article seeks to examine the costs and benefits of globalisation to the Central Asian countries, and it is based on both historical and empirical studies.

Keywords:
Globalisation, Central Asian Republics, Japan, US, India, Korea, China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, WTO, UNDP, ADB, Churchill, Marx, Huntington.

Introduction:

Globalisation made its effect felt in Korea, Japan, China, India and Central Asian Republics (hereafter CARs): courtesy huge foreign capital

* **Professor, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, J&K, India:** mkaw@rediffmail.com & kawm_06@yahoo.co.in

1 Mushtaq A.Kaw, "Trade & Commerce in Chinese Central Asia", *Central Asia: Introspection*, Eds., Mushtaq A. Kaw & Aijaz A Bandey, CCAS, University of Kashmir, 2006. pp. 47-61.

2 Jeremy Breacher and Tim Costello, Eds., *Global Village or Global Pillage: Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up*, South End Press, 1994, pp. 1-9.

3 Prof. T. K. Oomen, Keynote address, National Seminar on "Globalisation & Social Sustainability", Department of Sociology, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, October 12-13, 2008.

investment in the CARs by the world famous companies on banking, trade, construction, hydropower generation and hydrocarbon exploration and transportation. These included *Chevron Corporation*(US), *Agip* (Italy), *Gazprom* (Russia), *Unocal* (US), *Mobil* (France), *British Petroleum and British Enterprise Oil*, *Anglo-Dutch Royal Dutch/Shell*, *Statoil* (Norway), *Repsol* (Spain), *National Company of China* (NCC), *Mitsui* (Japan), *Petrons* (Malaysian), *Merhav* (Israel) and *INDC* (Iran) etc. While Swiss and Turkish corporations invested on oil and gas exploration in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, *Daimler-Benz* of Germany, *Daewoo* of South Korea on car industry, the *BAT* of United Kingdom made investment on cigarette making and tool manufacturing. Turkey launched Eurasia Television Network from Ankara to Central Asia to popularize her cultural influence in spoken Turkish language.[4] So did other Eurasian firms on mining, energy and telecommunication industries.[5] Korean and Uzbek firms, the *UzDaewoo Auto Joint-Stock Company* and the *General Motors-Daewoo Auto and Technology*, cooperated to manufacture auto spare parts through *UzDaewoo Auto Company* in Asaka in the Eastern Andijan region. Chinese consortiums sponsored projects on road building, oil and gas transportation, hydropower generation and power lines from and across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan[6] and Tajikistan.[7] The Russian companies, *RusAI* and *Oleg Deripaska*, financed projects on hydropower generation and aluminum processing at Rogun and Turzunzade respectively in Tajikistan. Indian firms, *ONGC Mittal Energy Ltd* and *Nuclear Power Corporation of India*, invested on energy explorations in Kazakhstan and hydropower generation in Tajikistan. In addition, the transcontinental funding agencies , the *Asian Development Bank* (ADB), *World Trade Organisation*(WTO), *European Union*(EU)[8] etc. floated loans and funds

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4 "Turkey Pushing Eastward-By Satellite", *Washington Post*, March 22, 1992.

5 Shirin Akiner, " Politics of Energy in the Caspian Sea Region", *Regional Survey of the World: East Europe, Russia and Central Asia*, Third edition, UK, 2003, n. 27, pp.11, 215-17; Murat Kenisarin, "The Energy Sector of Uzbekistan: Present State & Problems", *Central Asia and the Caucasus* , no's. 2(26) and 34, 2004, pp.126, 128; Turkmenistan Natural Resources, Library of Congress: Cf. http://www.countrystudies.us/Turkmenistan/20.htm

6 Robert G.Sutter, *China's Rise in Asia: Promises & Pearls*, Lanham, 2005, pp.26-30, 108-09; James C. Moltz, "China's political and economic relations with Kazakhstan and Kygyzstan", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No.2, 1998, pp. 231-35.

7 *International Monetary Fund*: Republic of Tajikistan, March 8, 2007.

8 Fouskas K. Vassilis , *Zones of Conflict: US Foreign Policy in Central Asia: Structural Reform and Political Change*, London, 2003, p. 22; Bruno Coppieters, "Central Asia Region in a New International Environment", *NATO Review*,Vol.44, No. 5, September 1996, pp. 26-31.

for infrastructural development and energy generation and transportation from CARs to international markets.

Costs & Benefits of CARS:

As a natural concomitant of above investments, the CARs particularly Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan followed by Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan experienced the emergence of mammoth business houses, banks, industrial set ups, construction plants, hydropower and hydrocarbon projects and telecommunication systems. These are changing the entire façade of CARs and capacitating them to huge foreign exchanges, strengthen national currencies, generate jobs, raise life standard and open up vistas of social sustainability and economic restructuring. Such benefits are steadily percolating down to villages which are gradually changing their face and transforming them into leading urban hubs pointing thereby to a horizontal and vertical growth in the CARs including Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the two poor economies, with lesser resources and distant location from the established world markets, marine and transportation hubs. By all means, however, Kazakhstan offers the best model of socio-economic development following large scale multinational companies and massive foreign investments. The UNDP reports,[9] field experiences of the present investigator and the search findings of the eminent Kazakh economists like Bolat Tatibekov, are altogether supportive of marked improvement in the life standard of the Kazakhs over the last several years. While the country is not devoid of the poverty, its level is substantially diminishing compared to her counterparts. The below poverty level which had increased till 1998, dipped from 34.6% to 9.8% during 1999-2005. Likewise, the purchasing power in terms of foodstuffs, goods and services improved almost at the same level. The number of people whose income was below food basket cost declined from 16.2% to 1.6% during 1998-2005, a ten times recovery.[10] In a way, average monthly income of Kazakh men increased from 14034 *tengis* in 1999 to 34648 *tengis* in 2004: that of the women also improved from 9485 to 21445 *tengis* during the same period.[11] The literacy rate recovered at all levels[12] and so did the rate of child mortality from 35 to 20.1 per thousand births between 1991 and

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9 First Report on *UN Millennium Development Goals in Kazakhstan*, UNDP, Kazakhstan, 2002.

10 "Population Living Standards in Kazakhstan*", Statistic Yearbook*. Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty ,2004.

11 Females and Males of Kazakhstan", *Short Statistic Bulletin*, Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2004.

12 *First Report on UN Millennium Development Goals in Kazakhstan*, UNDP in Kazakhstan, 2002; *Short Statistical Yearbook of Kazakhstan*, Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty, 2006.

2003 [13] : indeed all because of Kazakhstan's abundant hydrocarbon resources, volatile trade, immense exposure to and cooperation with foreign countries, multinational companies, firms and consortiums for mutual benefits. Such type of growth is traceable in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and other Central Asian states of course with varying degrees.

Politically, globalisation smoothened inter and intra-state conflicts among the CARs probably in tone with John Stuart Mill's belief that "integration would prove an instrument of conflict management in domestic situations." For economic and other benefits, the contending parties would prefer peace, dialogue and settlement to conflict and war. The political realist, Winston Churchill, also upholds Mills' views on the multiple advantages due to follow from the merger of the nation states[14] and resolution of a wide variety of those conflicts that characterized the "writings of Herodotus, the father of history, Karl Marx, the proponent have-nots, Samuel Huntington, the advocate of Western civilization."[15] Quite precisely, globalisation sought to neutralize, if not out rightly eliminate, an assortment of ethno-national, religio-cultural and economic conflicts among the CARs. Even their border disputes with Russia and China, were relatively settled for mutual benefits emanating from the global trade.[16] This sort of conflict management spontaneously forged a sense of mutual co-existence among the CARs, though it juxtaposed them to popular indignation for the restoration of fundamental and democratic rights. The intermittent popular outbursts in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and trans-Caucasian states against the authoritarian regimes explain the extraneous influences that globalisation brought forth during economic amalgamation. Indeed, it exposed the hitherto landlocked and stereotyped peoples of Central Asian to the progressing world communities, which eventually, sought to widen their political horizon and socio-economic and cultural make up. Such an awakening was the

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13 "Population Living Standards in Kazakhstan*"*, *Statistic Yearbook*. Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Almaty ,2004.

14 Winston S. Churchill, "Foreword", *An Idea Conquers the World*, Ed., R .N .Koudenhove-Kalergi, London, Macmillan, 1953, p. X.

15 *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 25, 2008.

16 Witt Raczka, "Xinjiang and its Central Asian Borderlands", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No.3,Oxford, 1998, p. 384; Guangcheng Xing, "Security Issues in China's relations with Central Asian States",(eds.) Y.Zhang & R.Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges Beyond Borders,* London, 1998, n. 1,pp.65,209; *China's Policy Priorities,* Lanham, 2000, p. 65; K.Warikoo, "Central Asia and China : The geopolitical Imperatives", (ed.), Shams-ud Din, *Geopolitics and Energy Resources in Central Asia and Caspian Sea Region*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 260; Yasmin Melet, "China's Political and Economic Relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan", *Central Asian Survey*, No. 31, p. 245.

offshoot of the educational integration of CARs with the reputed institutions in US, Turkey, Korea, India, Japan, Russia and China which the Central Asian youth visit for the pursuit of the degrees in engineering, medical, MPhil, PhD, etc. True educational reforms in CARs had the nation-building agenda to which indigenization of native languages was a specific feature. But these were simultaneously aimed at (i) marginalizing Soviet educational system, (ii) building up foundation for a quality-based education, (iii) and creating comparable educational institutions with Europe.[17] Under the circumstances, learning English language and education across the Seas ceased to be a taboo as both are the potential mediums of earning job and education within the global framework. Little wonder to observe Central Asian youth taking Western education in Europe and Asia and the level of illiteracy instantly declining in CARs. Kazakhstan, for one, substantially reduced illiteracy and the gender disparity as is vindicated by almost the same percentage of the Kazakh boys and girls at the primary and secondary levels. The women's participation in the legislative bodies of the country also swelled due to educational priorities of the Kazakhs: 7.7% by 2004 in the Senate comprising 39 members and 10.4% in the country's Parliament or *Majlis* of 77 members. To recall, the said rate had immediately contracted after the Soviet demise.

Culturally, globalisation facilitated the rural-urban movement, a phenomenon unheard of Central Asia till recent past as the region was known for "… the low rate of movement of the population from their local rural environment to urban centres … each inhabitant's loyalty remained at the local level", the village and its local customs, traditions and kinship ties.[18] The globalisation brought them out of the Arcadian life and boosted their large scale migration from the socially isolated and economically backward to quite advanced and richer zones housed by peoples of divergent ethno-national and ethno-regional backgrounds. There they jointly work in multinational companies and business houses and share their thought and harmonious tradition of "cultural pluralism" which finds support from Laura Adams's writings: "Globalisation is a process that contributes to international integration and homogenization" and stimulates "diversity by providing venues for the propagation of new

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17 Henri Fruchet, "The use of history: the Soviet historiography of Khan Kenesary Kasimov" and Robert Lowe, "Nation building and identity in the Kyrgyz Republic", *Central Asia: Aspects of transition*, (ed.) Tom Everett-Heath, London/New York, 2003, pp. 106-32.

18 John Glenn, *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, Macmillan & St. Martin Press, London & New York, 1999, pp. 91-96.

ideas about local identities".[19] The points in reference are the nascent metropolitans of Central Asian states, which symbolize quite integrative educational, economic and cultural centres. The same is true of the population in Eastern Turkistan or Xinjiang where, for instance, the restaurants represent a real blend of distinct tastes and ethnic identities, the Chinese owner, Uighur receptionist, Kyrgyz cook, Kazakh server and Tajik customer. Even the higher educational institutions in CARs charcaterise the blend of Indian, Chinese, Russian, Pakistan and Japanese students through mutual influences in food, dress and culture, which eventually leads to the formation of the "cultural entropy". Such a phenomenon is especially publicized by those young Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kyrgyz and Tajik girls and boys who visit developed European and Asian countries, USA, Japan, Turkey, China, India etc., for education, job and trade. They return back home with new experiences about alien culture, individual behaviour and collective attitudes, which they later transmit to their native conditions. Many of them take up job in multinational companies, shopping malls, business houses, cafes, bars, restaurants and quietly conducted night clubs in the important metropolitans of the CARs. During an informal chat, a Kazakh national from Almaty, maintained that "Globalisation does not distance but unifies cultures which is a blessing to pool together human energy, diverse ethno-national and geographical identities notwithstanding varying materialistic ends and interests". This kind of universal brotherhood is, therefore, based on the principle of "each for all and all for each" as it effectively swamps rigid ethno-cultural structures. Having diversified sources of income, globalisation empowered the Central Asians to formalize a wide variety of customs and rituals related to the human belief, birth, death and marriages, the hallmark of Central Asian history and culture from early times. With flow of money, they organize such ceremonies with great deal of extravaganza and entertain visitors, mourners and guests alike with quite a wide variety of food, juices, tea, drinks, etc.

However, it would be simply naïve to consider globalisation as an absolute programme of human development. Together with advantages, it brought the Central Asians face to face with complexities of life. This is perhaps why the ongoing global recession is making its impact on CARs also. Some experts opine that had there been no globalisation, the spillover of recession would have been localized. More so, they believe that globalisation, exceptions apart, failed to produce a genuine middle

[19] Laura Adams, "Globalization in Central Asia: Notes on Centrality and Marginalization," *Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. VI, no. 2, p.6.

class in Central Asia. The neo-rich class mostly comprises the political and the educational elite which are, by and large, disinclined to ameliorate social inequality and rural-urban void. The official data is fudged by the CARs to present a rosy picture of the growth and development, they further believe. Hence, poverty, unemployment and low life standard reign supreme especially in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which together perpetuate crimes, endemic corruption and a stressful society [20] to avoid which, the Tajiks often take recourse to arms smuggling and drug trafficking as short-cut means of social survival and elevation. Of the six routes originating from Afghanistan, three routes traverse Khorog, Panj and Moskovsky in Tajikistan. [21] The Khorog-Oash-Aandijan route, the "Opium Highway", is treaded by the Tajik youth to smuggle opium from Afghanistan to European markets across Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russian. In fact, opium smuggling absorbs a lot of poverty-stricken and unemployed youth in the whole Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (hereafter GBAO) on two counts: one, it remains the dominant source of their survival in the rugged terrain and second, it is fairly lucrative as can be easily gauged from the report of Andrey Nikolayev, the former Director of the Russian Federal Border Service: "A certain amount of heroin costs $100 in Badakhshan province in Afghanistan. Once it is smuggled across the River Panj into the GBAO in Tajikistan its value increases to $ 1000. As it is taken through Oash in Kyrgyzstan it increases to $ 10,000, when it reaches Europe it costs $ 100,000".[22] Interestingly, the Tajik women contribute a great deal to its trade in the Pamir region despite heavy penalties. They also engage in the "suit case" or small international trade. Thus from Alamty Kazakhstan, the heroin consignments are afforded by different gender ethnic groups including the children to Russia and thence to Europe due to soft borders and free global trade .

Likewise, trafficking in women is facilitated by the phenomenon of world transforming into a "global home". Eminent sociologists like Marfua Tokhtakhodjaeva from Uzbeksiatn[23] and Sofia Kasymova from

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20 Emomali Rakhmanov, *Tajikistan in the Mirror of History*, Vol. 1-2, River Editions Ltd., London, 2006, p. 1.

21 *International Crisis Group*, "Recent Violence: Causes and Consequences", Central Asia Briefing, October 18, 2000.

22 Roger N McDermott, "Border Security in Tajikistan: Countering the Narcotics Trade?", *Conflict Studies Research Centre*, October 2002, p. 36.

23 "Trafficking of Women: The Case of Uzbekistan", Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies , Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

Tajikistan[24], have expatiated upon the underlying factors of prostitution and flesh trade in the countryside of CARs.[25] Field studies also reveal that a large number of innocent girls, lured by job and business, are transported across in groups to perform illicit and immoral acts. Similarly, for making a living, a large number of Central Asian work forces annually migrate to Russia and other foreign countries. During their out-stay, they make new marriages which contributes to alarming social tensions in their home land. In sequence thereof, they either divorce their actual spouses or leave them half way to live by themselves: attend the family and small farms or else migrate to urban areas for job, which at times, pushes them into the web of the prostitution and flesh trade. This type of transitory or perennial out migration, the offshoot of population explosion, scarce resources, uneven growth rate, varying wage scales, unemployment, etc, also find support from the immense opportunities thrown open by globalisation, the soft borders, flexible visa regimes, boom of the multinationals and foreign capital. Quite exactly, scores of Central Asians annually migrate to Russia, China, Korea, Japan, India, Turkey, USA, etc for education and career building. In fact, the said trend had set in immediately with the Soviet demise in 1991. The new-born Soviet Central Asian states, under transition, failed to address the immediate challenges. For the fear of ethnic cleansing or for earning employment, a large proportion of non-Turkic and non-Iranian ethnic groups migrated from the CARs [26] though it was correspondingly reciprocated by the inflow of equal and even more number of Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Turk, Uigur and Dungans into CARs at their embryonic stage. The net result was that the titular population swelled from 62.3% to 79.9% in Kazakhstan during 1989-2000 ; 71.4% to 77.6% in Uzbekistan during 1989-2002 ; 40.1% to 53.4% in Kazakhstan during 1989-1999 ; 52.4 % to 65.7 % in Kyrgyzstan during 1989-2001 and from

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[24] "Labour Market Globalisation & Status of Women in Post-Soviet Tajikistan", Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

[25] "Labour Market Globalisation & Status of Women in Post-Soviet Tajikistan", Paper presented in the International Seminar on *Globalisation and Eurasia*, Centre for Russian & Central Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, November 9-12, 2008.

[26] 16,199,154 to 14,953,131 Ukrainians, Germans, Tatars, Byelorussians, Azerbaijanis, Poles, Chechens, Bashkirs, Moldovans, Mordovans, Armenians and Greeks migrated from Kazakhstan and 50,000 to 90,000 Germans, Crimean Tatars, Jews, Turks-Meskhetians and others migrated from Uzbekistan during 80s and 90s: the similar was the proportion of out migration in Kyrgyzstan , Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

72%-91% in Turkmenistan during 1989-2001.[27] The further expansion of the Turkic groups in CARs would precipitate marginalizing the ethnic minorities and lead to what Karl Deutsch terms as the "obliteration of unity of nation states in all such situations whose populations are already separated into social groups with different languages or cultures of necessary way of living".[28] It would be equally fraught with serious consequences for the migrant Central Asians in all such situations "where there is migration and where groups of people who lived earlier in isolation, become ethnocentric to accommodate in heterogeneous conditions".[29]

Nevertheless, it should not be presumed that out migration of Central Asians stopped after 2000. It continues unabatedly as tens and thousands of unemployment and poverty-affected Tajiks, Kyrgyz and Uzbeks to Russia and Kazakhstan are driven to out migration for employment and better wages. Fairly speaking, it has become the only source of living to many Tajik and Kyrgyz families leave apart the accruing remittances to the respective nation states of Central Asia. The remittances amount to $260 millions in Tajikistan and $160 millions in Kyrgyzstan (only via Western Union). Reportedly, the money transferred by Kyrgyz migrants makes the half of the national budget. This is excluding the contribution of unregistered remittances and hand-to-hand transfers. Another obvious benefit of out migration is that it absorbs surplus work force by 10-15% in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. However, one should not loose sight of the fact that the phenomenon of out migration contributed to the youth drain in CARs. Migration of highly qualified specialists is a very big loss to the CARs as hoards of the workers, qualified and educated youth, from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan emigrate to Canada, UK, USA, Japan, Turkey, etc for high-paying jobs.[30] In the process, the respective countries loose the services of a potential human resource otherwise necessary for the growth and development of the respective countries especially when they are going through transition from central to market economy, to which effect, as was desired by the

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27 Valeriy S. Khan, " The State Ideologies in Post-Soviet Central Asia: The Ethnic Dimension", *Central Asia in Retrospect and Prospect*, Ed. Mushtaq A Kaw, Readworthy, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 11-28.

28 "Social Mobolisation and Political Development", American Political Science Review, No.55, 1961, pp. 493-514.

29 "What is an ethnic Group", *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, Eds., Montserrat Guibernau & John Rex, Oxford & Malden, 1997, p.21.

30 Stephen Dalziel, "London's Russian's", *BBC World Service on Assignments* (July 10, 2000); Saskia Sassan, *Globalisation and its Discontents*, p. 8.

transcontinental funding agencies, they enforced measures to promote privatization of all means and forces of production and encourage real competition and genuine labour and trade market. It is a different thing that the full form of private proprietorship on the analogy of Transcaucasian states is yet to grow in agricultural and industrial sector of the CARs. The Soviet state units of agricultural production, the *kolkhoze*, still exist with a different name of *shirkat*. The peasant's right to land ownership, free production and marketing is yet regulated.[31]

Educationally, globalisation is blamed to affect radical change in the priorities of the CARs, from education to business, which experts attribute to 30% slash in the literacy rate, for instance, in Kazakhstan during nineties and to the equal proportions in other Central Asian states. The number of first year university students reduced to only 3340 in Turkmenistan in 2000.[32] The option of the subjects for studies also changed because of the emphasis of globalisation on international relations and business administration. The premier subjects of math, physics, biology, known in Soviet times, took a back seat which is exemplified by the 50% contraction in the percentage of physicists, mathematicians, biologists in Kazakhstan around 1990-96. Geology and sciences declined by 40% while number of littérateurs increased by 7%, vetenarians by 14% and lawyers by 50% during the same period.[33] However, history and languages continued to have a space in the educational set up under the nation-building agenda. During the process of educational restructuring the native languages were recognized as the official languages and Russian was simply accorded the status of a *de facto* language for administrative, academic and political performance[34] which genuinely frustrated the regional intelligentsia of different language and cultural backgrounds for the fear of loosing promotions and privileges.[35] Thus the Russian language and its text in school libraries were gradually substituted by the native literature.[36] In Kazakhstan, by

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31 Mushtaq A. Kaw, "Changing Land Tenures, Agrarian Reforms and Peasantry in Central Asian Republics (CARs)", *International Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. XI, Institute of Asian Culture & Development, Seoul, Korea, 2006.

32 Eric W. Sievers, *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable Development and Comprehensive Capital*, London/ New York, 2003, p. 54.

33 *The Post-Soviet Decline of Central Asia: Sustainable Development and Comprehensive Capital*, p. 66.

34 G.Tett, "Soviet Mullahs Who Threaten Gorbachev", *Financial Times*, 17 August, 1991.

35 Gelner Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1983, pp. 162-66.

36 Катагощина И. Т. *Кризис идентичности как фактор миграционных процессов на постсоветском* Восток, 2001, № 6, с. 79.

2000, the number of Russian training schools reduced by 60% and in Turkmenistan by 71%.[37] In Tajikistan, the textbooks at Russian-speaking schools were not updated for more than 10 years for the same reason.[38] That the officialisation of the native languages was a big "language shock" to multi-ethnic Russian speaking social groups, it deprived them of a common medium of communication and employment in industries, management, science, etc.[39] The rich content and unifying spirit of the Russian language[40] was, therefore, cut across partly by the language policy of titular nations and partly by the gradual inroads of the English rather the globalised language in the Soviet space.

That most productive belts are converted into industrial zones by the multinational companies thereby causing health, ecological and environmental hazards, is indeed there. The globalisation is juxtaposed to leave dreadful impact on the cultural ethos of the CARs. True it combined divergent ethnic groups in the above explained cases, but in others, it is proving a predator. A Kyrgyz scholar rightly opines that "with economic unification, the nomadic life style is experiencing a potent threat of extinction", a fact which is exactly in tone with the opinion of the "cultural imperialists" that "global cultural and technological influences eat up indigenous identities by displacing local values and practices antedating pre-historic times." On its account, a substantial percentage of rural population is in the process of shift from rural to urban areas at the cost of the age old cultural ethos. A point in reference is the break down of the joint family tradition and the weakening of community and fellow feeling so characteristic of Central Asia villages since early times. During an informal chat a Chinese scholar from the Chinese part of Central Asia (Xinjiang) forth right termed globalisation as a "double-edge sword: on the one hand, it enriches traditional Chinese culture and instills new vigour in it, one the other, it expunges some of its valued elements." Historically speaking, the given trend of the destruction of traditional values and customs set in with the Soviet occupation of Central Asia and their corresponding development programmes on the Socialist pattern though Glenn radically differs with it: "… The creation of state and collective farms (*Sovkhozy* and *Kolkhozy*) has tended to be based on local villages and have

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37 Независимая газета. 2000. 30.09.

38 *Тенденции бедности и благосостояния в Таджикистане в 90-х годах.* Аналитический доклад. Душанбе, 2002, UNICEF, с. 27.

39 Саралаев У. К. *Роль языка в международном общении*. - Диалог цивилизаций на Великом шелковом пути. Материалы международной конференции. – Бишкек, 2002. – С. 449.

40 Байтенова Н. *Межэтническая интеграция.* – Алматы, 1998. – С. 129.

therefore resulted in a syncretic fusion of the tribal/clanic structure and the agricultural production unit". [41] He is supported by Barnett who argue that "the groups were relocated to new areas … they generally moved *en masse* so that the kinship structure was retained … the state and collective farms …were ethnically mixed" and so were the ethnic groups and the kinship units kept in tact.[42] Contrarily, however, the rural-urban mobility in the wake of Sovietisation damaged village communities and their allied values for the simple reason that, on movement from the basic village to the *Sovkhozy*, the peasantry was subjected to altogether different conditions: from individual and self-sufficient units to state regulated farms, from choice of free peasant production to a centrally controlled cropping pattern, from a relatively independent to a choked atmosphere of communes where everything was governed by the Soviet state. Therefore, by dislodging peasantry from their native villages, [43] the Soviets undid the very basis of villages and their age long customs based on kinship, family, primordial and ethno-tribal ties. [44] The simple reason was that the Soviets wanted to make socialism as the "the only source of guidance". The further setback to the Central Asian cultural ethos is underway due to industrialization, urbanization, rural-urban mobility, new market forces enshrined in the entire edifice of globalisation. During educational and material pursuits within the integrated economic framework, the migrant rural folk, the young boys and girls, are caught up in a peculiar type of conflict between legacy and modernity and in the process, they are distanced from their family, village, land, customs, traditions, taboos, practices and in fact from the whole treasure of generations bequeathed heritage. They experience a change in every walk of life and from a simple life pattern to a globalised culture of jeans, cafes, restaurants, bars and liquor shops, etc. They are overwhelmingly absorbed by the Western movies, literature and music at the cost of the most enthralling and scintillating classical *Sufiyana* music. The traditional musical instruments, the *tabla, santoor, rabab, sittar,* etc are nearing extinction in the train of the pop music videos, a practically unknown medium in pre-independent Central Asia, are frequently used to explain glorious past and national identities of the CARs. The popular Uzbek singers, like Sevara Nazarkhan and the trio "Setora," produced such songs and videos which are broadcasted on the

41 *The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia*, pp. 91-96.

42 Rubin Barnett, "The Fragmentation of Tajikistan", *Survival*, 35/4, Winter 1993-94, p. 76.

43 R. A. Pierce, *Central Asia, 1867-1917*, Berkeley, 1960, p. 70.

44 Geoffery Wheeler, *The Peoples of Soviet Central Asia*, London, 1966, p. 71.

youth television channel, *Yoshlar* (Young People), on weekly basis indicating a great deal of global cultural influence .

The social customs and practices related to marriages, the hallmark of Central Asian culture, have also undergone new experiences due to the inflow of extra money in the region. Because of which the people have got into wasteful resource cult as they organize the marriage ceremonies with great deal of extravaganza and immense expenditure on entertaining the guests with an intricate variety of meals. They doll out huge quantum of dowry to the groom in cash and in the form of cars, televisions, refrigerators, washing machines, and other electronic goods. On the day of marriage contract, the newly married couple is held out in Benz, Mercedes and other spacious cars of the foreign make. Similarly, the rituals regarding death and burial are extravagantly performed symbolic of a social obligation than a sacred and holy act of attaining peace unto the deceased. Consequently, such ceremonies have become ritualistic both in form and content as these are organized to replenish the coffers of the priestly communities and entertain the visitors/mourners with the belief that it would augur well for the life of the deceased in the world here and hereafter. Therefore, the rehearsal of such ceremonies, lasting for days, months and years together, are facilitated by the additional sources of revenue stemming from the globalisation in Central Asian villages, towns and cities. While the affluent sections of the society manage them conveniently, the poor just afford them by begging and borrowing. In a way, the globalisation has hastened the cultural void among three broad social segments: (i) those who dwell in villages, follow customs, traditions, beliefs, taboos, rituals, practices, etc in letter and spirit, (ii) those who combine the Western culture with their traditional cultural survivals, and (iii) those who terminate the traditional customs and practices as obsolete in the face of the Western culture. In these circumstances, globalisation, leave apart its monetary dividends, is contributing to social tensions which, at times, are compounded by the generation gap and the conflicting perceptions of the older and younger generations about life and its nuances.

Sum Up:

To wrap up, globalisation represents a coin with two faces, one bright and another dark: one symbol of economic prosperity and another social conflicts and contradictions in Central Asian context. No doubt it is exposing the peoples of the region to the new trends of scientific and technological temperament and improving their quality of life and social sustainability. But such benefits are, more or less, specific to particular strata of the society whereas the larger segments, especially in villages, are devoid of them. This is why the villages do not indicate a worthwhile

improvement and they relatively wear a medieval look despite the enforcement of numerous schemes of economic restructuring as warranted under the norms of globalisation. In addition, globalisation is contributing to environmental and ecological disaster as huge firms, factories, business houses, occupy the spaces that were actually meant for agriculture operation. These release carbon monoxide and other industrial pollutants to the great detriment of the health and ecology as a whole. On top of it is the threatening to the rich cultural ethos. Since globalisation offers ample scope of human growth and development, rural-urban shift is, as such, becoming inevitable leading thereby to the disintegration of the otherwise joint families based on compact kinship ties and primordial values. Their spontaneous extinction is giving way to a new space rooted in money and material than peace and solace. In view of this, there is a great need of preserving the Central Asian culture from the onslaught of globalisation. Let us not be averse to change for onward march to civilization but let it not be at the cost of the rich heritage of the nation states of Central Asia. Last but not the least; Central Asia is since known as a home to a cluster of multi-ethnic and multi-national groups, who have been always at war with one another for regional leadership, power, resource and territorial sharing. One does foresee the role of globalistaion in neutralizing such inbuilt inter and intra-state conflicts but one can't really guarantee their final settlement unless the Soviet fallacies are set to right through the intervention of some apex global and regional organizations.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Bahram Navazeni* &
Maryam Navazeni**

Abstract:
In Iran there is a combination of Islamic laws as well as people's decisions in place regarding the rights of women. 'Islamic feminism', offers a critique of feminist theories, which construct it as an authentic and indigenous emancipation alternative to secular feminisms. Focusing on Iran after the victory of 1979 Islamic Revolution we are exploring women's right in an Islamic society. Some of women's rights are quite common everywhere in the world as these are inherent whereas others are acquisitive and thus different from one society and region to another. This paper argues that some women rights in Iran, though not recognized by the government laws, were common and widely applicable before the 1979 revolution and later approved in the Constitutional Law of 1979 while some new ones were recognized and are part of the Constitution. Accordingly, the paper argues that women's rights in political, social, cultural and economic arenas are improving in Iran.

Keywords:
Iran, Islamic Revolution, Women's rights, Developments.

Introduction:

On 27 August 2006, a women's rights campaign known as 'One Million Signatures Campaign' was launched in Iran.[1] This campaign claimed that the Iranian government "seems intent on defining policies that relegate women to the private sphere and reinforce their status as second class citizens" and thus has tried to make the discourse on women's rights a national priority. Accordingly the activists have tried hard to reach out to citizens and engage them in direct dialogue on women's rights and raise their awareness about the negative effects of such discriminatory laws on living of women and the society.

Though different in their attitudes and deeds, all other women's groups, like religious reformists, conservative as well as secular ones, are

* **Prof. of Political Science, Imam Khomeini International University (IKIU),Qazvin, Iran, info@navazeni.ir:** navazenib@ikiu.ac.ir
** **Student of Criminology Law, IKIU, maryam@navazeni.ir**

1 Some prominent speakers of the Iranian women's movement in the late 20th century and at the turn of the new millennium may be named as Simin Behbahani, Shirin Ebadi, Tahmineh Milani, Mehrangiz Kar, Elaheh Koulaei, and Farah Karimi, Shahla Sherkat, Jila Bani Yaghoob, Mahboubeh Abbas-Gholizadeh, Azam Taleghani and Shahla Lahiji.

acting inside and outside Iran, and have taken up these issues.[2] While according to religious women's groups great achievements have occurred in Iran since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the secular ones claim that these are only small victories as no real legal changes have been achieved in support of women's rights. Though the women have equal rights in marriage and inheritance, or get equal compensation for injury or death (blood money), or pass on their nationality to their children, or for that matter there is an end to stoning for adultery and end to polygamy, yet such examples are not felt satisfactory by secular activists who claim that there are many gender-biased laws in Iran that need to be changed.[3]

While there was heavy participation of Iranian women in the Islamic Revolution of 1979 that toppled the Shah, the secular groups believe that within months of the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran all rights that women were accustomed to enjoy under the Shah have severely been curtailed.[4] For example, the revoking of the 1967 Family Protection Law is one such act and accordingly there is enforcement to observe Islamic dress code for female government workers; ban on women to become judges; reduction of the legal age of marriage for girls to 13; and the ban on married women from attending public schools. Unisex places like beaches, sports centers, schools, public buses are also regarded as the strict sex-segregation policy for which the Islamic Revolution is ideologically committed.[5]

Pre Revolutionary Women's Rights:

Women's rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran are quite different from those under the Shah. Even at the Shah's regime we may divide them prior to 1963 White Revolution and after up to the 1979. Prior to White Revolution women had no right to participate in the political suffrage that wealthy men had achieved after the 1907 Constitutional Revolution. During all this period up until the enforcement of the 1967 Family

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2 Bahram Navazeni and Abbas Hashemi, "Iranian Women Political Tendencies", Manjit Singh, D. P. Singh,, (Eds), *Woman and Empowerment: Experiences from Some South Asian Countries,* Unistar Books, Chandigarh, 2005.

3 Sussan Tahmasebi, "Progress towards women's rights in Iran",

4 Elham Gheytanchi, "Chronology of Events Regarding Women in Iran since the Revolution of 1979", *Social Research via Find Articles.com,* Summer 2000, accessed 21 September 2008; Nikki R. Keddie, *Social Research via Find Articles.com*, Summer 2000, accessed 21 September 2008; Nayereh Tohidi, "Iran's Women's Rights Activists Are Being Smeared", *Women's eNews,* 17 September 2008; accessed September 21, 2008.

5 Elham Gheytanchi, *Social Research via Find Articles.com*, Summer 2000, accessed 21 September 2008.

Protection Law, the Islamic *Shari'at* Law was the basis of family, marriage and women's rights in Iran. As examples, the law permitted men to have four permanent and as many temporary wives as they wanted. Custody of children was in the hands of the father and after his death, in the hands of the male relatives on the father's side. Whether the couple had divorced, or else after the death of the father, the mother would not get custody of her children. The woman had to have written permission from her husband to travel. Since inside the country, one does not need to show an ID to travel, this permission was required for traveling outside the country. Citizenship was only through paternity.

Due to the rise of women's rights movements around the world, including Iran, certain changes appeared gradually such as the right to vote, which was established in Iran in 1963. The 1967 Family Protection Law and its amendments of 1974 also required married men to get permission from their permanent wife, or wives, to acquire another permanent wife though this did not apply to temporary wives.

Post Revolutionary Women's Rights:

After the establishment of the Islamic government in Iran, a move was made to implement the *Shari'at* law widely. The outcome of the "fundamentalist" interpretation of *Shari'at* in Iran, though not as harsh as in Saudi Arabia or that of the Afghanistan's Taliban, is like those as exist in almost all countries with majority Muslim population. It did include the exclusion of women from judgeship, the imposition of Islamic code of dress on women, and inclusion of strict *Shari'at* rules in the judiciary. These meant that some punishments for crimes were to comply with the Islamic tradition. As an example the ban was imposed on "Bad hijabi" and women were not to expose any part of the body other than hands and face in public and those doing contrary to it were subjected to punishment up to 500,000 rials ($500) fine or 2 months imprisonment (Islamic Punishment Law, Article 638). On the other hand there were also punishments up to 74 lashes and from 2 to 6 months imprisonment for anyone (read men) who in public places commit aggression or affray children or women or insult them with words and behaviours opposite to their dignity and prestige (Islamic Punishment Law, Article 619).

The Constitution and Women:

Constitutional Law in the Islamic Republic of Iran was adopted and ratified on 24 Oct 1979 by the popular referendum and later amended on 28 July 1989. The Preamble of the Constitution values "the blood of hundreds of young men and women," who, "infused with faith" nurtured the Islamic Revolution of Iran and "raised their cries of *Allahu Akbar* at

daybreak in execution yards, or was gunned down by the enemy in streets and market places." The people mentioned here are of "all segments of society and of all political and religious factions", nevertheless, the Constitution puts more emphasis on "especially the women" who "were actively and massively present in a most conspicuous manner at all stages of this great struggle … mothers with infants in their arms rushing towards the scene of battle" and thus recognize their "essential and decisive role played by this major segment of society in the struggle."

To respect the women's right and their emancipation, the Preamble insists on the base of all "cultural, social, political, and economic institutions of Iranian society" on the "Islamic principles and norms" and that the Iranian "nation, with all its beings, seeks its fulfillment." The main mission of the Constitution is therefore "to create conditions conducive to the development of man in accordance with the noble and universal values of Islam" and thus the women's rights in the Constitution and other ordinary laws were legislated according to these Islamic values.

By assigning a section in its preamble as "Woman in the Constitution," the preamble of the Constitution is elaborating its ideological conception of exploited and oppressed women under the old regime. It also expresses its hope that women "regain their true identity and human rights" in the Iranian pro revolutionary society and "benefit from a particularly large augmentation of their rights, because of the greater oppression that they suffered. The constitution recognizes "the family" as "the fundamental unit of society and the main center for the growth and edification of human being." To deliver women "from being regarded as an object or instrument in the service of promoting consumerism and exploitation" the Preamble binds "the Islamic government" to recover the women's role of "motherhood" as "momentous and precious function" and help them assuming "a pioneering social role and become the fellow struggler of man in all vital areas of life."

In some Articles of the Constitution both men and women are observed equal and the government has the duty to keep this equality. Article 3 obliges the government of "directing all its resources" to specific goals including:

> "free education and physical training for everyone at all levels, and the facilitation and expansion of higher education" (3(3)),
>
> "the abolition of all forms of undesirable discrimination and the provision of equitable opportunities for all, in both the material and the intellectual spheres" (3(9)) and

> "securing the multifarious rights of all citizens, both women and men, and providing legal protection for all, as well as the equality of all before the law." (3(14))

The equality of all before the law is once more repeated in Article 20 as reads "All citizens of the country, both men and women, equally enjoy the protection of the law and enjoy all human, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, in conformity with Islamic criteria." Article 22 of the Constitutional guarantees inviolate of every individual's (no matter men's or women's) "dignity, life, property, rights, residence, and occupation" and Article 23 forbids "the investigation of individuals' beliefs" and clearly states "no one may be molested or taken to task simply for holding a certain belief." Freedom of expression in "publications and the press" (Article 24), forbidden of "examination of and non delivery of letters, recording and divulging of telephone conversations, … censorship, … tapping and bugging (Article 25), freedom of establishing "political parties, societies and association" and joining any of them (Article 26), freedom of "unarmed assemblies and marches" (Article 27), freedom "to choose the employment he/she wishes" (Article 28) and "the enjoyment of social security" to cover "retirement, unemployment, old age, being laid off, being without a guardian, casual misfortune, accidents, and occurrences giving rise to the need for health services and medical care and treatment, through insurance etc. (Article 29).

According to Article 32 no person may be arrested or detained "except according to and in the manner laid down in the law" and based on Article 33 "no person may be ousted from his residence or forbidden to reside in the locality of his/her choice or compelled to reside in a particular locality". Every individual according to Article 34 has the right "to ask for justice" and to refer "to the competent courts". Article 35 entitles "both parties" in all courts to "select a lawyer for themselves" and according to Article 36 "a sentence to punishment and its execution must only be by the decision of a competent court and by virtue of law."

The Rights of Women:

However, "because of the greater oppression that they suffered under the old regime" as the Preamble states, the Constitution draws more attention to the "Women's Rights" as in Article 21 and counts 5 various rights the government must ensure "in all respects in conformity with Islamic criteria and accomplish" as follows:

1) create a favorable environment for the growth of woman's personality and the restoration of her rights, both the material and intellectual;

2) the protection of mothers, particularly during pregnancy and child-rearing, and the protection of children without guardians;
3) establishing competent courts to protect and preserve the family;
4) the provision of special insurance for widows, aged women, and women without support;
5) the awarding of guardianship of children to worthy mothers, in order to protect the interests of the children, in the absence of a legal guardian.

Women's Rights in the Statutes:

In addition to these constitutional rights, Iranian women enjoy many other rights from the legislature and other statutes. Furthermore, the constitutional rights are implemented through legislation that passes special regulations in the form of Acts and Bills. Women have the right to choose their future husbands and no one can be enforced to marry an undesired man (Civil Code Article 1070). In the Civil Code of 1925 (Articles 1078-1101), Family Protection Law of 1967 (amended in 1974 and after the Islamic Revolution to conform better to the interests of women in the family) a women's has the right to *Mahr* (nuptial gift), and asking of *Sadoqah* or *Sedaaq* (the Quranic term), which is a gift from the groom to the bride for her positive answer to marriage. *Mahr* can be money, any worthy property or even action such as teaching Quran, and is subject to the agreement between the two. Normally today it is between 14 to 1000 gold coins (equivalent to $3,000 to $400,000) depending upon the wealth of the groom. However, *Mahr* is a preferential debt upon the husband and as soon as the wife request for its payment it is to be paid. This debt is of such importance that the wife may refer to the court and use her right of detaining the husband to force him the payment.

As the marriage is considered a marital contract, there are sometimes added some more conditions within the contract and become compulsory to observe by the parties. The bride, as a party to this contract, may pick up a joint place for their residence (Civil Code Article 1114). According to the marital contract revised after the Islamic Revolution husband has to transfer to his wife half of the wealth acquired after the marriage, has no excuses to divorce her and the wife has the right to ask the court to get divorced if the husband got addicted or was jailed for 5 months or has left her for six uninterrupted months.

Furthermore married women are not legally obliged to work outside the family and earn money for the family and even if they work inside they can ask for money according to a law passed in 1992 by the Expediency Council and spend it as they wish, even for outside the

family purposes (Civil Code Article 1118). The husband has also to pay *Nafaqeh* (maintenance or alimony) for accommodation, clothing, food and furniture suitable to the women's family standard. It can even include payment to servant if a woman is from a wealthy family and in its amendment in 2002 the need for curing the disease has also been added.

Custody of children to mother is another right recognized by the Civil Code (Article of 1169 amended in 2003) according to which mother has the precedence of keeping the child (with no difference of boy or girl) up to 7 years of age and then the precedence goes to the father if there is no discord, otherwise the court will decide. Before the amendment, mother's precedence in the custody was for boys under 2 and for girls under 7 years. The cost of living of the children under mother's custody is on the shoulders of father (Civil Code Article 1199). According to Article 1 of the Family Protection Law of 1974, the judicial proceedings of all family complaints and grievances are vested to the county courts. This has benefitted women as they were historically and socially suffering from the dictates of their husbands. A law passed in 1997 has designated some existing courts in every county as the Family Courts. Accordingly, "if continuation of the marriage causes rigidity and austerity for the wife, she may refer to the court and ask for divorce" (Civil Code Article 1130).

There is freedom of employment (Article 28 of the Constitution) for all citizens that includes all political and judicial positions. The only exception found in it is the position of the president of the country which has been reserved for men (Article 115 and its interpretation by the Constitutional Guardian Council in 1997). In 1995 an amendment to the Law of Appointing the Judiciary (Judges) maintained that the head of the Judiciary may appoint women of competence for judiciary to different court positions.

The Labour Law of 1989 has assigned special rights to women and Article 75 has barred women from "risky, hard, and dangerous works" and even "carrying cargos in exceed of limits without the mechanical devices". Article 76 provides 90 days pregnancy off period with pay in both government and private sectors after which their previous job get restored to them. Later in 1995 the law of Promoting Nutrition with the Mother Milk extended this period to 120 days up to 3 children. This law maintains that women have the right of 1 hour a day for milking their children up to 20 months of their age and according to the Labour Law (Article 78) the employer has to set up necessary nursery to keep their children during the office work. The Social Security Law of 2004 has also provided some facilities and protections for derelict women and

mothers during pregnancy and custody of their children and special insurance for the widows, aged women and self-warden.

Another right for women is their exemption from the military service. According to the Military Service Law, women are exempted from the 2 year military service men do. Nevertheless, they have the right to choose the military job as their career and there is no legal restriction in gradation though it had not been in action until 1997 when some new applicants for policewoman officers were approved.

Women's Rights in Practice:

After the Revolution in 1979, Iran has emphasized the requirement of participation of women in civil and political life. Accordingly the voting right for women is maintained and they are encouraged to participate fully in all forms of public life. Ban on "Bad hijabi" is therefore a necessary tool to maintain a safe and sound environment for women entering into the public sphere un-chaperoned. The early 1990s brought a marked increase in the number of women employed in Iran. They also pursue higher education in large numbers as a result of free education and the literacy campaigns that have been carried. Today they are entrepreneurs, academicians, policy makers, physicians. Today, there is an effort to make certain professions exclusive for them like pediatricians and gynecologists while as men are encouraged to become civil engineers. Again, over 65% of university students are women and this is a big achievement as compared to the past when in 1936 there were just 12 of them in Tehran University. In 2001, Allameh Tabatabaii University, Tarbiat Modares University, and Azzahra University initiated women's studies programmes at the Master of Arts level, and shortly thereafter Tehran University organized a similar programme.

For the first time in the past three decades three women were nominated by the president to hold ministerial positions, out of which one got the vote of confidence in summer 2009 for the ministry of Health and Medical Education. There are many more women in parliament and other city councils than ever were during the previous governments. During the last seven parliament elections the number of women participants has increased gradually from 90 to 827 and those of the elected ones from 4 to 13.[6] Participation of women in public life has also made them publishers and they have opened all-women publishing houses, to print books and pamphlets on women's issues, including from secular and leftist point of view.

[6] http://www.majlis.ir/mhtml/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=2085

In the sports, despite some restrictions, there are quite many female athletes who have won medals in international competitions. Iranian women are allowed to compete in sports that require removal of the *hijab*, but only in areas that are meant for females. They are banned from public events if spectators include unrelated men. Men are not allowed to train or coach women in the fields where women have to expose any part of their bodies such as in swimming and thus because of the lack of female coaches certain sports teams have been prevented from international competition. Accordingly, of the 53 Iranian athletes in the Beijing Olympics, there were only three women: Sara Khoshjamal Fekri (taekwondo), Najmeh Abtin (shooting) and Homa Hosseini (rowing) whereas comparing it to that of the 2004 Athens Olympics there was just one female athlete, in shooting and thus a great success.

There is a well developed birth control programme in place which received an award from the UN about five years ago. According to UN WHO statistics, infant mortality and teen-age pregnancy rates in Iran are much lower than those in most third-world countries. In 2005, the Iranian parliament approved abortions carried out before four months gestation if a woman's life was at risk or if the fetus was malformed. With technical support from the United Nations Population Fund, the government undertook literacy and family planning initiatives. The Fund's specific contributions to the Literacy Movement Organization of Iran included training more than 7,000 teachers, developing a nine-episode television series on women's health issues (including family planning), and procuring computers and other equipment.

Conclusion:

After the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the government has implemented the *Shari'at* law, though it is not as harsh as in Saudi Arabia, and it did include imposition of Islamic code of dress for women, and strict *Shari'at* rules in the judiciary. Although women's inclusion in civil and political life was maintained and were encouraged to participate fully in all forms of public life while some punishments for crimes were to comply with the Islamic tradition such as execution for rape and adultery.

Regardless the enforcement of a complete hijab (dressing code) and punishment on charges of "improper hijab", many developments have occurred in the areas of birth control and abortion, child custody, education, divorce and marriage law, and employment including the right to become judges. It is true that Iranian society is committed to unisex policies in public places and some legal and customary restrictions are on women in their choice of career, travel outside the country, but it is also a

fact that Iranian women have never been historically so active in the social and political life of the country as holding high academic, managerial, and even political positions.

There is a positive trend to rereading and reinterpreting some religious texts and literature that have been misappropriated. Iranian Constitutional law explicitly confirms, in its various articles, gender equality as an Islamic principle and a necessity for the welfare of human being and together with the improvement of women's education and their social responsibility there is hope to have a more participation of women in every fields of the society.

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POLITICS OF ISLAMISATION IN UZBEKISTAN

Kuldip Singh & Sushil Bodh*

Abstract:
A Sudden upsurge of Islamisation with militant and violent versions was witnessed in post Soviet Uzbekistan. Although Islam for centuries has been an important marker in determining Uzbek and Central Asian identity and national consciousness, it has nevertheless been a multifaceted phenomenon, characterized by the divisions along Shia-Sunni suborders, syncretic shamanist practices, popular/official denominations and lately by Wahabi and fundamentalist versions. Post Soviet Uzbekistan suffered from an ideological void, providing an opportunity to external actors to engage with the people having fundamental tendencies and religious orthodoxy, as opposed to Central Asian ethos and incumbent secular regime. Along with external actors of oil rich West Asian states, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan the regional actors Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Hizb-ul Tahreer (HT), Akramiya and the like were instrumental in the resurgence of Islam with violent consequences for the whole region. Prolonged fusion of religion with ethno-nationalism and subsequent Soviet suppression, the tribal social structure, economic depression and repressive policies of Islam Karimove's authoritarian rule are no less significant in determining resurgence of Islam in Uzbekistan.
Keywords:
Uzbekistan, Muslim fundamentalism, IMU, HT, Karimove, Central Asia.

Introduction:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was an Islamic resurgence in Uzbekistan and political Islam began to assume an important aspect in Uzbek social and cultured life.[1] Uzbekistan is primarily considered as a Muslim nation because Muslims account for about 88 % of the population. Majority of ethnic Uzbeks are adherents of the Hanafi sect of Sunni Islam, but the Wahhabi sect has flourished in recent years.[2]

Islam in Central Asia does not have a monolithic structure, various trends, like Sufism or even pre-Islamic faiths like Shamanism, and other religions, particularly Buddhism, exerted influence and wielded power".[3] There are two popular branches of Sufism in the region, the Yasaviyya and the Nagshbandiyya and their adherents are marked as obscurantist cults.[4] Apart from major split between the Sunnis and the Shias, there also exist different doctrinal tendencies like traditionalism,

* **Depatment of Political Science, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.**

1 Ramakant Dwivedi, "Challenges of Religious Extremism in Uzbekistan", *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol.9, No.1-2, Jan-June, 2005, p. 125.

2 M.H Syed, *World Infopaedia Uzbekistan*, Program Publications, New Delhi, 2007, n. 2, p. 116.

3 Anita Sengupta, *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition*, Lexington Books, New York, 2003, p.17.

4 Nandini Bhattacharya, *Dueling Islam, Soviet and Regional Identity in Central Asia*, Shipra Publications, Delhi, 2008, p. 126.

fundamentalist, and in the 19th and 20th centuries, modernist. There is also the inter-play between dogmatic religion, Sufism and popular piety, "official" Islam, and "popular" Islam. All of these streams share one faith, but the social structures in which their common Islamic sentiment developed differed, as did their political experiences.[5]

Islam of Central Asia is a sui generis. It is some what different and liberal from Islam existing in countries like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Therefore, they easily build relations with the communists during the Soviet era. Some Central Asian Muslims even embraced communism and Muslim Communist Party was also established.[6] Among the Muslims of this region, the Jadids brought new ideas in the beginning of 20th century who campaigned against tradition and orthodoxy. An eloquent young Jadid, Mahmud Khoja Behbudiy spoke out vigorously and persistently attacked the personal and social abuses of Islam in his writings like "*The Dispute*" and in the journal "*Ayina*".[7]

But when independence came in 1991, the Central Asians passed through an ideology crisis. External religious influences and Muslims activists of Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the United States started penetrating in the region for gaining popularity. However, they failed to acknowledge or respect indigenous Central Asian religious histories.[8]

According to Uzbek president Islam Karimov "we could witness in Uzbekistan over 100 nationalities … and almost 15 religious confessions are represented"[9] and even though Uzbek government always showed its respect towards Islam as Karimov took his oath on Quran and also did a hajj but what the Uzbek government hated most is the mixing of Islam and politics.[10] Therefore, Karimov recognizes non-religious secular thinking as 'parallel with religion'. He believes that the interaction between secular and religious thinking will promote the richness, variety and development of the human race[11] and values the crucial role that

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5 *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition*, p. 11.

6 Ahmad Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, Orient Longman Private Limited, New Delhi, 2002, p. 35, n.3.

7 Edward A. Allworth, *The Modern Uzbeks From the Fourteen Century to the Present: A Cultural History*, Hoover Institution Press, California, 1990, p. 142.

8 Russell Zanca, "Explaining Islam in Central Asia: An Anthropological Approach for Uzbekistan", *Journal of Muslim Affairs*, Vol. 24, No.1, April 2004, p. 105.

9 Islam Karimov, *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century*, available at (www.umid.com).

10 *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition*, p.201, n.11.

11 John R. Pottenger, "Civil Society, Religious Freedom, and Islam Karimov: Uzbekistan's Struggle for a Decent Society", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23(1), March, 2004, p. 65.

religion, especially Islam, plays in assisting individuals to 'overcome the trials of human existence as well as their isolation and alienation from one another'.[12]

The present status of Islam in not orthodox in character as the public opinion surveys reveal that in Uzbekistan, 44% of those claiming to be religious Muslims did not pray at all and 23% did so occasionally. About two-thirds of the respondents who claimed to be religious either did not fast at all or fasted occasionally and even one third Uzbek believers could not correctly translate the sentence, "*There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet*" from Arabic, though this *shahda* is the first and most important belief in Islam.[13]

Islamic Revivalism and Radicalism:

Islam was the chief marker of the Uzbek identity, though not the only, when Soviets entered the region. Soviet policy towards Muslims was not static but it changed from one phase to another. When the Soviets needed Muslims support they granted concessions to them, otherwise the anti-religious propaganda and repression against the Islam continued to be its main policy.[14] During the preparatory stage of the Bolshevik revolution, Muslim nationalism was protected and encouraged by the party leaders in order to win the support of the Central Asian Muslims. But the moment there came up the question of sharing power with the local Muslim organization; the Soviet system began to show unwillingness and incompatibility between the two ethoses.[15] An organization called "Society of Godless Militants" of Jews and communists had the duty of conducting anti-Islamic propaganda campaign. Several journals were published for guidance and training of the people for the tactics and methods of anti-Islamic propaganda. The different tactics of anti-Islamic struggle were: (i) attack on Islamic custom and rites, (ii) attack on holy places and Sufism (iii) the Ulema were attacked on various anti-people allegations as untrustworthy, exploiters and enemies of people, (iv) the

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12 John R. Pottenger, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23(1), p.66.

13 Ajay Patnaik, *Nation, Minorities and States in Central Asia*, Anamika Publishers and Distributors (P) Limited, New Delhi, 2003, p. 168. According to one survey, only 20% of the Uzbeks believe that Uzbekistan should be for the 'Uzbeks alone' though more than 90% would prefer their children to marry someone of the same nationality. In their everyday life, people identify with the smaller identities and this allows for a lot of heterogeneity in the broader ethnic identity and positive inter-ethnic harmony, (*Nation, Minorities and States in Central Asia*, p.148.). These things clearly indicate the heterodoxy, tolerance and adaptability of Uzbek Muslims.

14 Ali Muhammad Rather, "Religious Revivalism- A Case Study of Uzbekistan", *Central Asia: Continuity and Change*, Mushtaq A. Kaw, (Ed.), Srinagar: 1999, p. 238.

15 *Dueling Islam: Soviet and Regional Identity in Central Asia*.

liberation of women from traditions like child marriages, veil, bride price and for this purpose the so called liberated women were used.[16] Thus, during the Soviet period traditional Islam and its followers went to a drastic decline in Uzbekistan as well as in the whole region.

Soviet particularly targeted Islam because they considered Islam as backward and reactionary. They depicted Islam as a reactionary Mullah-led force supported by British imperialists that was trying to undermine the revolution and prevent progress and education.[17] Under the Soviets, there were campaigns designed to eradicate Islam from Central Asia. The aim was clear: wean the Central Asian from reactionary Islam and convert them into urbanized proletarians. Then the Basmachi revolt came in forefront and indicated that Islam is a mobilizing force and has capability to unify people of Central Asia against Soviet rule.[18] In February 1918 Basmachi rebellions as an Islamic revolt led by Mullahs and clan leaders erupted. It considered of a number of independent guerrilla groups in region.[19] They organized themselves as the "Army of Islam".[20] They were fighting for a variety of causes: Jihad, *Shar'ia*, Turkic nationalism, anti communism. But, they could not survive for more than a decade and got defeated by Soviets in 1929.[21] In May 1944, the Soviet government created the Council for Affairs of Religious Cults by special decree, which later become the leading Soviet state organ dealing with Islam and Muslims. The Soviets reduced Islam to the legal status of a cult. The policy of "official Islam" was developed by Soviet government and government opened two "official Madrassas in Tashkent and Bukhara in which Mullahs would train in both Islamic and Soviet studies. But, the "parallel Islam" or "unofficial Islam" was working clandestinely in the region.[22] The last anti-Islamic crusade was launched by Mikhail Gorbachev under his "liberalizing" programme of perestroika, in which Islam was perceived as the enemy of modernization a rallying point for anti-Russian feelings amongst Central Asia's ethnic groups.[23]

When independence came in 1991, the Central Asians, ideologically speaking, went back to the 1920s.[24] Islam was the natural

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16 Ali Muhammad Rather, *Central Asia: Continuity and Change*, p. 35, n. 3.
17 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.36, n.3.
18 Rob Johnson, *Oil, Islam and Conflict*, Reaktion Books Limited, Great Britain, 2007, p.63.
19 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 35, n.3.
20 *The Formation of The Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition*, p.191, n.11.
21 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.35, n.3.
22 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.39.
23 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia.*
24 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 35.

choice to fill an ideological vacuum created by the disintegration of the Soviet Union and its Communist ideology. Islam has certain characteristics that make it a credible alternative for many natives as it is a coherent system of legal codes and moral principles.[25]

Accordingly, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was an Islamic resurgence in Uzbekistan and it began to assume an important factor in Uzbek social and cultural life.[26] Thereafter, Islamic activists started acting openly; number of mosques and Madrassas were reopened. However, soon after independence Karimov held almost all powers in his own hands and banned opposition parties, placed tight controls on media, and outlawed public discussion and debate on future policy. By turning his own political survival into state policy, Karimov ensured that the politically active elements, intellectuals, mullahs, new political parties would be forced, like the Islam of Soviet era, to go underground. And with that, all these groups eventually became radicalized and violent and among them many young people looked towards Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia for new ideological inspirations[27] which resulted in the emergence of number of radical and extremist groups. Some of them are following:

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU):

IMU was created by Tohir Yuldashev in 1996. He and his field commander Jumaboy Ahmadjonovich Khojiyev also known as Juma Namangani and Tojiboy were instrumental in expanding and strengthening the base of the IMU in the region.[28] In an interview with the Voice of America, Yuldashev set out the IMU's goals, "the activities are fighting against oppression within our own country, against bribery, against inequalities and also the freeing of our Muslim brothers from prison".[29] He also claimed that "we have a movement of one hundred thousand people. It takes only a spark to burn down a forest, and for that one match is sufficient. We have enough strength to settle the scores with Karimov, and God willing, there are many more thousands of Mujahedeen who share this dream". [30] He traced the origin of IMU back to the Basmachi and called them his grand fathers.

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25 Shireen T. Hunter, *Central Asia Since Independence*, Praeger Publications, Washington, 1996, p.35.

26 Ramakant Dwivedi, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, Vol. 9, No.1-2, p.125, n.9.

27 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p. 54, n.3.

28 Ramakant Dwivedi, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, p. 128, n.9.

29 J. K. Mohanty, *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2006, p.112.

30 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p.113.

On 25th August 1999, the IMU issued an official communique declaring Jihad on the Karimov regime and calling for its overthrow[31] and bring Islam to Uzbekistan, but that is only the first part of their plan. They have other aims also for the whole of Central Asia.[32]

IMU was banned on 25 September 2000 by the US department of state for being a terrorist organization under its law.[33] The US invasion of Afghanistan after 9/11 had an immediate impact on the activities of IMU, which had established links with Taliban and Al Qaeda as IMU used Afghanistan as a base to launch attacks into Uzbekistan in 1999 and 2000. According to Emmanual Karagiannis, "the IMU was physically and organizationally devastated by the 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan".[34] In the late November 2001, a report said that the group leader, 32-years old Juma Namamgani died from wounds received during US bombing in Mazare-Sharif region of Afghanistan.[35] Though, Taliban never participated directly in any of the terrorist activity in Uzbekistan but played a role of co-operator and host to them[36] indicates the relationship of Taliban with IMU.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir (HT):

Hizb-ut-Tahrir al-Islami or simply Hizb-ut-Tahrir is an active organization in Central Asia. It can be judged by the fact that there are more HT prisoners in Central Asia's prisons than those of any other movement, including the better known IMU.[37] HT is said to have originated in the revivalist movement of Wahabis of Saudi Arabia though it is separated from them on several issues but Uzbek government labeled all Islamic militants as Wahabis including HT members.[38] The first HT pamphlets appeared in Uzbekistan in 1995-96 after a Jordanian named Salahuddin, came to Tashkent in 1995 and set up the first HT cell with the help of two Uzbeks.[39]

HT aims to establish a single, unified Caliphate across Central Asia, from Xinjiang province to the Caucasus so that ultimately the entire Muslim world is united as one *Umma* without national borders. To achieve this goal, they want to topple the Karimov government and HT leaders are confident that they are winning support from within

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31 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*.
32 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.133, n.3.
33 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p.114, n.39.
34 Cerwyn Moore, "Combating Terrorism in Russian and Uzbekistan", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 20, No.2, June 2007, p.315.
35 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, n.39, p.114.
36 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p. 117.
37 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.116, n.3.
38 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p.118.
39 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p. 120.

Karimov's inner circle, and have sympathizers in the army, intelligence services, and the upper echelon of the bureaucracy, like in the custom department-who help to promote their programme.[40]

Though, the extent of the support for the movement is unknown, it has been suggested that its membership in the region may have reached 12,000-15,000, against the leadership claim of 80,000 supporters.[41] The leadership predicts that because the repressions by the Central Asian regimes are so severe that ultimately there will be a war and 'we have to prepare for that'.[42]

Akramiya:

Akramiya, another Islamic militant group in Uzbekistan, has been banned by the Uzbek government. It is a splinter group of the outlawed Hizb-ut-Tahrir. It is reported that leaflets distributed by Akramiya encourage suicide bombers[43] and the suicide bomb attacks in Tashkent during March 28-April 1, 2004 followed by suicide bomb attacks in front of US and Israeli embassies in Tashkent on July 30, 2004 were reportedly organized by this group of the HT.[44]

The emergence of these groups has become one of the major threats to the security of Uzbekistan and the followings may be the factors responsible for the turmoil in this region.

Firstly, the continued suppression of Islam by the Soviets was the reason for the Islamic resurgence in the region.[45] According to Alexandra Bennigsen, "Central Asia was deeply distressed by and thoroughly discontented with the Soviet experience and the suppression of Islam was the foremost reason of their anger. As Islam provided the strongest anchor to hold traditional life in Central Asia, the Soviet government was bent upon eliminating its influence root and branch".[46]After the Communism collapsed, the people of Central Asia suffered an identity crisis, and Islam became one of the most important components of new identity that eventually emerged in the region. The rise of Islamic militia, it is argued, was directly rooted in the self-assertiveness of nations searching for a collective identity and the Islamic forces that grew

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40 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.123, n.3.

41 David Lewis, "Uzbekistan: Authoritarianism and Conflict," Mekenkamp, Monique, Tangerine, Paulvan, and Veen, Van de Hans, Eds., *Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia*, Lynne Reinner Publishers, London, 2003, p.194.

42 *Oil, Islam and Conflict*, p.78, n. 28.

43 M.H. Syed, *World Infopaedia Uzbekistan*, p. 122, n.2.

44 Ramakant Dwivedi, *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies*, p.132, n.9.

45 Vitaly V. Naumkin, *Radical Islam in Central Asia Between Pen and Rifle*, Rowman and Little Field Publishers, New York, INC, 2005, p.25.

46 *Dueling Islam: Soviet and Regional Identity in Central Asia*, p.120, n.12.

provided the basis for the revival of Islam on a wider scale in the post-Soviet period.[47]

Secondly, there is lack of one homogenous group with one overriding identity of Islam. Apart from being divided, they are affected by strong ideological and clan/regional loyalties that negate and oppose the unifying appeal of Islam[48] and therefore the search for the collective identity becomes another factor responsible for division in the region. Even if most of the people are followers of the Hanfiya order yet the division between the *jadidist* or modernizers and *qadimist* or conservatives existed in the society long before the Sovietization.[49] Similarly, in June 1989, Uzbek and Tajik youths went on the rampage against fellow Muslims, Mashketian Turks in the Fergana valley, with many deaths and much destruction. The same brought riots, also in the Fergana valley, between Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, both traditionally Muslim people.[50]

Thirdly, the economic deprivations also lead to extremism in the region as the poor socio-economic conditions are the cause of Islamic militancy. The general assumption is that poverty, underdevelopment, unemployment and other grievances give birth to extremism.[51] In 1992 acute food shortage led to riots in Tashkent, which were finally put down by military force. In 1994, after Uzbekistan was forced to introduce its own currency, the Uzbek som, inflation rose to 1500%. The rising level of poverty and unemployment as high as 80% in the Fergana valley has become major concerns for the regime, but it appears to be doing little to tackle the issue, as four hundred thousand young people come on the job market every year and 60% of the population is now under 25 years old. These young people are jobless, restless, and hungry and their numbers are growing.[52]

Fourthly, the repressive policies of the Uzbek government towards Islam cause the extremism. The policies of the Uzbek govt. to curb the growth of religious fundamentalism and terrorism, rather than being helpful, in curbing the menace, have contributed substantially to its growth and spread due to the reaction they generate among the suffering masses.[53] Since, independence, the regime has worked hard to reassert

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47 *Nation, Minorities and States in Central Asia*, p.162, n.22.
48 *Nation, Minorities and States in Central Asia*, p.164, n.22.
49 *Radical Islam in Central Asia Between Pen and Rifle*, p.15, n.56.
50 James Critch Low, "Nationalism and Islamic Resurgence in Uzbekistan", *Central Asia its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects*, Hafeez Malik, (Ed.), The Macmillam Press Limited, London, 1994, p. 244.
51 *Radical Islam in Central Asia Between Pen and Rifle*, p. 22, n.56.
52 *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*, p.82, n.3.
53 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p.130, n.39.

the authority of the national board, bringing about another era of "official Islam". The Muslims directorate has a monopoly over religious instruction and the organization of contacts with the rest of the Muslims world. New Madrassas have appeared under its auspices, and it organizes the Hajj for several thousand citizens every year. In also controls all mosques and their personnel in the country. Mosques not controlled by the directorate, by contrast, are deemed illegal and have in many instances been closed.[54]

Although, Karimov is attempting to build a secular state, but he has prevented the growth of any Islamic opposition that if able to gather mass support could pose a serious threat to his regime. In such a context, the dichotomous nature of his policy towards Islam is clear as are his repressive actions explicable.[55]

Response of Uzbek Government:

(i) Constitutional and other legal provision:

There are number of provisions in the constitution which provide some religious freedoms along with several restrictions.

Article 31 guarantees freedom of conscience to all the citizens of the country. Everyone shall have the right to profess or not to profess any religion. Any compulsory imposition of religion shall be impermissible.[56] Instead, Article 61 separates religion from state and defines religious organizations and associations shall be separated from the state. The state shall not interfere with the activity of the religious organizations. Similarly, Article 29 says everyone shall be guaranteed freedom of thought, speech and convictions. Everyone shall have the right to seek, obtain and disseminate any information, except that which is directed against the existing constitutional system and in some other instances specified by law. Freedom of opinion and its expression may be restricted by law if any state or other secret is involved. Furthermore, Article 12 states, public life shall develop on the basis of a diversity of political institutional, ideologies and opinion. No ideology shall be granted the status of state ideology.

There are several other constitutional provisions which oppose the extremism. The Uzbek government also passed a special law to regulate financing of religious institutions and clergymen and also to ensure strict

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54 Adeeb Khalid, "A Secular Islam: Nation, State, and Religion in Uzbekistan", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 35, No.4, Nov. 2003, p.587.

55 Tom Everett-Heath, "Instability and Identity in a Post-Soviet World", Tom Everett-Heath, Ed., *Central Asia Aspects of Transitions*, Routledge Curzon, London, 2003, p. 194.

56 *Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan*, 1992, [www.press-service.uz].

control over the substance of the sermons in mosques. To this effect Karimov government set up a committee for religious affairs in the republic's council of ministers.[57]This 1998 law on freedom of conscience and religious organizations regulates several protective measures. Articles 14 states, with the exception of those working in religious organizations, citizens of Uzbekistan are not permitted to wear "ritual" dress in public places. In May 1998, government further amended provisions of the criminal code and code on administrative responsibility treating the practice of religion. Under Article 84 of the amended code on administrative responsibility, violators of the prohibition on ritual dress are fined five to ten times the minimum monthly wage or subject to administrative arrest up to fifteen days.[58]

(ii) Reaction of Uzbek President Islam Karimov:

To Karimov religion strengthens people's faith, purifies and elevates them, and makes adherents stronger in overcoming the trails of human existence. It transfers universal and spiritual values from generation to generation. That is why religion is a natural part of human life. Unfortunately, the religious consciousness, being used not as a constructive power but as a destructive one, causes fanatism which is accompanied by intolerance towards all others.[59] He argues that Islam has been used for political purposes as some Muslims are aiming to discredit democracy, the secular state and a multinational and multi-confessional society. It would be fatal for the history of the 21st century, if Islam and the states of Islamic culture were to be represented as a new "empire of evil" and an overall zone of danger.[60]

Karimov states that numerous Islamic organizations want to impose 'alien spiritual ideals and values' that will disrupt Uzbek society and ultimately return Uzbekistan to medieval obscurantism. He argues that Islamic militants, calling themselves 'fighters for faith', attempt to justify heir political activism. He has condemned both International terrorism and religions extremism and fundamentalism and declared them to be greatest threats to Uzbek stability and sovereignty.[61] Moreover, he told to a press conference on 17 April 1998, that one way to avoid religious fanaticism was to integrate with European structures and in the strongest ever gesture statement he, in May 1998, told the

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57 Nalin Kumar Mohapatra, *Political Culture and Democratic Development in Central Asia*, Bookwell Publishers, New Delhi, 2006, p. 267.

58 [http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1999/Uzbekistan/uzbek-03.htm]

59 *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century*, n. 18.

60 *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century*.

61 John R. Pottenger, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 23(1), p.68, n.20.

parliament that he was ready to shoot the leaders of an Islamic fundamentalist movement himself, if MPs lack the courage to do so.[62]

***(iii) Efforts at the International level*:**

Efforts at the international level are also made by Uzbek government to curb the terrorism in the region. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become the first International legal document the Republic of Uzbekistan has joined after gaining independence. Uzbekistan has chosen a path of building democratic and legal state and powerful civil society. Uzbekistan dedicated the 60th anniversary of adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 2008.[63] On November 1999 on Istanbul Summit of OSCE, President Karimov introduced proposal to create an International center in the structure of UNO for the fight against terrorism.[64] In addition, on October 2000, International Conference in Tashkent was organized by UNO, OSCE and Uzbek government for safety justification and stability in Central Asia. Experts from 70 countries and 40 International Organizations worked out proposals on general approaches for reluctant strategy to the international terrorism.[65] Similarly, the meeting of SCO was held in Tashkent on June 17, 2004 to eliminate religious extremism.[66] In short, there are 13 documents of the UNO, directed to counter terrorism. They are 11 conventions and 2 protocols and it is very important to emphasize that Uzbekistan is a participant of all acting conventions and protocols of the UNO on the fight against terrorism.[67]

Conclusion:

Islam is an integral part of the lives of the people of Uzbekistan as well as the whole Central Asian region. It helped them to create their indigenous identity and always helped them in difficult and crisis situations. Karimov also recognizes this thing and argues that the cultural values of Islam, its traditions and its huge spiritual heritage greatly contribute not only to the historical evolution of our region but also to the qualitative shaping of its new image.[68] Though, Uzbekistan and the whole region is going through a very crucial phase due to several reasons like Islamic extremism, authoritarianism, proto democracy etc. and most

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62 *Terrorism and Militancy in Central Asia*, p. 164, n. 39,

63 [http://www.jahonnews.uz/eng/documents/decrees/decree on 60 anniversary of human rights declaration. Mgr]

64 [http://www.gov.uz/en/ctx.scm?sectionid=119&contented=1953].

65 [http://www.gov.uz/en/ctx.scm?sectionid=119&contented=1953].

66 Yalman Onaran, "Economic and Nationalism: The Case of Muslim Central Asia", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 13(4), 1994, p. 134, n. 4.

67 [http://www.gov.uz/en/ctx.scm? sectionid=119&contented=1953].

68 *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century*, n.18.

of scholars especially western scholars are holding Islam as the main culprit for this situation because they correlate Islam with problems and conflicts yet Islam per se is not a threat to the security and stability of the Central Asian region rather misinterpretation made by the organizations like IMU and HT for their political gains are responsible for the crisis of this region.

BERDYMUKHAMMEDOV'S TURKMENISTAN
A MODEST SHIFT IN DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL POLITICS

Sebastien Peyrouse *

Abstract:
While Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov seeks to reintegrate Turkmenistan on the international and regional levels and attempts to establish new partnerships with foreign companies to accelerate investments, domestic policy seems a poor reflection of the regime's evolution. The authorities' attention is focused on social issues totally neglected by the regime of Saparmurat Niyazov. New schools were built, provincial hospitals have reopened, roads and railways are improving, land reforms, however small, are welcomed, and a modest decentralization has emerged. However, the general social situation remains tense: a total absence of public liberty, violations of religious rights, mostly unacknowledged massive unemployment, a loss of confidence of the middle classes, whose educational and professional opportunities have been reduced, increasing corruption of state organs, and rural poverty influenced by the social problems of recent years. Yet, the main long-term problem probably remains the country's lack of human capital, which was destroyed in recent decades and needs time to be restored.
Keywords:
Turkmenistan, Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov, Domestic Politics, Education, Health, Media, Food Security.

Introduction:

In December 2006, the death of Saparmurat Niyazov raised many questions about the future evolution of Turkmenistan. The eccentricities and the dictatorial management style of the deceased president, his systematic repression of all opposition, and the increasingly difficult social situation, exacerbated by the financial misappropriations of the president and his entourage, lent the country an extremely negative image. The arrival to power of a new president raised hopes of a "thaw" along the lines of Nikita Khrushchev after the death of Stalin. The declarations and first measures decreed by the new Turkmen leader did in fact go in this direction, as Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov reoriented certain aspects of Turkmen policy. On the international level, he encouraged an exit from the country's isolationist policies and the revival of foreign cooperation, in particular in the economic realm.[1] Concerning domestic affairs, he announced large reforms in key sectors such as health, education, and agriculture. Among other improvements, he brought far greater attention to the trafficking and consumption of

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* **Managing Editor, China & Eurasia Forum Quarterly.** This paper is also appearing simultaneously in *China & Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2010, pp.47-67.

1 Richard Pomfret, "Turkmenistan's foreign policy," *The China Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 2008, pp. 22-26.

drugs.[2] These problems have been recognized publicly and the country now participates in various regional and international projects aimed at limiting their growth. However, the much-awaited shift in domestic policies has been more cautious than what has taken place in foreign policy.

One of the most visible steps, the new Code of Social Security instituted in Spring 2007 has helped restore full pensions, or significantly increase them, for nearly 200,000 citizens who had been arbitrarily deprived under Niyazov. Water and electricity are still free, payments for rent and heating are symbolic, and many staples such as flour and salt are sold at low prices and sometimes for a loss, as during Soviet times. Meanwhile other benefits enjoyed by the Turkmen people have been put into question: rising gasoline prices, limiting free access to city gas to 600 m^3 per year, the override to be charged through meters installed in 2010. The official exchange rate was 5,200 Manat to the dollar when Berdymukhammedov came to power, and has now reached 14,200 Manat, leading to very high inflation. Furthermore, since unemployment is officially non-existent, pauperized people cannot claim social or financial assistance. Finally, despite the promises to decentralize made in 2007 and the increased attention by the new president to rural areas, the autonomy of municipalities and local councils is more symbolic than real.

Public Space, Still Controlled:
Cult of Personality: Has One President Followed the Other?

Upon taking office, Berdymukhammedov put forth all the signs of deference necessary to establish his legitimacy as the successor of the first president of independent Turkmenistan and to pay homage to Niyazov. The "men of the December 21," who put him in power, belonged mainly to the *siloviki* (representatives of the power ministries) and expected ideological stability. However, later in 2007, Berdymukhammedov diminished references to the "holy book" or the *Ruhnama*, Niyazov's ideological "Red Book", ordered the removal of Niyazov's portraits from primary and secondary schools immediately after the educational reform, and seemed to hesitate as to where to take the ideological framework. From 2008 to 2009, the portraits of Niyazov in public spaces were gradually removed, new bank notes were issued without the face of the first president, and the official cult of the

[2] Bernd Rechel, Inga Sikorskaya, Martin McKee, *Health* in *Turkmenistan after Niyazov*, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, London, 2009, p. 25.

[3] However number of holidays deemed not compliant with Turkmen traditions, such as Valentine's Day, have been banned.

Ruhnama was quietly shelved. The most apparent excesses, like the changes to the calendar, were abolished and popular holidays such as Victory Day and International Women's Day were reinstated.[3] Relocating the Neutrality Arch, one of the primary symbols of the Niyazov regime, was openly discussed. "Deniyazovization" accelerated when in 2009 the birthday of the former president was ignored, even though the occasion was marked with great festivities during his lifetime. The *Ruhnama* continues to be taught, but it is now recommended that teachers not to dwell on the chapters that mention Niyazov and his family. A special commission to confiscate Niyazov-era books, including the *Ruhnama*, was set up and searches were conducted of government and business offices.[4]

However, this progressive erasure of the cult of Niyazov gave way to a new cult of the second president and his family. Although Berdymukhammedov did not proclaim himself a prophet or confer upon his works prophylactic virtues as Niyazov decreed for the *Ruhnama,* the cult of personality continues. The portraits and writings of Berdymukhammedov have gradually replaced those of Niyazov.[5] The media continue to describe him with designations similar to those of his predecessor, including "leader of the fair state", "dear son of the Turkmen people", and the "backbone of the nation."[6] The theme of the "Great Renaissance", for which Berdymukhammedov would be the same incarnation, has replaced that of the "golden age" of the nation.[7] A museum dedicated to his grandfather, who was killed during the great earthquake of 1948, opened in 2009 and the cult of his parents is spreading.[8] Some measures related to the cult of personality should not be understood as mere gestures of ideological upbringing, but arise because of financial reasons. The requirement for each university or school to buy presidential works constitutes a significant source of revenue for the presidential administration. The decree on the obligation

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4 Kumush Ovezova, "Author of Rukhnama not to be mentioned," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* March 24, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1029> (May 2, 2010).

5 Personal observations, Ashgabat, April 2008.

6 "Happy new cult!" *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* September 9, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=115I> (May 2, 2010).

7 Slavomir Horak, "Velikoe V ozrozhdenie: prodolzhenie ideologicheskoi traditsii Turkmenistan [The Great Renaissance. The Continuity of Ideological Tradition of Turkmenistan]," *Politeks* 3, 2009, pp.100-115

8 "Grandfather's museum," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* November 27, 2009, <http://wwwochrono-tmoorg/en/?id=1226> (May 2, 2010); "The statue of the President's father installed in the Ashgabat higher educational establishment," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* February 15, 2010, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1289> (May 2, 2010).

to play sports in the name of the good physical health of the nation requires citizens to pay a fee to join sports clubs, and is similar to the mandate to lay wreaths on monuments related to Turkmenbashi (Niyazov's ceremonial name) and his family, since the floral industry is run by relatives of the president.

Through multiple staged media appearances, Berdymukhammedov has sought to preserve a paternalistic attitude. He continues the tradition set by Niyazov of televised sessions in which persons accused of crimes are publicly reprimanded, making note of his openness and willingness to fight against crime, corruption, and abuse. A particularly tangible sign of the maintenance of a highly authoritarian regime, the situation of human rights has not improved at all since the death of Niyazov. Aside from very restricted possibilities for expression and movement, individual freedoms are limited. An unofficial curfew has been upheld, forcing citizens to return to their home before eleven in the evening, while a process of forced retraditionalization obliges women to dress in a traditional manner at formal meetings.

A Long-Awaited Cultural and Media Opening Delayed:

Despite the promising signs associated with the reestablishing of the theatre and circus, which were forbidden under Niyazov, the longawaited cultural liberation has not taken place. In December 2009, the Turkmen national theater was ultimately banned from staging *Metranpazh*, a play by the Russian playwright Alexander Vampilov, as the Ministry of Culture decreed that it was more judicious to put on Turkmen plays.[9] While all forms of art had been particularly mistreated under Niyazov, the hard sciences received the same treatment and were removed from the public space. Although Berdymukhammedov has not really restored any breathing room for the arts, he has sought to revitalize scientific endeavours, as he is aware of their direct and immediate impact on the state of economic development. By June 2007, he had ordered the reopening of the Academy of Sciences, which was abolished in 1997-1998, established a Fund for science and technology, and has again allowed thesis defenses in the exact science and humanities.[10]

A mark of the cultural closure of the regime, the publishing field remains paltry, limited to presidential works and a few other books that the authorities strictly control. All publications are still endorsed by the

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9 "V Turkmenistane zapreshchena postanovka p'esy russkogo dramaturga [Turkmenistan forbids the staging of Russian dramatic pieces]," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* December 2,2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?id=2304> (May 2, 2010).

10 Rafiz Abazov, "Science in Turkmenistan: How Far Will Reforms Go?" *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst,* June 15, 2009, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5150> (April 14, 2010).

president's ideology advisor, Viktor Khramov, the former director for ideology of the Central Committee of the Turkmen Communist Party. Publishing is carried out by students from the Academy of Arts of Turkmenistan, whose cost is markedly less than that of professionals. Apart from school textbooks, the majority of publications are devoted to the president. In more than eighteen years of independence, not one literary work by a contemporary Turkmen writer has been published. Each year Turkmenistan holds a book fair, which is meant to showcase the cultural revival of the country. Whereas a number of Russian writers travelled to it in 2008, hoping to initiate some cooperation, the country is now so closed off that none of those Russian authors returned in 2009. It is still practically impossible to import books published in Russia, unless one is in possession of a special permit, which is extremely difficult to obtain. Some Russian editors were allowed to make gifts of books, later deposited at Turkmenistan's national library, to the fair in 2009.[11] Latinization also poses an obstacle, since the few classics from the Soviet era that have been republished are in Latin writing, which remains difficult to access for many of the country's citizens. In April 2010, Berdymukhammedov finally reopened the municipal libraries that his predecessor had closed down.[12] No additional Cyrillic typography machine was available in the country, with Gazprom reintroducing the first in 2007.

The hoped-for reforms in the area of freedom of the press have remained a dead letter. Today all media organizations are controlled totally by the state and are subject to permanent censorship. Only one information agency exists, the Turkmen State Information Agency *(Turkmen Dovlet Habarlary)* and all the information provided to journalists comes from the presidential press. At present, none of the twenty-five newspapers, fifteen magazines, four television channels, or four radios station has the least bit of independence. As under Niyazov, the broadcasting of bad news, for example shortages or factory failures, is prohibited. A sociological study conducted clandestinely reveals that the Turkmen population gives priority to watching Russian television, followed by Uzbek and then Turkish television, via satellite;[13] however,

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11 Kumush Ovezova, "Ne vsiakaia kniga - put' k progressu [Not every book is a way to progress]," *The Chronicles of Turhmenistan*, October 9, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/? heading=I2.> (April 15, 2010).

12 "V Turkmenii vnov' otkrylis' biblioteki, zakrytye pri Turkmenbashi [The libraries closed in Turkmenistan by Niyazov have reopened]," *Gundogar*, April 1, 2010, <http://www.gundogar.org/?topic_id=25&year=2010&month=4> (April 15, 2010).

13 "Pessimizm turkmenskikh telezritelei [The pessimism of Turkmen television audiences]," *Institute for War & Peace Reporting*, July 23, 2010, <http://iwpr.net/fr/node/ 47336> (August 17, 2010).

this remains the privilege of a minority. In 2008, Berdymukhammedov ordered the disassembly of satellite dishes, arguing that they blighted towns. Even if no written order followed, the dishes have begun to be taken down by the administration so they can be replaced by a cable system enabling the state to control the channels to which Turkmen citizens can gain access. According to the Turkmen Initiative report, the dismantling of these dishes is to be continued.[14]

In such conditions the vast majority of the population has no interest in the daily newspapers and magazines, which are considered of poor quality and pro-government. In order for periodical publications to survive, the government compels state employees to subscribe to several newspapers at once, and those who do not comply are threatened with dismissal. They must generally subscribe to the newspapers linked with their profession, but also to magazines without any connection to their jobs. Company leaders receive a quota from the ministry indicating the number of copies of each newspaper that must be distributed within the organization. In some provinces, a minimal subscription fee of about US$18 has been set, a significant amount for those with very low salaries, such as teachers. The number of subscriptions is deducted from salaries and, in many cases, it seems that the interested person is not even asked to which newspaper he or she would like to subscribe. This results in some households receiving two or three copies of the same newspaper when the members of the same family work in different places.[15]

All internet subscriptions stipulate that users are not allowed to visit sites containing information likely to harm social morale, relations between the national minorities, and the prestige of the country. Since 2000, the state corporation Turkmentelekom has controlled the entire network. The opening of 15 Internet cafes in 2007 can certainly be counted as progress, but using the web requires the presentation of a passport, and the manager must obligatorily note the name and the address of the user. In 2008, the authorities installed new filters to prevent access to dissident sites.[16] Exchanges of emails via the most popular sites such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Hotmail are monitored. Other sites were blocked in 2009, such as You Tube and Live Journal. Those

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14 On Internet and medias in Turkmenistan, see O *sostoianii svobody sredstv massovoi informatsii, prava na svobodu slova* i *prava na dostup k informatsii v Turkmenistane* [On the state of the freedom of the press, and the right to free speech and to accessing information in Turkmenistan], Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights, Vienna, 2008.

15 Nazar Saparov, "Subscription to periodicals is underway in Turkmenistan," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan*, May 7, 2008, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1090> (April 15,2010).

16 Personal observations, Ashgabat, April 2008.

who can gain access to the internet mainly work in companies and businesses, with access for ordinary citizens remaining extremely limited.[17]

Minority Rights and Restrictions* on *Religious Freedom:

The rights of national minorities are widely flouted. Under Niyazov, minorities were deprived of public expression and could not receive education in their national languages. It is still difficult to obtain information on national minority schools, most of which were closed or converted into Turkmen-language institutions. According to the Turkmen Education Initiative, there are only six schools in Mary with some instruction in Russian, five in Turkmenabat, four in Dashoguz, and five in Turkmenbashi.[18] The Uzbek-language schools have all closed. Despite negotiations in 2007 between Nursultan Nazarbayev and Berdymukhammedov to build a Kazakh-language school in Turkmenbashi, it seems that the project has stalled. There is practically no media for the national minorities. Today only one Russian-language newspaper exists, *Neitral'nyi Turkmenistan,* as well as one dual language Russian-Turkmen publicity newspaper, *Habarlar.* The main television channel broadcasts one program in Russian for two hours each day. About 10% of radio information time is in Russian. None of the other national minority languages is used in the media.

Far more than his predecessor, Berdymukhammedov emphasizes the internal dangers that ethnic separatism and religious extremism pose, which the 2009 military doctrine discussed at particular length. The methods of control and repression against religion have barely changed. The second president since independence has extended all regulations imposed under the Soviet regime and then maintained or enhanced by Niyazov, in particular the obligation of every religious movement to register with the Ministry of Justice or else face a criminal penalty. The number of authorized movements remains extremely small. Although the separation of state and religion is specified in the Constitution, it does not exist in practice. The main body of religious control, the Committee for Religious Affairs *(Gengeshi)* continues to appoint Muslim representatives and Orthodox clergy, who then refuse to register "competitor" movements. The situation of religious education is equally difficult, as Berdymukhammedov has not allowed any madras as to open.

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17 "Prezident Turkmenistana ne vypolniaet obeshchaniia 0 dostupe v Internet [The president of Turkmenistan fails to respect his promises concerning access to the Internet]," *IWPR,* November 12, 2009, <http://iwpr.net/fr/node/z9353> (August 17, 2010); "Turkmen Internet. Our survey," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* June 16, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?heading=4&page=17> (August 17, 2010).

18 *Turkmenistan. The Reform of the Education System,* Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights, Vienna, 2009, p. 20.

Muslims are forbidden from receiving religious training abroad and imams educated outside of Turkmenistan cannot earn tenure; only future Orthodox priests have the "privilege" of going to Russia to study. The number of people authorized to make the *hajj* has remained as low as before, 188 people out of the 5,000 authorized by the Saudi authorities in 2008.[19] Like Uzbekistan, control over Islam is extreme. A somewhat dissident person, even if he or she belongs to a Sufi movement, may be imprisoned for "Wahhabism." The mosques are empty, as believers prefer to avoid being controlled by the police and assimilated to the Islamists.[20]

Many minority faiths are also banned, a punishment that is part of a broader policy of discrimination against national minorities. Shiism, practiced by the country's Azeri minority of at least 30,000 people, is a major target. No Shiite mosque can be officially registered and a handful of clandestine establishments and prayer rooms open to Shiites are tolerated in Sunni mosques. These illegal buildings numbered around five in 2008. A Shiite mosque in the village of Bagyr, near Ashgabat, was demolished in 2005. The last Shiite imam of Turkmenbashi, a city that is home to much of the Azeri community, was forced to leave the country the same year.[21] The Iranian Embassy in Ashgabat maintains its own mosque, which is protected by diplomatic status, but remains inaccessible to citizens of Turkmenistan. This is also the case for Armenians, who were unable to obtain official recognition and are forced to worship in Russian Orthodox churches. Finally, as in most of the other Central Asian republics, a citizen belonging to the titular nationality who has converted to a Christian movement is subject to strong pressures. The Protestant movements are in the sights of the authorities, faithful Protestants lose their jobs and their children are threatened with expulsion from school. Police raids in places of worship or in the homes of believers remain commonplace.[22]

Repression continues to be meted out regularly and some Soviet practices have been maintained, such as internment in psychiatric hospitals, which in 2008 happened to a correspondent of Freedom Radio, Sazak Durdymuradov. This practice seems to have returned in force because it can result in detention without going through the courts.

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19 "Turkmenistan: Exit bans, haj ban, visa denials part of state religious isolation policy," *Forum 18*, February 2, 2010, <http://www.forumI8.org/Archive.php?article_id=I403> (March 8, 2010).

20 Personal observations and interviews with anonymous Turkmen citizens, Ashgabat, April *2008*.

21 Sebastien Peyrouse, Sadykzhan Ibraimov, "Iran's Central Asia Temptations," *Currents Trends* in *Islamist Ideology*, Vol. 10, 2010.

22 On the religious situation, see Felix Corley's reports at www.forumI8.org.

Prisons are overcrowded; the penal facility in the city of Bairamali was built to house 800 people, but now holds between 3,500 and 4,000. Many prisoners prefer to sleep outside, around the barracks when the weather permits. Visitation buildings are far too small, forcing families to pay bribes of around US$30 to speak to a detained relative.[23] As in other prisons in Central Asia, the more affluent prisoners are able to achieve a higher standard of living, and can even bring in prostitutes and alcohol. Under Niyazov, regular amnesties guaranteed the government substantial income, since they were the result of deals with families. Under Berdymukhammedov, it seems that the number of people pardoned has fallen significantly.

Renewed Social Protections? Education, Health, and Housing:
An Educational System Difficult to Rebuild:

It is perhaps in education where the hopes have been the highest. Some positive measures were taken and rapidly adopted in February 2007. Mandatory schooling, reduced to nine years by Niyazov, has gone back to ten years.[24] However, it still remains one year less than that of Russia, meaning that pupils are unable to obtain the necessary equivalents to pursue their studies in Russian universities. Niyazov eliminated several subjects such as physics, chemistry, universal history, and literature, while Berdymukhammedov has reestablished the human and natural sciences to the curriculum. From first to seventh grade, courses of physical education have also been reintroduced. Despite these positive measures, the announced reforms remain suspended.

The reduction in the number of teaching hours of the *Ruhnama* has also failed to create a freer atmosphere. All textbooks published after 2001 contain citations, texts, and extracts from it. On the other hand, any new textbooks published since 2007 contains multiple references to the new president. Some disciplines aimed at spreading the personality cult of the new president have been included in the curriculum. Students must, for example, study the "Policy of the Renaissance era," in which they are taught about the new summits the country has attained and the justness of presidential decisions. Another subject called "Basics of a healthy life style" has been made compulsory and is taught on the basis of presidential works for one hour per week across all grades.[25] Most of

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23 "Koloniia v Bairamali [Penitentiary colony in Bairamali]," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* November II, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?id=2263> (May 15, 2010).

24 "Ovnesenii izmeneniia v Zakon Turkmenistana 'Ob obrazovanii v Turkmenistane' [The introduction of changes to the Turkmenistan law 'On Education in Turkmenistan']," *Neitra/'nyi Turkmenistan,* February 16, 2007.

25 *Turkmenistan. The Reform of the Education System*, p. 10.

the persons responsible for it have no special training in teaching, but are rather recruited on the basis of their availability.

Officially, the number of teaching hours per instructor has been reduced, going from thirty to twenty-four hours per week, as has the number of children per class, which is now limited to twenty-five. But the lack of teachers in rural areas often makes presidential decisions difficult to enforce. Although the authorities announced a forty-percent salary increase for teachers, the raise has not been realized in practice, since this amount is deducted from salaries for various social needs. Most of the country's schools have not been refurbished since independence, with the exception of a few cosmetic renovations undertaken during summer vacations using funds collected from teachers and the parents of pupils. Schools lack qualified staff, for example, for teaching physics and chemistry. Berdymukhammedov decided instead to multiply the construction of new schools. The symbol of the new generation of schools, the Pushkin school, is the only one that maintains a Russian curriculum. Inaugurated in December 2009 in the presence of the Russian and Turkmen presidents, it is financed by Russian energy firms.[26] This school has today become one of the striking examples of the corruption of teaching. Even if entry is officially free, bribes of between US$5,000 and US$10,000 are allegedly required to enroll one's child, on top of which additional bribes are payable throughout the year, in particular in the form of gifts to teachers.[27] The Pushkin school enables access to Russian universities, where the education is better and the fees are markedly lower than in Turkmen universities.

Turkmen schools still have a general lack of textbooks. Most date from the Soviet era, although some were published during the 2000s, including textbooks for physics in 2003, English in 2006, and fourth grade mathematics in 2007. Possibilities for learning foreign languages remain very limited in terms of hours and are restricted to Russian which, given its disappearance as the language of learning, is increasingly taught as a foreign language, sometimes English, rarely German. The majority of Russian teachers left the country after they were dismissed from their positions, following Niyazov's decision to eliminate most of the classes taught in Russian and to forbid state administration to minorities. Until 2001, the country had about 1,900

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[26] Marina Volkova, "Gazprom Opens School in Ashgabat," *The* Voice *of Russia*, December 22, 2009, <http://english.ruvr.ru/2009/12/22/3187073.html> (May 15, 2010).

[27] "Pochem besplatnoe obrazovanie v russkoj shkole? [How much is the free education at the Russian school?]" *Ferghana.ru*, December 30, 2009, <http://www.ferghana.ru/article. php?id=642,0> (February 10, 2010).

middle schools, including 49 that provided all of their lessons in Russian and 56 with lessons partly in Russian. In 2001-2002, most were eliminated and the teaching of Russian was reduced from three hours to one hour per week. In Ashgabat, only two schools were able to retain two classes in Russian each. Everywhere else, most Russian courses were shut down and the children sent to Turkmen-speaking classes.[28]

Berdymukhammedov also announced reforms to the university system, including the opening of new faculties, the implementation of computer science units, and fee-paying education. The obligation imposed by Niyazov to complete two years of work experience before entering university has been abolished. Tertiary education is no longer limited to two years and can reach four, five, or six years with the reintroduction of doctoral programmes, which had been eliminated. Research departments in universities are reopening, such as the Supreme Certification Commission, which has already conferred several dozen doctorates. The number of university places, however, remains well below the demand. In 2008, there were 20,000 applicants for only 4,000 places in the higher institutes, which means that the majority of students had to pay bribes. In 2008, new institutions emerged such as the Academy of Civil Service, the Institute of International Relations, and the National Institute of Economy and Management. Entry into the Institute of the Economy and Management, the state university, the Police Academy, or the military or energy institutes entails bribes of between US$10,000 and US$20,000.[29]

Despite Berdymukhammedov promoting the end of the international isolation of the country, education and research exchanges with other countries remain difficult. In April 2009, the Turkmen president and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev decided to institute reciprocal recognition for degrees; however, the measure has not yet been ratified by the countries' respective parliaments. The renowned Gubkin Institute of Oil and Gas, based in Moscow, has opened an office in Ashgabat to train young Turkmens to be oil professionals, as the country faces an acute shortage of technicians. But the operation and recruitment of the institute has fared poorly due to the steady deterioration of relations between Russia and Turkmenistan. In the context of deepening relations with the European Union, which is attempting to stand as a key partner of the new president, the Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes for student exchange were

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28 *Turkmenistan. The Reform of the Education System,* p. 20.

29 "Somnitel'nyi progress turkmenskogo obrazovaniia [The doubtful progress of the Turkmen education system]," September 18, 2009, <http://gundog.newhost.ru/?oII048425000000000000013000000> (June 3, 2010).

established, although their adaptation to the Turkmen system has been particularly unsuccessful.[30] In 2009, the Turkmen authorities cut down drastically on cooperation with foreign universities, in particular those in Europe and the United States. Almost one hundred Turkmen students with the proper visas and enrollment documents were forbidden from pursuing their studies abroad. The authorities were concerned with the ideas, deemed too liberal, being disseminated in certain new universities in Central Asia, such as the American University of Bishkek or the KIMEP in Almaty. A study conducted by the Ministry of Education reportedly showed that 80% of students at the end of their schooling would prefer to leave the country to study or work abroad.[31]

Progress and Setbacks in Public Health:

The second area where reforms have been most anticipated is health. The new president has committed himself to putting the health system back on its feet, since it suffered severely from Niyazov's policies during his final years. In spite of the improvements, the Turkmen health system remains in bad shape. The number of trained personnel is far too few, and the system is suffering from the effects of the reduction of the duration of medical training to two years, which Niyazov imposed. Berdymukhammedov, a dentist by trade, increased the length of training to five years, but it will be necessary to wait a while until proper standards are again reached. Basic medical care remains very limited, in particular in rural areas, where access to care is clearly inefficient. Health financing is by no means transparent. As the Rechel report notes, it is still difficult to obtain official information about the country's health system, yet this is indispensable in the effort to outline strategies for improvement.[32]

The regime maintains secrecy over numerous medical domains and their financing, and it continues to hinder the diagnosis of infectious diseases. It refuses, for example, to recognize that people are infected with HIV / AIDS and allegedly has reported only one new case between 1989 and 2006.[33] According to the Rechel report, this very low level is

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30 Peter Jones, "The EU-Central Asia Education Initiative," *EUCAM working Paper*, no. 9, February 2010, <http://www.eucentralasia.eu/fileadmin/ user_upload/PDF/ Working_Papers/WP9-EN.pdf> (April 17, 2010).

31 "Turkmenistan: Students Slapped with Five- Year Travel Ban," *Eurasianet.org*, November 12, 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/ departments/ civil society/ articles/eav111309b.shtml (April 23,2010). The ban was partly lifted at the beginning of 2010.

32 Bernd Rechel, Inga Sikorskaya, Martin McKee, *Health* in *Turkmenistan after Niyazov*.

33 Bernd Rechel, Inga Sikorskaya, Martin McKee, *Health* in *Turkmenistan after Niyazov.*, p. 18.

not credible. In 2009, for fear of provoking a movement of panic among the population, Berdymukhammedov restricted information on preventative measures designed to limit the spread of bird flu, and representatives from the Ministry of Health prohibited school children and state employees from wearing masks. The Ministry seems to have focused much more on the fight against the rumors than against the spread of the H_1N_1 virus. In November 2009, it requested the withdrawal of brochures providing information about the flu and its prevention that had been distributed in state organs. Posters designed in collaboration with UNICEF and put up in public places were also taken down.

Several international institutions, including the European Union, the World Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank, have expressed readiness to assist the country in the health sector; however, the hoped for cooperation with the international community in this area has also been called into question. Public health NGOs have not been able to develop, despite the policies of opening promised by Berdymukhammedov. The last NGO established in Turkmenistan, Doctors without Borders (MSF), left the country after claiming it was confronted with permanent hindrances from the political authorities.[34] Indeed, the government henceforth claimed to be capable of fighting tuberculosis on its own, but this is highly unlikely given the progression of infectious diseases. While MSF did not contest the authorities' plans for improvement in health-which include the opening of a center for the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis in 2007, within the State Medicine Institute, and a new strategy for the prevention and the fight against tuberculosis for 2008 to 2015-these plans will not bear any results until 2013-2014 at the earliest. Moreover, one person in five affected by tuberculosis in the country has developed a drug-resistant form, which is very difficult to treat and calls for international knowledge.[35]

The Construction Boom and Continued Expropriation:

The famous construction boom under the Niyazov regime did not end with the leadership change. Berdymukhammedov seems as symbolically invested in new building projects as his predecessor. The corruption related to real estate is indeed a source of huge gains, whether in the context of big construction projects or smaller buildings. In 2008, for example, Berdymukhammedov ordered the renovation of two cinemas in

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34 "Vrachi bez granits. Pri prezidente-medike nam v Turkmenii mesta ne nashlos [Doctors Without Border did not find its place under the President-physician]," *Deutsche Welle*, December 22, 2009, <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/o,,5046276,00.html> (March 9, 2010).

35 *Deutsche Welle*, December 22, 2009.

Ashgabat, allocating US$20 million for the project while independent estimates showed that the actual cost of the renovation amounted to only US$1 million. New buildings remain unaffordable for a majority of the population. Under Niyazov, the price of a three-room apartment in a new building was nearly US$300,000 at the official rate (or approximately US$62,000 at the black market rate). A credit scheme meant to facilitate the acquisition of new apartments has been adopted. However, the political and administrative authorities of several *vellayat* (regions) that lack the financial resources demand that buyers repay the loans too quickly. In Ashgabat, several persons who bought their apartments with cash or repaid their credit on time have been suspected of corruption and money laundering and summoned by the Prosecutor or Ministry of National Security (MNB).[36]

The majority of newly constructed buildings are empty, whatever their original function. Cultural buildings are largely under-utilized; luxury homes cannot find tenants, and hotels lack guests. This is especially true in the famous tourist area of Avaza, near Turkmenbashi, the main Turkmen Caspian port formerly known as Krasnovodsk. The seaside resort is supposed to have sixty hotels, restaurants and shopping centers, recreational activities, a seven kilometer-long artificial river, six artificial lakes with beaches and islands, four acres of wooded parks, sports complexes, a Disneyland, a planetarium, an aquarium, and even an ice rink, as well as a free trade area to promote market entry for foreign companies. In 2009, six hotels were in operation to accommodate roughly the first 2,000 Turkmen tourists, often the workers of companies involved in the construction of Avaza who were forced to take their holidays there.[37]

The policy of property seizure by the government without compensation has also continued. Despite official pronouncements guaranteeing compensation for any expropriated property, the government uses many arguments to deny the planned compensatory measures, which rarely correspond to the actual value of the destroyed houses.[38] The value of the underlying land, for example, is not taken into account in the compensation process. Many of those expelled are given small apartments in remote areas in return for their houses with land near

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36 "Housing issue," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* August 25, 2009 <http://www.chronotm.org/en/?id=I139> (April 17, 2010*).*

37 "Otdykhat' zastavia-t [Rest is mandatory]," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* December 7, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?id=2305> (February 15, 2010*).*

38 Dovelet Ovezov, Inga Sikorskaya, "Nedovol'stvo kampaniei turkmenskikh vlastei po snosu zhilykh domov [Property seizure organized by the Turkmen authorities creates discontent]", *Institute for War & Peace Reporting,* March 1, 2010, <http://www.iwpr.net/ru/node/29959> (May 2, 2010).

the city center. The political and administrative pressures are such that most of the victims of expropriations prefer silence. However, several reports confirm that the situation has improved compared to Niyazov, who in many cases offered no compensation at all.

Social and Economic Development Issues:

Agriculture and Food Security:

Agricultural questions, and the linked subject of food security, are important issues for the Turkmen authorities as they worry about destabilization in rural areas. Despite the reforms announced in 2007, meant to develop the private sector and allow farmers greater initiative, this sector is kept under tight state control. Numerous legislative changes have barely altered the situation. The state leases land, choosing crops and setting production quotas for so-called independent farmers, and then buys their output at unilaterally set prices. Farmers are still obligated to grow cotton or wheat, despite the desire of many to cultivate produce or livestock. The announced reforms have not led to a liberalization of agriculture, although some government actions, such as increasing the purchase price of grain in January 2009(with a further increase expected to come in 2010), have helped to encourage grain production.[39] Berdymukhammedov also expressed support for livestock development, since half the meat and poultry consumed in the country is imported from the United States, Iran, Russia, and Kazakhstan. But with the exception of a few new factory farms for poultry financed by Turkish companies, the sector remains moribund.

To ensure autonomy in food production, an obsession of the regime, Turkmenistan would need to produce 2.5 million tons of grain each year. Officially, the country produces 1.8 million tons, but independent estimates describe an output that does not exceed one million tons,[40] thus necessitating imports of more than half the country's grain stocks. In addition, production is often of poor quality due to harsh climatic conditions and limited productivity. Some of the grain can only be used for livestock feed. Moreover, as under the previous regime, overly ambitious economic goals sometimes lead to serious consequences for the lives of farmers and the rest of the population. In the regions of Lebap and Dashoguz in 2008, the authorities were too late in giving farmers permission to prepare fields for new cottonseed, in the mistaken

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39 "Turkmen Farmers to Get Higher Prices," *Institute for War & Peace Reporting*, January 21, 2009, <http://www.iwpr.net/fr/node/396I> (March 17, 2010).

40 "Turkmenistan. State hails food self-sufficiency, but many say claim is overblown," *Asia News*, July 26, 2010, http://www.asianews.it/news-en/State-hails-food-self-sufficiency, but-many-say-claim-is-overblown-I9037.html, (July 26, 2010).

expectation of maximum yield. The fields were then already frozen and tens of thousands of hectares could not be worked.[41] At the end of 2008, flour shortages provoked serious social tensions in these regions. Queues for bread multiplied and stocks sold within hours. Fear of renewed shortages of flour and rising wheat prices have led some people to buy more bread than necessary. Turkmen flour is still rationed, but the better off can obtain more costly Russian or Kazakh flour, which is sold without restrictions. Problems with the procurement of bread were still reported in some provincial cities in 2009.

The Deterioration of Irrigation Systems:

The agricultural situation is particularly sensitive as the country faces severe environmental problems, particularly the dilapidated state of its irrigation systems combined with the high water requirements of some crops, such as wheat and rice.[42] The authorities seem to want to maximize the repair of existing structures and claim to have modernized hundreds of kilometers of irrigation networks throughout the country. Many of them remain dry or damaged and the country lacks the water pumps needed to irrigate its fields. The question becomes even more acute in the regions of Lebap and Dashoguz, fed by the Amu Darya, a river that had particularly low water levels in 2008. In both areas, a majority of wheat fields have not received any water at all and the crops can survive only through the water from snowfall. As throughout the rest of Central Asia, the winter of 2007-2008 was terribly cold, and in the region of Dashoguz, the livestock died.[43]

The start of construction on the "Lake of the Golden Age", presented by Niyazov's propaganda as the solution to the irrigation problems of a part of the country, is considered by many experts as a future environmental tragedy and a source of potential tensions with neighbouring Uzbekistan. Berdymukhammedov has not questioned its construction, as he sees it as one of the engines of future irrigation of the Karakum desert. The filling of the lake, at a length of 103 kilometers and a width of 18.6 kilometers, could take fifteen years and cost about US$4.5 billion. It is likely to have serious consequences, among them the drying up of already-abused irrigation networks, the massive evaporation of the lake during the summer, the desertification of the area around the

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41 Sayara Djumabaeva, "Agricultural sector will recover on command," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* January 8, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?heading= 16> (March 3, 2010).

42 Oraz Akhmet, "Will bread be sufficient?" *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* September 15, 2008, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1013> June 11, 2009).

43 "Considerable loss of livestock," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* June 3, 2008, http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=553 (April 17, 2010).

lake and, therefore, displacement by wind of sand and chemicals.[44]

Turkmenistan is already affected by the ecological crisis of the Aral Sea, the poor water quality of which facilitates the spread of hepatitis, intestinal problems, and other infectious diseases. Despite some desalination and water purification plants that Turkish firms like Sekhil installed in the border region of Dashoguz, many Turkmen citizens continue each day to drink and use water unfit for consumption. The difficulty of accessing drinking water thus adds to environmental issues for a part of the population, especially in rural areas. In the summer of 2009, the authorities of Turkmenbashi and Dashoguz had to make cuts in water; in the latter city, water was available for only two to three hours per day. Steps have been taken to try to facilitate access to water, for example by allowing private companies to distill it, but demand still far exceeds supply and the cost of privatized water is too large for rural areas.[45]

Costly Transportation:

Since coming to power, Berdymukhammedov had expressed his willingness to develop transport networks to open up the country and accelerate the transit of foreign goods on national territory. However, the improved transportation of goods is not intended to apply to individuals. The movement of people remains very difficult, for both economic and political reasons. During the Soviet era, Turkmens grew accustomed to travel, whether by land or air, at very low, subsidized prices. Despite several increases, this privilege had been kept under Niyazov for travel within the country, but the cost of transportation has dramatically increased since 2008. The lack of air links also leads to a demand that greatly exceeds supply and promotes the black market, where tickets are sometimes sold at ten times their face value. The movement across borders is always difficult; the fares for the most desirable routes especially to Turkey, the main destination for small business *(chelnohi)* - have risen sharply. The cost of road transport has also increased significantly, further reducing the mobility of Turkmen citizens. From 2007 to 2008, the cost of petrol increased by a factor of eight.[46] The political authorities decided to distribute free gasoline coupons beginning in the first half of 2010, to a maximum of 12.0 liters per month per

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44 Richard Stone, "A New Great Lake or Dead Sea?" *Science 320,* May 23, 2008, pp. 1002-1005; "Turkmenistan to create desert sea," *BBC News,* July 16, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/z/hi/asia-pacific/8154467.stm> (May 11, 2010).

45 Nazar Saparov, "Lack of water in Turkmenistan," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* May 28, 2008, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1091> (May I, 2009).

46 Alan Peskov, "Mnimoe blagosostoianie [An Illusory Well-Being]," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* August 27, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/?id=2102> (December 3, 2009).

vehicle. A car owner receives coupons for 72.0 liters every six months. The procedure for obtaining these vouchers has grown administratively complex after hundreds of thousands of tons of fuel was attributed to persons not entitled to it.[47]

Migratory Flows and a Growing Demographic Crisis:

Despite the numerous administrative barriers, it seems that more and more people leave Turkmenistan to work abroad in Turkey, Iran, and increasingly Russia. These would-be migrants obtain tourist visas through travel agencies or manage to receive official documents to leave the country due to deep administrative corruption. Although much lower than migration from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, larger migration flows from Turkmenistan appear poised to take shape, mainly in the north and east. In 2005, 1,800 Turkmen "tourists" from the Dazhoguz region visited Russia; in 2006, this figure increased to nearly 2,400 and reached 4,000 in 2008.[48] While ethnic Turkmens tend to move to Turkey and Iran for work, ethnic Russians whose occupations have been particularly affected by Turkmen policies, such as teachers and professionals, dominate the flows toward Russia. Berdymukhammedov stopped Moscow's repatriation programme of the Russians from abroad launched in 2006, closing the provincial offices of the Russian emigration services in 2008.[49]

For the authorities, this emigration discredits the social reforms of the second president and further shrinks a population already in decline since independence. Unlike his predecessor, who said that the country had about 7 million inhabitants, Berdymukhammedov has quietly acknowledged the demographic crisis facing the regime, especially in urban areas. While no reliable figures are available, families with four to five children, common in the last years of the Soviet Union, have become rarer in large cities because of the social crisis affecting the country. Aid to mothers is extremely limited, around US$I2 per month.[50] Several measures have been taken to motivate births. In March 2008, a law known as *Ene Mahri* stated that women who give birth to at least eight children could receive social benefits. However, this financial incentive

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47 Meret Babaev, "Coupons for free Gasoline," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan*, December 24, 2009, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=I239> (February 10, 2010).

48 Marlene Laruelle, Ed., *Dynamiques migratoires et changements soci(haux en Asie centrale* [Migration dynamics and societal changes in Central Asia], Petra, Paris, 2010.

49 Essen Aman, "Turkmens move to Russia," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan*, April 28, 2008, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1058> (March 10, 2010).

50 Essen Aman, "Large families are uncommon in today's Turkmenistan," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan*, March 25, 2008, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=1054> (May 10, 2010).

is limited and the status of *Ene Mahri* is granted only after the eighth child reaches eight years of age and all the other children are still alive, an indirect revelation of the high infant mortality rates in the country.[51]

Increasingly Omnipresent Corruption:

As in other countries in the region, the prestige of a profession includes not only potential salary earned, but also the potential for bribes that can be extracted in the exercise of one's profession. Corruption is especially accentuated in Turkmenistan, where high turnover in the upper echelons of the administration lead state officials to attempt to enrich themselves as quickly as possible. This turnover ensured the stability of the system under Niyazov, as it does under Berdymukhammedov, since ministers protesting against their dismissal become the target of inspections in which they are accused of corruption and embezzlement. In a country where unemployment is high, all functions related to the allocation of posts are particularly profitable. Berdymukhammedov therefore has not at all changed the political-administrative structure, and Niyazov-era policies continue in all the profitable sectors of the national economy. This is especially true for gas revenues, a portion of which is sent to accounts in Europe (Deutsche Bank is regularly suspected to receive Turkmen presidential accounts). The only difference between Berdymukhammedov and his predecessor is the clear implication for members of his family and his clan, the Ahal-Teke.[52] The new president has therefore attempted to substitute his own financial networks to those controlled by the former president and his family. On a more modest social scale, small entrepreneurs face continuing pressures from the bureaucracy. Health and tax inspections are the most common because the payoff is usually more profitable than the fine that would otherwise be levied. Tax inspectors seem to calculate their payoff at about five to six percent of total sales. Thus to obtain a license to sell alcohol, one will generally pay a bribe of US$7,000.[53]

Conclusion:

While Berdymukhammedov seeks to reintegrate the country on the international and regional levels and attempts to establish new partnerships with foreign companies to accelerate investments have been made, domestic policy seems a poor reflection of the regime's evolution.

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51 Essen Aman, *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* March 25, 2008.

52 Maksat Alikperov, "Turkmen Gas as a family business," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* February 3, 2010, <http://www.chrono-tm.org/en/?id=I276> (March 10, 2010).

53 Maksat Alikperov, "Large-scale corruption of small businesses," *The Chronicles of Turkmenistan,* February 13, 2010, <www.chrono-tm.org/en/?heading=34> (May 16, 2010).

It is indirectly affected by the slight opening in certain international areas; Turkish, European, Japanese, and South Korean investments may change the situation in the region by opening a new facility or rehabilitating local production, which has sometimes been the case in recent years. The authorities' attention is focused on social issues totally neglected by the regime of Saparmurat Niyazov. New schools were built, provincial hospitals have reopened, roads and railways are improving, land reforms, however small, are welcomed, and a modest decentralization of power has emerged. However, the general social situation remains tense: a total absence of public liberty, violations of religious rights, mostly unacknowledged mass unemployment, a loss of confidence by the middle classes whose educational and professional opportunities have been reduced, increasing corruption of state organs, and rural poverty influenced by the social problems of recent years (rising gasoline prices, decreased numbers of subsidized products, difficulties in ensuring food security, and increased malnutrition). Rather than these issues, the main long-term problem probably remains the country's lack of human capital, which was destroyed in recent decades and needs time to be restored.

The case of Turkmenistan reveals how difficult it is to relax a dictatorial regime and to liberalize domestic policies so long as the same elites are in place. The change of a president does not necessarily entail real evolutions of political practices. The domestic policies remain the most difficult to liberalize, while foreign policy, in particular when energy issues are concerned, evolve more rapidly. This raises questions about the leeway given to authoritarian countries like Turkmenistan, which is often classified by international human rights organizations in the same category as North Korea and Myanmar/Burma. One may indeed wonder whether the tendency of Western observers to paint the regime in terms of its leader is relevant. Can Berdymukhammedov change the situation consistently or is he a hostage to the system? What degree of flexibility will be possible in a few years for the regime in an unstable geopolitical environment like that of Central Asia? The advocates of inaction can manipulate these questions, however legitimate. Throughout the twentieth century, some politicians with iron wills have drastically influenced their system and liberalized some of the most closed regimes. Given the complexity of the challenge, one may wonder to what extent Turkmen elites can attempt to change their country and meet growing social demands without creating a situation in which the political system would be completely reconsidered and former elites delegitimized.

IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

G. M. Mir*

Abstract:
The demise of the former Soviet Union (FSU) led to disintegration of watersheds resulting in water disputes particularly between water-surplus and water-deficit sub-regions, followed by arbitrations, treaties and some water-sharing agreements. Higher water mismanagement mainly by semi-desert steppy lower riparians, their fast growing water needs for dense population and huge thirsty irrigable land and the 'locational benefits', they claim for hydrocarbon resources, on one side, and the mountainous republics becoming conscious about the water resources – all is heading towards a complicated situation. Moreover, the three water-deficit republics have recorded the lowest irrigation efficiencies, much below the world average. Such unhealthy trends are mostly responsible for creating an environmental catastrophe in Greater Central Asia in which Aral Sea presents the worst scene. This dynamics has made irrigation management crucial and detrimental for the sustained crop production. In order to minimize the water loss from source to field, a critical issue in irrigation management, the respective governments, some international organizations, and NGOs have started to improve irrigation efficiency through the application of irrigation technology and the related measures. These initiatives have been successfully rewarded. However, the states being highly interdependent and single planning unit, their sustenance and development jointly lies in managing the resources, significantly water, which requires high degree of regional cooperation.

Keywords:
Irrigation Efficiency, Irrigation and Drainage, Operation and Maintenance, Irrigation Management Transfer, Irrigation Subsystems, Riparian Rights, Locational Benefit, Participatory Irrigation Management, Water Sharing Agreements, Upstream-downstream Dynamics, Anaeorobiosis, Regional Cooperation, Threshold Limit, Food Security.

Introduction:

Irrigation plays a crucial role in agricultural development of Central Asian republics (CARs), where 91% of net cropped area is irrigated which provide almost 97% of the regional crop production. Irrigated agriculture is critical to livelihood of majority of regional population and its absence significantly affects rural population. Irrigated water is, therefore, an asset and its availability or non-availability increases or reduces purchasing power and house-hold capacity to produce income in combination with other assets. Being a guarantee for food security, contributing almost 45% to the regional GDP, every non-farming livelihood activity of rural poor needs water. Prior to FSU break-up, the water sector used to be subsidized in Central Asia but after independence of the republics, water became unaffordable[1] and access to irrigation got

* **Professor, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, India.**

limited which deteriorated the basic infrastructure resulting in agricultural yield drops, ultimately affecting per capita income of farmers. The degradation of Irrigation and Drainage (I&D) systems in combination with the downturn in various aspects of agriculture, led to worsening irrigation efficiency. As the intensity of farmers responding to degradation of I&D systems increased by de-emphasizing crop production in favour of livestock breeding or seeking non-agricultural employment, the respective governments decided to introduce institutional reforms in the water sector and transfer the responsibility for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of irrigation systems to water users. A key element of Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) became the creation of Water Users Association. A periodical evaluation of such initiatives, particularly during the later transitional period suggests that considering water as economic, political and physical capital, the management initiatives should be pro-poor and eco-friendly. Moreover, in order to counter growing threat of environmental catastrophe and its adverse impacts on the regional bio-diversity, some fast-track steps have to be taken in all the five states, albeit, with varying nature and intensity.

Irrigation Systems:

For improving irrigation efficiency, a panacea for regional development, all the sub-systems of irrigation should function properly and in a balanced manner. These sub-systems include water delivery, on-farm distribution and drainage.[2] The spatio-temporal analysis of these sub-systems reveals that the wrong agro-based policies during FSU regime followed by break-down of irrigation infrastructure after independence of CARs have disturbed the coordination of the sub-systems. However, due to some effective management initiatives through the integrated and Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) efforts, the positive signs have been marked especially during the later phase of transition.

Water Delivery Sub-System:

This sub-system encompasses the source, conveyance, allocation and distribution of irrigation water as far as the users' turnout (farmgate). Most of the regional water, about 73%, originates from Pamir-Tienshan mountain complex, in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan respectively in the form of two major rivers i.e. Amu Darya (Oxus) and Syr Darya (Jaxarats)

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1 N. Nizamedinkhodjayeva Nargiza, *Rurual Livelihood and Irrigation Management Transfer: Case Study of Three Countries in the Fergana Valley of Central Asia*, International Water Management Institute, SIWI, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 2005, p.1.

2 C. Barrow, *Water Resources and Agricultural Development in Tropics*, Longman Development Studies, UK, 1987, p.204.

which are considered the life lines of the region as it is also shared by the three down-stream states; Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. [3] This water endowment which was considered a common resource of all republics during FSU became an international issue as a result of disintegration of watersheds. This led to recurring water-sharing disputes among the competitors particularly between the water-surplus and water-deficit areas. The 'locational benefit' doctrine further aggravated the crisis and the situation worsened in the area by growing disputes over sharing of transborder rivers. Arbitrations, water diplomacy, legal actions, and other water security issues forced these states to ink some water-sharing agreements, enabling the water-poor but energy-rich states to get required water deliveries in exchange of subsidized hydro-carbon resources through other payment modes. Non-compliance of some agreements, affected the credibility of the said agreements, leading to an unstable future for sustained irrigation particularly in water-deficit steppes.[4] In addition some unhealthy water resource predictions owing mainly to climatic change, induced experts to argue that water although being a physiological requirement of life, can no longer be an inexhaustible natural resource. Since for a sustained irrigation the sub-system 'sources of water' has to be assured and sustainable at any cost, the uncertain and seasonal source will lead to agricultural crises and regional disaster. The only way out to overcome this problem is to strengthen regional cooperation among these states, treat CARs as single planning unit, and manage water resources on the basis of watershed/river basin, which is an ideal planning unit for preserving, conserving and properly managing the water courses of the region.

So for the conveyance of water from source to turnout (farmgate) is concerned, it takes place by main canals, pipelines or aqueduct followed by distributaries (secondary channels, laterals, tertiary channels or pipes) to the turnout. Substantial irrigation water from source to fields is also drawn by underground water channels called *karez (quantas)*, *kuhla* and *nallah.* Water supplies suffer losses through seepage, spillage, overflow, evapo-transpiration, theft, etc. It has been estimated that the overall picture of CARs with respect to conveyance losses is alarming as more than 48% of the water withdrawals are lost during conveyance stage. Only 25-30% of the regional water diverted for irrigation takes the

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[3] G.M. Mir, *Resource Management, Regional Cooperation and Sustainable Development in Central Asian States*, Prince Art Printers, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 23-24.

[4] The growing need of water, competing for water courses on the analogy of locational benefit, highly un-even regional resource endowment, and a host of other factors, are great threat to the validity of these water-sharing pacts.

form of return flow as ground water.[5] However, the return flows are reported to be somewhat higher in Farghana valley. The remaining water lost through seepage and percolation returns to the irrigation system or feeds low lying irrigated fields. This picture of return flow continues even today causing water logging, anaerobiosis, salinity and other unwarranted environmental degrading forces which have spoiled the regional bio-diversity. The water spoilage is a double-edged sword, on one side, it reduces the water quantity diverted for farm and non-farm utilities, while on the other it spoils the soil, contaminate underground water and has played significant role in Aral Sea environmental catastrophe – a great threat to bio-diversity and future progress of the region.

The most obvious way of reducing conveyance losses from canal supply system, the dominant water carrier in the region, is to route canals to take advantage of topography and line any leak by plastic films. For water conveyance to far flung areas, plastic pipes can be used which are cheap and do not allow evapo-transpiration. Moreover, the system of underground water channels and horizontal wells *(karez)* and other sub-ground techniques which draw substantial water to the fields without any loss through evapo-transpiration, etc should have a denser network. The desiltation process and a continuous vigil and maintenance of all water carriers need to be on the top of management agenda. This is a stage of irrigation management shared both by the conveyance sub-stage and on-form water utility. The distribution stage has remained almost every time the basis of water disputes and soil pollution. In the related incidents recorded so far, CARs have taken a lead with a receding trend as result of some fruitful water-sharing agreements signed during the last decade.

The Farm Subsystem:

This sub-system consists of a network of tertiary channels, or more often, unlined ditches which distribute water from the turnout or where the farmers have access to water, to the point where it is actually applied to the crops. On-farm water losses are also high in CARs. However, the data pertaining to farm conduit efficiency[6] of the republics is neither complete nor with any standardized reliability. However, losses have been higher during this stage as against the world average. A spatio-temporal analysis of magnitude of wastage reduction during this stage in

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5 V.L. Shul'ts and Reki Sredney Azi, *Geografgiz*, Moskova, 1949, pp. 21-22.

6 Farm Conduit Efficiency is the ratio of the amount of water applied to the crop to the amount of water delivered at the turnout.

CARs reveals that the field irrigation efficiency[7] is higher in upper riparian countries as compared to the lower by virtue of climatic, topographic and edaphic variation. Similar factors are responsible for lower field application efficiency[8] in case of three downstream states. In recent years there has been considerable interest in deficit irrigation[9] in the region. This involves decreasing the amount of water or increases the interval between applications – in effect subjecting the crop to planned moisture stress in the hope that it will save water without reducing yields too much. Some crops like cotton may actually improve in quality if subjected to such treatment. The technique has been tested even on flooded rice and some varieties have responded well particularly in comparatively cool and moist belts. The on-farm water management which is crucial to sustained productivity and favourable environmental quality involves both irrigation as well as drainage.

Water Removal Subsystem:

Drainage is one of the most critical aspects of irrigation. Sustained cropping often depends almost as much on getting rid of excess water as on getting enough to irrigate with. This subsystem pertains to installation of drainage systems to control ground water level and / or to guide surface run off to where it can be safely disposed off when return flows are badly contaminated with salts and other agro-chemicals. Within irrigation and drainage, the later indicator is even worse in CARs due to lack of maintenance. Most of the horizontal as well as vertical drains are blocked, choked with weeds, silted with no standard quality repairs. Some drains have failed due to institutional as well as technological faults. Some being uncommissioned, others incorrectly built, scores left unfinished and some having no proper outlets.[10] This breakdown of I&D systems, particularly drainage failures, have led to salinization and water logging considered to be the most dangerous elements threatening regional agricultural sector. The alarming situation where the benefits of irrigation were being balanced by the losses rendered by poor drainage system, however, shows some positive signs of improvement in some areas of CARs through the application of some technological devices.

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7 Field Irrigation Efficiency is the ratio of volume of water actually consumed by the crops to the volume of water applied to the field.

8 Field Application Efficiency is the ratio of the average depth of water reaching and remaining in the root zone to the average depth of water applied to the field.

9 Deficit Irrigation is the ratio of irrigation water reduction to the amount of soil/root moisture retention required for crop growth.

10 M. Thurman, "Irrigation and Poverty in Central Asia: A Field Assessment", Report submitted to the World Bank for its publication in *Irrigation in Central Asia: Where to Rehabilitate and Why*, Washington DC, 2001, pp. 14-15.

The region requires two types of drainage sub-system. Draining soils require some sort of artificial drainage to cope with excess irrigation water and intense downpours. Whereas water logged areas need sub-surface field drains. Both types of drains require a constant vigil. The last stage of drainage requires careful attention when pesticides, herbicides, excess fertilizers and other agro-chemicals are drained to streams and other water bodies. This drainage component needs urgent attention on the part of management for its redressal before it adds to the already existing threshold limit in some affected areas of the region.

Irrigation Efficiency:

A positive correlation exists between the results of irrigation management efficiency. Higher irrigation efficiency leads judicious water-use in farming which ultimately affects the crop production, yield level and water productivity.[11] Whereas, water-use intensity and irrigation efficiency are negatively correlated, the magnitude of such relationship within CARs is evident from the table

Irrigation Efficiency, Water-use Intensity and Crop Production in CARs

Country	Indexed Matrix		
	Irrigation Efficiency	Water Use Intensity	Crop Production
Uzbekistan	0.2	0.08	1.49
Turkmenistan	0.3	0.06	1.47
Kazakhstan	0.4	0.05	1.58
Tajikistan	0.6	0.03	1.56
Kyrgyzstan	0.7	0.02	1.62

Source: Computed on the basis of data provided by various international agencies

An insight into the table reveals that the two mountainous states have lower water-use intensity and higher water-use efficiency[12] corresponding to higher water productivity. On the contrary, all the three lower riparian republics have registered lower irrigation efficiencies as a result of higher per unit farm water consumption and have lower indices of water productivity. Apart from this, due to the timely release of the required water quantities to downstream states the upper riparian suffer

[11] Water productivity is the ratio of crop yield to quantity of water used.

[12] Water-use efficiency is the ratio of volume of water used for crop production to the volume of water diverted from or stored at source.

huge losses through floods, deforestation, etc as a result of big dams and canals which often destroy their basic infrastructure. Moreover, they cannot irrigate their irrigable land, divert water and are unable to generate hydroelectricity, for which they have much potentials, owing to some water sharing agreements with co-riparian. This is an eye-opener for all the stakeholders, particularly the three downstream republics who are to shoulder the responsibility of developing, preserving, conserving and rationally managing the regional water resources. It has been predicted that if the existing levels of irrigation efficiencies are improved upto a reasonable level, all the irrigable area of the region will get irrigated, the production will be multiplied and the yield level will also increase substantially. Moreover, the improved irrigation efficiency will go a long way in averting the Aral Sea environmental catastrophe as well as will solve some of the major regional problems. Some of the international agencies[13] are doing commendable job in improving the management in water sector for sustained food, livelihood and nature but the water productivity will not improve without effective people-centered integrated irrigation management approach.

[13] The major ones include World Bank, IMF, UN, IWMI, SIWI, Water International etc.

US INTERESTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Ali Ahmad Abu Romman*

Abstract:
The disintegration of the USSR in December, 1991 and the consequent emergence of independent states in Central Asia, Caucasus, and the Baltic were unprecedented historical events in the global politics of modern times. As a result, five independent Central Asian states of significant geopolitical importance emerged on the vast Eurasian landscape. It is a land locked region of the gigantic Asian continent contiguous to six large states- Russia in the North-West, China in the East and Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India occupying the whole swathe of Southern fringe. The geographical location of Central Asia has been of decisive importance. The 19th century Great Game, Britain's against Russia, was mainly explained in terms of the strategic significance of the region because of its geographical location as the gateway to the Indian subcontinent and the Persian Gulf. In today's Great Game focus is on how to delink Central Asia from Russian ethnic domination and to build a polity attuned to democracy and liberal values, also to revamp their shattered economy marked as it is by shortages, inflation and unbalanced and lop sided pattern of development, evolve beneficial programmes of regional cooperation within the Central Asian states and with neighbouring countries and others.

Keywords:
Central Asian states, US, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, democratization, market economy.

Introduction:

The US interest in Central Asia is of recent origin. During the heydays of the Soviet Union, an iron curtain separated the Central Asian states from the outside world. The disintegration of Soviet Union opened the doors for the outsiders into the region, which was hither-to a *terra incognita* for outside powers. The newly liberated states felt the resource crunch and looked for possible new investors from the West, Japan and South Korea. However, there is no gainsaying that US was to play a central role in the region, being the sole super power. What are then the US objectives in the region?

Inaugurating the Central Asian Institute at the John Hopkins School of Advanced Studies, Washington in October 1996, James F. Collins, Special Advisor to the Secretary for the newly independent states, defined the US objectives in the Central Asian region as follows:

1. Support for the independence, sovereignty and security of each of the Central Asian states.

* **Department of Political Science, College of Economics / Al Ajalat, University of Al Jabal Al Gharbi / Al Zawya, Libya:** dr_ali34@yahoo.com

2. Assistance in the establishment of free market economies and democratic governments committed to equal opportunity and human rights for their citizens.
3. Integration of these states into the world community of political and financial institutions as well as their participation in the Euro-Atlantic security dialogue and co-operation programmes.
4. Encouragement of these states to pursue peaceful relations among themselves and with their neighbours for regional cooperation and to resolve local conflicts with international mediation.
5. Prevention of any trafficking in weapons of mass destruction or their elements across the region or the borders.
6. Enhancement of US commercial interest and the expansion and diversification of global energy supply.
7. The highest American priority, however, was to denuclearize these Central Asian states in exchange for political, diplomatic and economic support. In this respect, Washington cooperated with these states to dismantle and transport fissile material to the US. The departure of the last nuclear warhead from Kazakhstan in 1995 was a significant achievement in support of non-proliferation.[1]

US in Central Asia:

The US appears to be taking keen interest in defining the interests, goals and strategies of Central Asian states. It roped in all the five states into the NATO Partnership for Peace and to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)- a process by which Washington not only sought to enlarge the European security complex, but also intended to provide fresh mechanisms to address Central Asian security concerns.

The promotion of democracy and free market are among the principal objectives of the US administration. According to Strobe Talbott, formerly the Deputy Secretary of State, political and economic reforms in Central Asia would contribute to stability in a strategically vital region that borders China, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan and that has growing economic and social ties with Pakistan and India.[2] It is increasingly in the US interest to encourage the development of stable democratic systems, and that market economies in these new states emerge strong and take deep roots.

While numerous US programmes have had a beneficial impact, other initiatives have been criticised by locals as patronizing the very governmental structures, which are in need of reform. The US efforts

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1 Saleem Kidwai, "US Strategy in Central Asia", *Journal of Peace Studies*, Vol.6, March - April, 1999, pp 33-34

2 Saleem Kidwai, *Journal of Peace Studies*, pp 33-34.

have been subjected to criticism for viewing democratic and market reform as something to be imposed from the top. Despite the stated commitment of the US to expand the role of grassroots efforts, US-Central Asian partnerships in small non-governmental organization (NGOs) have played a relatively minor role in overall assistance programmes.

As US assistance networks expanded, they were restructured to take account of population whose support for reform was more complex and ambivalent than observers had envisioned. The US efforts were sensitive not only to the social safety nets, cultural values and traditions of Central Asia but also to the uniquely evolved mixtures of Soviet and Middle Eastern political and economic systems in these new countries, which may be quite specific. The Americans understood that it was possible to encourage democracy in the Muslim world without establishing themselves as enemies of Islam. The fear of Muslim fundamentalism that seemed to drive so many of the US initial efforts in Central Asia had also been viewed as leaving a destructive legacy that may have only encouraged the growth of fundamentalism itself.

The enormity of resources of these states made this region an attractive investment destination for the US business tycoons. The region has been identified as one of the most promising unexplored oil rich regions in the world. The $20 billion Chevron oil venture with Kazakhstan and the western consortium to exploit the oil fields in the Caspian Sea are among the world's largest and particularly most lucrative oil and gas ventures, and the number of other US companies seeking opportunity for entry into this field has grown exponentially in the past few years. Besides exploiting oil and gas deposits, the US companies are seeking influence in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, whose vast deposits of gold appear to be more lucrative than oil.

With these parameters, American's interest in Central Asia's development was vital. Domestic stability of all five states was a policy goal. Conflict resolution was a prerequisite for any successful energy development plans to be executed there in the region. Any conflict there would have profound repercussion on the US commercial interests. However, with slashes in foreign aid, the scope for direct US governmental involvement in developmental programmes, aimed at supporting Central Asian states economically and politically remained limited. Given the limits on its foreign aid, Washington did encourage its European and Asian partners to take leading roles.[3]

[3] Saleem Kidwai, *Journal of Peace Studies*, pp 35.

The Required Role:

The US as the sole remaining super power has great stakes in Central Asia which could be shaped and safeguarded by foreign policy experts, and not from public forces driven by market mechanisms. It is absolutely necessary for the US policy makers to respond to the basic aspirations of all the Central Asians. An effective US policy must seek to address their aspirations as central goals, rather than suggesting that the Central Asia's main concern is to check the Iranian influence.

The prevailing tendency to lump all the Central Asian states together as one entity should be discarded. All these states are anything but homogenous. The fact that all of them once were constituent elements of super power is surely not reason enough to pretend that they are of equal importance to the US. Differentiation among them is a necessity. The US policy ought to be oriented towards each of the individual states and not to all of them as a whole. The real challenge to the US is to correctly assess the American interests in the region. The US needs to formulate a policy towards the region which should be based on quest for real solutions.

The US involvement in Central Asian states is not only an opportunity but also a challenge. This is because of the speed with which things have happened. To quote Abdul Shakoor, "Never in the history so much has happened in such a short period of time and in such a peaceful manner as it has been in Eurasia in the past two decades. The disintegration of the Soviet Union and consequent emergence of the Central Asian states (CAS) has even caught the US policy-makers unawares. Perhaps one of the biggest foreign policy problems for the US today is to deal with the newly liberated CAS. The problem is biggest in the sense because both the US academicians and policy-makers knew very little about the region as well as the US had no experience of interaction to deal with the region".[4] This is what Leslie Gelb, in the *New York Times*, once commented: "Washington's Soviet experts were mainly experts on Moscow, and with the break-up of the Soviet Union they have been adrift".[5] It was also pointed out by an anthropologist, William Beeman that "Years of neglect have left the United States starved of knowledgeable regional specialists. Only one institution-

[4] Abdul Shakoor, "Central Asia: The US Interest-Perception and its Security Policies", *European Studies*, Vol. 2, Number 2, 1995, p. 14.

[5] Mowahid Hussain, "Central Asia: Impact on and Implications for Pak-US ties", *Central Asia and the Region*, S. M. Haider, Ed., Progressive Publishers, Lahore, 1993, p.406.

Indiana University - currently offers courses on the region as part of a regular masters' curriculum".[6]

It becomes apparent that lack of in-depth knowledge and having no experience at all to deal with the region has created complications for the US. One such example is related to the much exaggerated furour over the issue of fundamentalism. The US academicians and policy-makers were making a strategic blunder by taking "Sufism" as another form of Muslim fundamentalism or extremism. This has clearly become a source of alienation and confrontation among the Central Asian nations on the one hand and the US on the other. Hence the main problem for the US is to define its interests and formulate policies vis-à-vis the CAS in such a way that masses are not alienated.

The present geo-political scenario is in sharp contrast with that of the post-1945 era, when the US readily filled the power vacuum created by the withdrawal of Britain from its colonial world. One fundamental difference is that unlike Britain, Russia does not want to be replaced completely by the US even though there is a much wider range of cooperation between the two. Russia, despite its severe and pressing domestic political problems, remains keen to retain its hold and influence over the whole region known as near abroad of which Central Asia is an inalienable strategic component. Moreover, the situation also varies from that of a post-World War-II era in terms of the number of actors involved in the "revisited great game". Along with Russia, the US has not only to face China as a strong regional power, highly conscious of the Western and the US designs and moves towards the region; but also has to face a number of other assertive actors like Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. Within this framework of the US policy-making, one may address the following perspectives:

1. Where does the US stand in the region?
2. How do the US elite tend to visualize or define its interests?

Having identified these two possible variables in US interest perceptions, one may elaborate them as under:

The US Standings in the Region:

With the Soviet disintegration, the United States is now able for the first time to inject its political presence in the new post-Soviet states of Eurasia all the way to the frontiers of China as well as to dominate the Persian Gulf region on the southern fringes of Eurasia.[7] On the Asian side, America has to face three states on the southern rim of the CAS -

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6 *Central Asia and the Region*.

7 Zbigniew Brezinski, "World Order of the Future", *Dawn*, Karachi, March 3, 1994.

Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. To have inroads into the CAS, America has to operate either through them or in combination with these three states. Iran, obviously, is a nonentity for the US. Turkey and Pakistan are the two states which could prove to be instrumental for the US. Again the extraordinary rise or the possible establishment of even a secular Pan-Turkic region (which has such potential because of ethnic, religious and linguistic proximity) is not acceptable either to the European Community (EC), or to the US and Russia. This leaves out Pakistan to play a crucial and instrumental role for the US for its geo-political centrality.

Yet there is another option for the US, that is, Russia with whom America can do business. Already she has signed a "partnership for peace" agreement with her. However, any such US linkage or commitment with the region is, primarily, contingent upon its intensity of interests-perception. The question arises how the US visualize its interests in Central Asia. This leads us to the study of the phenomenon of interest-perception, particularly focusing on the few following components in great details.

The US Interests:

a. Containment of Fundamentalism.
b. Military-Strategic Interests.
c. Containment of Iran.
d. Economic and Commercial Interests.

a. Containment of Fundamentalism

The spread of Muslim fundamentalism in Central Asia is not only a popular bogey, but a conceived real threat in the Western media, especially after the Tajik civil war. The then US Secretary of State, James Baker, publicly warned Central Asian leaders, to stay clear of radical Muslims and the influence of Iran.[8]

In the words of a leading American strategic analyst, Zbigniew Brzezinski, the horizon of this threat-perception emerging from the phenomenon of so-called fundamentalism is "For Russia and America the geo-political vacuum which may become a dangerous whirlpool. The political awakening of Islam is generating not only a collision with residual Russian imperialism in the north, but, in time, is also likely to contest American domination in the South". He further adds that "the geographical perimeter of this whirlpool may extend from Adriatic sea next to the Balkans all the way to the border of the Chinese Xinjiang. From south to north, this border loops around the Persian Gulf,

[8] Ahmad Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism?*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1994, p. 245.

embracing parts of the Middle East, then Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan in the South, all of Central Asia along Russian-Kazakh frontier to the north, and all the way along the Russian-Ukrainian border".[9] Infact, it is a distant threat-perception. We are highlighting the significance of curbing of such potential Islamic resurgence.

b. Military-Strategic Interests

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction is a reality for the Americans, as they are highly determined to check any such possible proliferation. CIA chief, James Woolsey, told a senate committee that "nonproliferation poses one of the most complex challenges the intelligence community will face for the remainder of the century".[10]

The problems raised by Kazakhstan's acquisition of nuclear weapons, the fourth largest nuclear power in the world, dominated American and the Western strategists. Kazakhstan inherited 104 SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) with a total of 1400 warheads. Each ICBM could travel up to 11,200 kilometers and carry 10 independently targeted warheads, each of which is equivalent to half a million tons of TNT. The point to be noted is that Kazakhstan has become the first ever state which could strike directly at the heartlands of the West. That is why Kazakhstan has become a source of grave concern for the US whose diplomats have been visiting frequently Almata after the failed coup of August 1991.[11] However, the continuing concerns were set at rest only after Kazakhstan signed the NPT and agreed to dismantle its nuclear arsenal – the first CIS country to voluntarily do so.

Sometime back, rumours abounded in the western press that Kazakhstan had sold an SS-18 to Iran and that it was about to provide Tehran with enriched uranium. Speculative media reports in 1992 also spoke of Tajikistan selling enriched uranium to potential Third World customers at the rate of $100,000 a kilogram. The nuclear card became a political leverage for Ukraine and Kazakhstan, as both had tried to extract more concessions from Russia and greater financial aid from the US[12] by using the nuclear lever at that point of time.

However, the hectic diplomacy of the US had resulted in the signing of a treaty in May 1992, when the President of Kazakhstan agreed to sign the first Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-I) which would eventually allow the elimination of one third of Soviet and

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9 Zbigniew Brezinski, *Dawn*, Karachi, March 3, 1994.

10 Ahmad Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism,* p. 236.

11 *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism,* p. 234.

12 *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism*, p.236.

the US nuclear weapons.[13] The importance attached to Kazakhstan's possession of weapon could well be judged from the treaty provision that the very first of these missiles to be eliminated would be the SS-18s, the lethal missile on Kazakh soil. This may be the convergence of the American and Russian interests and hence of their security policies.

c. Containment of Iran

Ever since the fall of the Shah, Iran has become the chief opponent of the US in this region. In the words of former advisor of American National Security Council, Zbigniew Brzezinski: "Iran is clearly an aspirant to regional hegemony and it is prepared to outwit the US. It has an imperial tradition and possesses both the religious and the nationalist motivation to contest both the American and the Russian presence in the area. With both religion and motivation conspiring an alien regional hegemony, the current American supremacy in the Middle East is built quite literally on sand. A good illustration of the US limitation of regional control is provided by the fact that even the extraordinary one sided military outcome of the Gulf War of 1991 did not yield equally commensurate political results: Saddam Hussein's regime remained in power, and both the Shiite and Kurd revolts despite American encouragement of them, were suppressed".[14] Moreover, a total destruction of Iraq in a Gulf War would have led to the emergence of Iran as a decisive regional leader, which for obvious reasons America did not want.

d. Economic and Commercial Interests

Although US officials regard economic interests in Central Asia as private sector interests,[15] given the huge energy potential, this may turn into an official one or as an alternate to the Middle Eastern oil resources in future. These days American investors and businessmen are very active in evaluating the region's oil and gas potential. Shafiqul Islam, an Economist, in an article said, "The natural resources that has attracted the attentions of Americans, Japanese and other foreign investors to Central Asia is energy - oil and natural gas"[16] He identified that the US, major European countries, Japan, China and South Korea were on their way to becoming the region's major trading partners and investors.

In an overall analysis, the nature of American interests may be concluded in the words of a recent study group's report on Central Asia, published by the US Institute of Peace, which says:

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13 *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism*, p. 235.

14 Zbigniew Brezinski, *Dawn*, Karachi, March 3, 1994.

15 M. A. Bhatty, "Pakistan's Perspectives on Central Asia", *Strategic Studies*, (Islamabad), Vol. XVI, No.3, Spring, 1994, p. 36.

16 Shafiqul Islam, "Capitalism on the Silk Route", *Current History*, Vol. 93, No. 582, April 1994, p. 156.

"The only threat in former Soviet Central Asia to have evoked US interests since dissolving the USSR seems to come from some combination of Iran, Muslim fundamentalism, instability and the presence of a nuclear capability. Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are contending for the position of primary American or Western surrogate in containing this threat, with Egypt, India and Israel coming for similar but lesser roles".[17]

Given the nature of the US strategic interests, the point is how would these interests be better served? What are the US policies to attain these very interests? What would be the means to achieve these ends? To answer these interrelated questions, one has to analyze the past and the present trends of the US security policies vis-à-vis Central Asia.

Political Targets:

It is being observed that the USA's political targets in Central Asia are primarily to increase stability, to speed up democratization, to settle free market economy and make sure that it smoothly operates, to increase commercial activity, to control nuclear weapons and to settle human rights standards. Washington promotes all these targets in such a manner of political priority which could be formulated as preventing the development or the activities of radical regimes in the region. In a more general sense the US purpose is to help the Central Asian states with their integration into the world thus making them aware of their own international rights and responsibilities. Therefore these states will take responsibility in security problems and the like by not allowing the rise of anti-Western radical regimes, which may threaten international peace and security.

Although there is a consensus among the American policy makers about the targets listed above, there are divergent views on dimensions of American interference in Central Asia. The group supporting an active policy towards Central Asia is mainly concerned with the negative effects of a probable instability on the neighbouring states which have good relations with the US, including Turkey.[18] On the other hand, because of the existence of the equipment and resources suitable for producing nuclear weapons in this region, this school of thought draws attention to the danger of a possible armament and the spread of these weapons to the radical third world countries or to the terrorist organizations. Within this perspective, the US should increase its support for the region; it should even make efforts in improving bilateral

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17 Robert B. Oakley, *Afghanistan and Post-Soviet Central Asia Prospects for Political Evolution and the Role of Islam*, US Institute of Peace, Washington DC, p. 36.

18 Warren Christopher, "Towards a Secure, Free and Fully Integrated Europe", *Dispatch*, 1994, p.403.

relations. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that the interests of the allies and the US are not always overlapping as far as this region is concerned and that a limited amount of fund for aids are apportioned for these friendly states. Another crucial factor is the belief that the chance of a transformation through direct American involvement is higher, as far as America's prestige is concerned. The advocates of direct American intervention point out that through increasing American aid and investment, the region's dependence on Washington would be enhanced and Russia could be balanced.[19] The last argument is that to lag behind the competition against China, North Korea, and some European states which are penetrating the Central Asian market, will have a negative effect on America's position in the global competition.[20] The group criticizing America's current policy and demanding less involvement in Central Asia argues that the region does not mean much to American interests, and even that the developments in the region remain marginal, as far as America is concerned. Ignoring the claims that there is a threat of Muslim radicalism in the region, and that such a thing would damage American interests in the Middle East or in any other region. The members of this group point out that the regional interests of Washington could be pursued by Turkey and other friendly states. While some are stressing that interference in different cultures, for the sake of democratization lead to authoritarianism within the historical process, another group claims that since giving of continuing aid will mean ensuring permanent American interference, which will become the sole means of checking Muslim radicalism. Another approach is that oil and natural resources of these new states are not of vital importance to America, and that it will take years for these states to open up to the Western markets. Yet another factor which is considered having as much importance as the other factors is the anxiety that any conflict or instability would be dangerous for the American personnel.[21]

Of these two approaches, which have been touched upon with its main points, the first one is dominant as far as the current conjuncture is concerned. The most obvious proof of this situation is America's rapidity in recognizing the newly independent states following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Storbe Talbott, aptly pointed out that Washington took into consideration these countries' characteristics and thus

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19 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests*, Washington, 1996, p.2.

20 Strobe Talbott, Presidents and Prime Ministers, 1994, an address in Washington DC, May 3, 1994, p.3.

21 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests*, p.2.

established relations on different dimensions with each country.[22] In this context the bilateral relations and the characteristics which determined these relations need detailed examination.

Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian state recognized by the US on December 25, 1991. The cornerstone of the present relations with Kazakhstan is the law of "endorsement of Russia's and Eurasia's newly established democracies and their freedom to free markets. A law to this effect was passed in 1992. This law has implications directed at military, political, and economic transformation. Washington sent aid to this country for a smooth transition to market economy. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazabayev had paid his first official visit to the US from 18 to 20 May 1992. Vice-President Albert Gore's visit in September 1993 was followed by Foreign Secretary Warren Christopher's visit to Almaty in October 1994.[23] During Nazarbayev's second visit to the US, he and Clinton signed the "Democratic Cooperation Agreement" which emphasized democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law.[24] After Nazarbayev's visit, another high level contact was realized in April 1995 with Defense Secretary William Perry's visit to Kazakhstan.[25]

In addition to high level visits, the American administration had taken the lead in establishing educational programmes about various subjects in order to help Kazakhstan with its transition to democracy. These programmes consist of different topics such as political party and voter education, election arrangements, public administration, human rights, law and legal reforms, foreign policy, diplomacy, university administration and English training. Services like translation of articles and books, on the other hand, have also not been neglected.[26]

As could be understood from the US-Kazakhstan relations, there emerged the opportunity of establishing bilateral relations between the newly independent states and the US due to the end of the Cold War. Washington recognized Kyrgyzstan on December 25, 1991 and opened an Embassy in Bishkek in February 1992. The relations with Kyrgyzstan were conducted within the framework of the Freedom law, like the other newly independent states. Kyrgyz President Askeer Akayev visited the US from 15 to 22 May 1993. Akayev made contacts with President Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and Foreign Secretary Warren Christopher. During this visit Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Karabayev and

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22 StrobeTalbott, Presidents and Prime Ministers, 1994.
23 *Turkish Daily News*, December 11, 1993.
24 *Turkish Daily News*, February 16, 1994.
25 *Turkish Daily News*, April 6, 1995.
26 *Despatch*, 1994, p.282.

his American counterpart signed a framework agreement; about the aid the American administration would give to Kyrgyzstan. Vice-President Gore reciprocated this visit in December 1993. In addition to an agreement that would facilitate bilateral investment relations, Gore also put his signature on a joint agricultural project.

Within the general logic of its relations with the Central Asian states, Washington had taken a series of initiatives for securing and consolidating transition to democracy. Although there were ups and downs, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were ahead of others in the democratization process, according to the reports prepared by the American think-tanks.[27] American authorities are engaged in various services in Kyrgyzstan such as administrative reorganization, and exchange programme for local and central government officials, diplomatic training, pluralism, electoral law, political party training, free media activities of cultural groups, university administration and students exchange. Furthermore, "Peace Corps' volunteers are working to spread English teaching in the country.

The American administration established diplomatic relations with Turkmenistan in mid-March 1992 and opened an Embassy in Ashkabat. The relations of Washington with Turkmenistan were on a lower course compared to relations with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This is because Turkmenistan had traversed less distance in transition to democracy and free market economy than others. Despite this situation, the American administration did not fail to engage in various projects to settle democracy and civic culture in that country.

The US had recognized Uzbekistan on December 25, 1991 and opened an Embassy in Tashkent in March 1992. Despite early recognition, the relations had not improved to the desired level. The reason was Uzbekistan's problems regarding human rights, civil liberties and transition to democracy.[28] Washington, as in its relations with Turkmenistan, had continued its dialogue in and its call for democratization to Uzbekistan.[29] Defense Secretary William Perry had emphasized the strategic importance of the country during his visit in April 1995 and has reiterated the American support for democratization and maintenance of stability. The American authorities on the other

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27 Martha Brill Olcott, "Central Asian on its Own", *Journal of Democracy*, 1993, pp. 92-103.

28 Roger Kangas, "Recent Developments in Uzbek Political Parties", *Central Asian Monitor*, No.4, 1992, pp.22-27.

29 Jim Nichol, *Central Asia's New States: Political Developments and Implications for US Interests*, p.3.

hand, carried on with training activities in Uzbekistan as well "Peace Corps" volunteers were working for spreading English training.

The country with which the American administration had the lowest level of relations was Tajikistan. The reason for that was the civil war and instability. Washington recognized Tajikistan on December 25, 1991 and opened an Embassy in Dushanbe in March 1992. Thereafter the relations developed in the shape of sending in humanitarian aid to Tajikistan to heal the wounds of war. The officials of the American Department of Foreign Affairs had participated in the peace talks between the warring parties in Tajikistan, as observers within the UN Organization.

Conclusion:

The US interests in Central Asian states, together with that of several other European and Asian economic giants are of recent origin, consequent upon the raising of the iron curtain in 1991. Though freed from the hegemonistic control of the Soviet Union, these states were in the throes of development and desperately needed foreign capital investment for sustained economic growth. This inter-alia required not only support for the independence and sovereignty of these states but also their integration into the world community in terms of enhanced security and commercial expansion, their increased democratization to be followed by denuclearization.

Since changes took place with amazing rapidity and speed in this region, from the disintegration of the Soviet Union to the formation of Commonwealth of Independent States, from the liberation of nationalities to their integration in global institutions, the need of the hour for the US government is not to club these countries arbitrarily into one homogenous mould, but to differentiate between them and recognise their in-built heterogeneity in terms of political awareness, economic development, impact of the ideology of Islam and multi-national character of these states. Combating Muslim fundamentalism, which is being exported by neighbouring countries such as Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, requires a careful handling of ground level situation in such a way that without appearing to be an enemy of Islam, one may encourage increased democratization of traditional and antecedent political structures.

The containment of Iran without a total destruction of Iraq is yet another US policy goal in the region. This can be done by developing friendly relations with Pakistan and Turkey but not at the cost of Russia. In fact the US accepts that Russia has a predominant role to perform in the region; thereby reducing Pakistan and Turkey on the periphery. To

offset growing Iranian influence in the region, US, Turkey, Israel and Europe have come under a common umbrella to prevent Islamisation of Central Asia.

The nuclear issue of former Soviet republics is also linked with problems of health. A series of surface and underground explosions contaminated the environment of concerned states. Areas contiguous to test sites have shown an alarming rise in cancerous diseases, infant mortality and genetic disorders. The chief aim of the US is to ensure that within the framework of START treaties, all nuclear weapons of Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus are transferred to Russia for liquidation. The denuclearization of Kazakhstan became a matter of utmost priority for the US, where she found a great convergence of interests with Russia. The states of Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus were none too keen to use their nuclear card to extract more concessions - political as well as economic, from the US and Russia. Therefore, Kazakhstan has signed nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The primary focus of the US should have been on legal and technical assistance in tackling issues such as environmental protection, drug-trafficking and weapons proliferation. The US could also channel its efforts through international organizations that facilitate social progress such as refugee relief, health care and family planning. Particularly useful US roles might include providing technology and skills especially in dry land agricultural technologies, such as drip irrigation, that could reduce water use and help farmers shift from cotton production to a more balanced pattern of agriculture. One of Central Asia's most crucial needs is to train experts, who can play neutral roles in the transition to market economies and democratic political systems. Unmatched US capacities in higher education too could be especially useful.

Russia still regards its former republics to be in its interest zone and hence it will not brook any outside interference in this region. At the same time, it is keen to impress upon these states that their security is inalienably and inextricably linked with Russia which alone is capable of defending them against outside aggression. However, because of geographical and ethnic factors, Russia is apprehensive of the designs of China which is using its nuclear and economic clout to gain a firm foothold in these states.

PERSIAN LITERATURE OF MEDIEVAL KASHMIR (14TH – 16TH CENTURY)

G. R. Jan*

Abstract:
The Iranian and Indian civilizations, two of the earliest and creative, have played vital and dynamic role in the formation and shaping of the world history. Iranian influences in Kashmir appeared strongly after the establishment of Sultanate (1320-1585) there, much more was the introduction of Persian language and its literature. During the course of time it became so strong that it was the official language of the state till Urdu was introduced in the 19th century. Many luminaries worked hard to spread it and produced a body of literature that has left its marks on the life of the people there.
Keywords:
Persian language, literature, Iran, Central Asia, Kashmir.

Introduction:

Till the end of the 16th century, Kashmir played vital role in the Indian sub-continent as an independent state. With its separate identity, Kashmir had its relations and contacts with Iran and other Central Asian states. Besides political and cultural ties, there was large scale free trade with Iran and Central Asia. It was then that Persian language replaced the Sanskrit as the state language, even though one of the powerful Hindu rulers of Kashmir, Lalitaditya, in the 8th century had invaded Khurāsan, Bukhārā, Samarqand, Tāshkent, etc, the main centers of Avesta, Pahlavi and Persian speaking belt of Iran and Central Asia. However, the effects of Persian language were visible at the end of Hindu rule in Kashmir when a remarkable handbook, *Lokapraksha* on Kashmiri administration in Sanskrit language, was written which has many Persian and Arabic words.[1]

Persian Language:

Persian may have been adopted by one and all in spite of the fact that Sanskrit was not forgotten. This is why that Hindus also learned the language and excelled in it to translate various Sanskrit works in Persian.[2] Besides those that were translated during the rule of Sultan

* **Professor, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar.**

1 *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, Eng. Tr., M. A. Stein, Vol. I, Delhi edition, 1979, pp. 130-31, n2.

2 Shirivara, the poet historian of Zainul-Abidin, was fond of Persian and translated Maulan Jami's *Youssuf Zulaikha* into Sanskrit. Bhat Avtar learned *Shahnamai* of Firdausi by heart.

Zainul-Abedin (1420-1470) there was one Tilak, son of a barber, who served in the court of Mehmood Gaznavi[3] - the powerful king of a vast land of Persian speaking belt, and translated Sanskrit works in Persian in Kashmir.[4] There must have been few others like him who in the beginning would have helped to work as translators between the people of Kashmir and non-Kashmiris; like the one who translated the meeting held between the Rinchan from Ladakh (who became the first Muslim to rule Kashmir) and Saiyid Sharfud-Din,[5] the Turkish saint called commonly Bulbul Shah. These were the days when Islam in Kashmir was not widely known and only few were its adherents.

Thereafter many missionaries entered Kashmir, from Central Asia and Iran, and played dynamic role in the formation, shape and establishment of Islamic culture there which gave birth to the various religo-philosophical, socio-cultural and literary movements. These foreign adventures, *Sufis, Saiyids, Ulema and Mashaikhs,* established monasteries, mosques, schools and libraries across the Valley. In these centers of learning's Persian was the language of conversation at public level to change the entire horizon of Kashmir; its culture, history, language and way of living. It was only thereafter that organised schooling was started to impart education in Persian language. One such was established by Mir Mirak Indrabi, who came from Indrab-Afghanistan and his monastery at Malaratta Srinagar was famous for the learning of Persian.[6] On the other hand some of the natives also went outside to get better education in Persian speaking areas. Sheikh Suliman and his son Shiekh Ahmad Khushkhawn went to Samarqand and thence to Kulab (Tajikistan) to receive Islamic education and to learn Persian language.[7] Sheikh Sultan Kubra and Shiekh Bahaud-Din Ganjbakhsh

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3 Farukhi Sistani, a court poet of Sultan, shows desire of the Sultan to invade Kashmir in the following Persian couplets:
Mā rā rāhi Kashmir hami ārzū āyad
mā ze ārzū'i khwesh nitābim bayak moui
Gah ast ki yakbar bakashmir kharamaim
Az dast butan pehneh kuna'im az sar but gav'i
Shah ast bakashmir agar Izad khahād
Imsal nyaram tā keen nakashm zo'i
(We have desire to see Kashmir. We will not let off our desire. It is time that we will at once walk into Kashmir. If God wishes we will be in Kashmir this year. We will not sit idle till we will not take it); Farukhi Sistani, *Devan-i- Farukhi,* Tehran, p. 325.

4 Abdul Qadir Sarwari, *Kashmir main Farsi Adab ki Tarikh,* Hyderabad, 1968, p. 35.

5 Anonymous, *Baharistani Shahi,* Ur. Tr., and Ed., Akbar Hydri, Delhi, p.16.

6 Baba Dawood Mishkati, *Asrarul Abrar,* Ms, p.297.

7 Peer Ghulam Hassan, *Tarikhi Hassan, Tazkiratul Awliyai Kashmir,* Ur. Tr., Vol. II, Srinagar, 1960, p.195

went to Khatlan to receive guidance in mysticism under the leadership of Khawja Ishauqe Khatlani.[8] Sheikh Yaqoob Sarfi, a luminary of Kashmir, went to Samarqand to receive his education under the guidance of Shiekh Hussein Khawrazmi. He was a reputed poet and prose writer and produced numerous prose and poetical works. These occurrences paved way for establishing solid ground for the Persian language and literature in Kashmir.

Persian Literature:

The credit for laying the concrete foundation of Persian goes to Mir Saiyid Ali Hamdani -a pioneer among the Saiyids who traveled to Kashmir in the 14th century and they were together responsible for the spread of Islam at a larger scale. Mir Saiyid was a great religious leader, a preacher, a renowned saint, an eminent scholar of his age, and a poet too. He wrote many books on the subject of government, logic, philosophy, medicine, etc. His poetry, under the pen name of Ali and Alai, is full of mystic and pious ideas and views. *Chihal Asrar* is the collection of this poetry.[9]

While preaching Islam in Kashmir the associates of Mir Saiyid Ali Hamdani also created wonderful Persian literature. One of the earliest was Saiyid Tajud-Din, who had complete hold on astrology and other sciences, and wrote a treatise, on the truth of Islam, *Siraj*.[10] Like him, Mir Saiyid Haider wrote two books in Persian, one on the subject of mysticism, *Nafatul Irfan* and second on the truth of Islam, *Hidayatul Mustarshideen*.[11] Mullah Ahamd Alama a disciple of Saiyid Sharfud-Din and the first Sheikh-ul-Islam of Kashmir wrote books in Persian, *Fatwai Shahabi* and *Shihab-i-Saqibl*.[12] The distinguished Saiyid Jamalud-Din Muhadis established a school in Srinagar and his book in Persian is

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8 Mohammad Raza Akhoonzada, *Tuhfa'i Kashmir*, Urdu Tr. *Tuhfatul Ahbab,* Lahore, 1997, pp. 264-65.

9 Sultan Qutbud-Din, during whose rule Shah Hamdan came to Kashmir was himself fond of poetry and used to say verses under pen name Qutbi. Noorud-Din Jaffer Badkhshi attributed the following verses with the Sultan, in which he shows his faith with Shah-i-Hamdan and warmly welcomes his arrival into Kashmir:

Jānam fidā bar qadm khāki tu bādā ya amir
Ruham fidā bar sharifi tu bāda ya amir
Qutbi agar chi kard gunahan zi had-u-wad
Ākhar marā nasib shifā'at ziy u badā a amir; (O! Lord my life may be sacrificed to the dust of your feet. My soul may be sacrificed to your distinguished name. If Qutbi committed unlimited sins, O! Lord at least your intercession may be to my share); Nooud-Din Jaffer Badkhshi, *Manqabatul Jawahar*, Ms, f 10/b.

10 Qazi Mohammad Ashraf, *Tazkiratul Arifeen* , Ms, p.35.

11 Ali Ibni Raza, *Kuhlul Jawahar*, Lahore, pp. 34-35.

12 *Tarikhi Hassan, Tazkira Awliya-i-Kashmir*, p. 413.

Tathirul-Qaloob[13].

Mir Mohammad Hamdani like his father, Mir Saiyid Ali Hamdani, was a writer of many books; one was *Iskandaria,* a treatise for Sultan Sikander, during whose rule he arrived in Kashmir. He also wrote a book on logic known as *Shamsia*, besides 45 other books on Persian literature.[14] Mir Saiyid Mohammad Isfahani has written commentary on a book namely *Tanveer-i-Sharhi Siraj*.[15] Mir Mohammad Baqir compiled many books in Persian, the best is *Noor*.[16] *Ahadis-i-Suniya,* on the sayings of Prophet of Islam (PBUH), was the Persian work of Saiyid Hussain Shirazi, performing the duty of Qazi of Kashmir.[17] Baba Haji Adham who came from Gazna wrote *Maqamat* in Persian.[18] Mir Saiyid Mohammad Baihaqi said many verses in praise of Sultan Sikander, under the Nome de gore Dervish and had a Persian *Divan*.[19]

The golden period in the Sultanate period, rather one of the best in the entire history of Kashmir, was that of Sultan Zainul-Abidin. He had good command on Kashmiri, Persian, Tibetan and Sanskrit languages and used to say the verses[20] under the Nome de gore of Qutub; like:

Ay bigard shama' rawait ālami parwanai
Wazz lab-i-shirin taw shori 'ast dar har khana'i
Man ba chandin āshna'i mi khwarram khun jagar
Ashna rāhal in ast way bar begānāi
Qutub miskeen gar gunahi mikunad' aibash makun
'aib nabūd gār gunahi mikunad dewāna'i[21]

(The whole world in the shape of a butterfly is around your candle like face. It is the talk everywhere of your sweet lips. I in so many acquaintances am sorely grieved. It is the condition of a family woe that may be on to the stranger. If poor Qutub commits sin, do not blame him. It is not a fault, if a mad commits sin).

The Sultan was a prose writer also and his two books were *Shikayat* and Question and Answer. His court had many learned men[22]

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13 *Kuhlul Jawahar*, p. 5.

14 Ahamad Ibni Saboor, *Khawariqus Salikeen*, Ms, f 30/; Abdul Wahab Noori, *Fathat-i-Kubrai*, Ms, f 80/a.

15. *Kuhlul Jawahar*, p.6

16 *Kuhlul Jawahar*, p.6

17 *Baharsitan-i-Shahi*, p.17; Haider Malik, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*,Ms; Hassan Beigh Khaki, *Tarikh-i-Kashmir*, Ms,F 28/a; Dawood Mishkati, *Asrarul Abrar*, Ms, F 44/6.

18 Khawja Mohammad Azam, *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, Amritsar, p. 85.

19 *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, p. 279.

20 J.C. Dutt, *Kings of Kashmir*, Culcutta, 1830, pp.149-50.

21 *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, Vol. II, p.195

22 Qazi Jamalud-Din, Mulla Nadri and Mulla Jameel were also court poets. Among the learned men were Maulana Ziai and Maulana Fathi, *Baharistani Shahi*, p.340; Saiyid Mohammad Amin Mantqi Baihaqi was a distinguished Sufi saint and a mystic poet; *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, p.55.

and among them was the court poet, Mullah Ahamad Kashmiri. He translated *Mahabarta* and *Rajatarangini* into Persian as well as *Dasvatra* into Persian[23]; and wrote *Miratul Aloom*[24] besides being a historian too.[25] Khawja Mohammad Azam writes:

Maulana Ahamad Kashmiri afsh Shu'ra bud dr tarikhi khud nivishtas[26] *(Mulla Ahamad Kashmiri was great poet, he wrote history).*

Like wise in the court at that time was Mullah Kabir, the teacher of Sultan and Shiekhul Islam. He is credited to have written *Sharhi Mulla*.[27] Also came then Mir Saiyid Hussein Qumi, from Qum (Iran), to stay at Zaingir where he established a school and wrote a book on the truth of Islam, *Siratul Mustaqeem*.[28] Mullah Alma Ansari, one of his companions, wrote a commentary on the book of Mullah Saeed Hamdani.[29]

Thereafter some more towering personalities shined on the sphere of Kashmir. Mullah Mohammad Ani Harvi, a student of Maulana Jami, came to Kashmir and was appointed as a college teacher. Mir Shamsud Din Mohammad Iraqi came to Kashmir twice and established a monastery at Zadibal Srinagar, where Persian was taught. The distinguished Mir Qazi Mohammad Qudsi was a close associate of Mir Iraqi. He was a poet and has composed a remarkable *Mathnavis*.[30] Mir Danyal wrote a treatise in Persian.[31] Saiyid Abdun-Nabi or Abdul Gani, a close friend of Mir Iraqi, wrote a treatise *Anwarul Huda*,[32] which is a commentary of *Nafhatul Irfan* of Mir Saiyid Haider. Maulana Mir Saiyid Raziud-Din (d. 957 AH / 1550 AD), a headmaster of an educational institute at Qutbud Din Pora, wrote many high reputed books on various subjects in Persian. Mullah Abdul Wahab had good command on mysticism, logic and riddles and wrote many treatises on these subjects.[33] Mullah Hajji Ganai, Maulana Kamalud-Din Ganai and Qazi Ibrahim, the historian, were prominent men of learning and the Qazi wrote a history *Qalmraiu Kashmir* in the year 1520.[34] Likewise, Mullah

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23 M. K. Parmoo, *History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir*, Srinagar, 1969, p.63.
24 M. Aslam, *Gauhar-i-Alam*, Mss, p.83.
25 G .M. D. Sufi, *Kashir*, Vol. I, New Delhi, 1979, p.347; *Kashmir main Farsi Adab ki Tarikh*, p.59.
26 Kh. Mohammad Azam, *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, p.95.
27 Sufi G. M. D, Kashir, Vol. I, p.347.
28 *Kuhlul Jawahar*, p.5.
29 *Kuhlul Jawahar* , p.6.
30 *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, p.97.
31 Mohammad Ali Kashmiri, *Tuhfatul Ahbab*, Ms, pp. 84-91, 278-282, 322-25, 413-17,.
32 *Kuhlul Jawahar*, pp.7-8.
33 *Waqat-i-Kashmir*, p.85.
34 *Kashmir main Farsi Adab ki Tarikh*, p. 93

Hussain Qari also wrote history of Kashmir.[35] Mir Saiyid Hussain wrote a commentary on *Awradi Fathia* in the name of *Anwar-u1-Bahi'a.*[36]

It was because of such wonderful works that Kashmir was called *Iran-i-Sager* (little Iran) and provided enough space for learning the Persian language. It was not only then but thereafter as well some excellent works in Persian were produced there and together these works and their language have changed the social scenario in the region which is still found in the life and culture of the people.

35 *Kashmir main Farsi Adab ki Tarikh*, p. 93.
36 Saiyid Sibti Ali, *Shajra'I Mir Saiyid Hussain*, Srinagar,p.8.

ARMENIAN ISSUE AS REFLECTED IN RUSSIAN ARCHIVAL RECORDS

Mehmet Perinçek*

Abstract:
The Czarist Russian and Soviet archival records gain significance with regard to much debated and controversial accounts of Armenian genocides – the issue laden with accusations and counter accusations founded on concocted and fabricated narratives fed by imperial powers to facilitate the division and share of booty of Ottoman territory. Czarist Russia and Soviets were the most important witness of the event, besides contending parties of Armenian and Turkey, between 1915 and 1923. The documents include besides state records, the Dashnak documents, who themselves were controlled and exploited by imperial Russia and Soviets for their own designs. These documents reflect the tragic saga of killings, massacres of Armenians and retaliation by Turks during these fateful years, resulting in ethnic cleansing of Armenians as well as Turkish Muslims of Armenia. The records depict living conditions of Ottoman Armenians, rise of Armenians nationalism, its enticement to Czarist plans, the Dashnak design to annihilate majority Muslim population of Ottoman Armenia, besides imperialist intrigues leading to genocides with an utter disregard to human values and international moral codes of conduct.

Keywords:
Russia, Armenia, Ottoman Turkey, czarist, Soviets, Archives.

Introduction:

The accusation of Armenian genocide has been one of the leading issues for Turkey and the world. The events that took place between 1915 and 1923 were witnessed, apart from the Turkish and the Armenian sides, by Czarist Russia and Soviet Russia. Consequently, the Russian state archives contain documents that lead in determining the truth. The archival records are:

- Russian documents from the Czarist era, the military archives of Czarist Russia and the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Russian documents from the Soviet era, the archives of the Soviet Russia Communist Party (currently, Russian Social, Political, and Historical State Archive), the archives of the Soviet era Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Red Army archives;
- In addition, documents relating to both the Czarist and Soviet era in the Russian Federation State Archives.

The Importance of Russian State Archives:

Firstly, Czarist Russia was one of the powerful states that fought a war to divide and share the Ottoman territory, and kept detailed records on the events before and after the 1915 deportation of the Armenians.

* **Research Assistant, Istanbul University, Turkey:** mperincek@hotmail.com

Secondly, during the Turkish Independence War, Soviet Russia fought at the same front line as the Revolutionary Turkey in Anatolia. The Russian Caucasus front had joined the eastern Turkish front against the British Caucasus line. The Russian archive is therefore a primary source of information for this period.

Thirdly, due to the fact that Russia was in control of the Dashnaks, a good part of the Dashnak documents were kept in Czarist Russian archives. Furthermore, in the Soviet archives numerous important records exist in addition to the archives of Soviet Armenia. Many documents in the Armenian state archives are not open to public. Therefore, it is possible to obtain these records only through the Russian state archives. Azerbaijan and Georgian sources also supplement to the information available in the Russian ones.

While the observations of the German generals, English officers and American missionaries can be called subjective, still then leaving aside their imperialist intentions, Russians witnessed and recorded the events as a state at all stages. Considering that the Russian state archives also house records from both Armenian and other Caucasian republics it will not be an exaggeration to claim that they provide the most important documentation concerning the Armenian issue.

Many communications and top secret reports written by high-ranking officials from Czarist Russia, Soviet Russia, Dashnaks and Soviet Armenia are available at the Russian archives. These documents include the confessions of those who claim that an Armenian genocide took place as well as those that used the Armenian question against Turkey. They are of special importance as they reflect the observations of a strong third party such as the Czarist Russia or Soviet Russia and constitute strong and valid international evidence. Particularly, the reports and internal communications demonstrate the frank evaluation of truth by state officials.

Main Points Emanating from Russian State Archives:

The common feature of the documents at the Russian state archives is that they basically debate the international false fabrication of an Armenian genocide. I carried out research for eleven years, starting in 1998, on the Armenian question in the Czarist and Soviet Russian state archives and wish to share my conclusions drawn from those records:

1. Before and after the World War I, during both inter-state wars and in the course of civilian strives mass killings were experienced. Considering that 200,000 Armenian soldiers were serving in the Czarist Russian army, it can be concluded that many of them died during those wars. Secondly, when the Armenian bandit gangs embarked ethnic cleansing of Turks in collaboration with foreign states, the Ottoman State intervened and the fights led to the loss of many lives from both sides. Thirdly, outside the war fronts between

armies, violent clashes occurred between Armenians and the Muslim population (Turks and Kurds) where a large number of people died.

2. The documents establish that, between 1915 and 1920, Armenian bandits in Southern Caucasus followed a systematic ethnic cleansing policy towards Turks, Azeri Turks and Kurds in Eastern Anatolia, as well as in Cilicia (today's Adana-Maras region).
3. The main responsible parties of inter-state wars as well as of Muslim-Armenian violence were the Western Imperialists and Czarist Russia. The big states that wanted to divide and share the Ottoman territory provoked the Armenian organisations to fight. Under these circumstances, the Ottoman State and the Muslim population took strong action to suppress the revolting Armenian gangs which was but a rightful war to defend the fatherland.

Armenian Records in the Czarist Archives:

The records in the archives of the Czarist era on the Armenian question cover principally the period between the end of the 19th century and 1919. There are naturally earlier records as well. Although the Czarist era ended with the 1917 February and October Revolutions, one can also find some records from later years in these archives due to the continuing existence for a while of the White Army, the Kolchak Government and of the Caucasian Front Headquarters in Tbilisi.

Living Conditions of the Armenians in the Ottoman State:

The documents in the archives of the Czarist era refer to the excellent living conditions of the Armenians, and to the fact that they were particularly supported and protected by the Ottoman State until the intervention of imperialist state particularly with the 1878 Berlin Conference. According to the communications of the Czarist authorities, the living conditions of the Ottoman Armenians were superior to those of the Russian Armenians. For this reason, many Armenians fled from the Czarist Russia and found refuge in the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman dominant classes never made ethnic distinctions in their exploitation of the people. In fact, in many instances, Armenian peasants were better off than the Muslims. Armenians gained special status through their activities in trade and crafts. Furthermore, nationalities under the rule of the Ottoman State, particularly, Turks, Kurds and Armenians, lived in full harmony.

These documents provide evidence to the fact that the propaganda pursued by Western states and Czarist Russia concerning the living conditions of the Armenians within the Ottoman State was aimed at legitimizing the rationale of their intention to invade and break up the Ottoman territory. Exaggerated and falsified claims were fabricated in order to create public opinion and to justify imperialist aggression and accordingly some of the fanatic historians wrote the propagandist

theories about the living conditions of the Armenians in the Ottoman time.

The Rise of Armenian Nationalism and its Characteristics:

Documents from the Czarist archives of the 19th Century point to the rise of Armenian nationalism parallel to the rise of Czarist motives of using the Armenians against the Turks. Particularly, the Armenian publications and documents in the archives from that period clearly indicate the collaborative, fanatic and aggressive features of Armenian nationalism. The Armenian intellectuals in the Caucasus were dreaming of building up an Armenian State, starting from late 19th Century and were trying to forcefully spread these ideas among the Turkish Armenians.

The Rrole of Western Europe in the Armenian Problem:

Western Europe and Russia were competing with each other in the manipulation of the Armenians to break up Eastern Anatolia. The reports of Russian officials underline the provocations and incitements of the British in the Armenian issue. The same authorities observed that these were methods, on the one hand, to disrupt the Russo-Ottoman relations, and on the other hand, to support the separatist guerrilla movement in the Ottoman State to split the empire's territory.

Missions Entrusted to the Armenians During the World War I:

The communications and meetings of the Dashnaks with the Czarist Russian authorities show that the Armenians were entrusted with two missions within the framework of the invasion of Anatolia. Firstly, the Armenians would revolt behind the back of the Turkish Army's frontlines to weaken it. Secondly, the Armenian voluntary units would breach the Turkish army's defensive lines to make the Russian conquest easier. There are numerous reports written by Russian officials supporting this intention. All these plans were implemented under the supervision of the Western countries and Czarist Russia.

Ottoman Armenians Enticed by Imperialist Plans:

The Ottoman Armenians played an active role in the fulfilment of both missions mentioned above. The issue cannot be attributed to a few Dashnaks. It is also true that a large number of Armenians participated in the formation of voluntary units and in the organisation of the uprisings. The archives are full of applications by Ottoman Armenians to serve in the Czarist army and to fight against the Turks in the voluntary units. The names of thousands of Armenians of Ottoman nationality, doctors, university students, intellectuals and even simple peasants, are listed in the archives. These documents are particularly important as they demonstrate that the threat to the Ottoman State was not limited by the separatist movement leaders and revolutionaries but also by the Ottoman Armenians and hence their deportation.

Massacre and Looting Policies of the Armenian Voluntary Units:

Hundreds of reports written by Czarist generals as well as hundreds of records and verdicts of the Czarist military courts demonstrate that the

Armenian voluntary units committed massacres of the Muslim population in the regions invaded during World War I and looted their properties. According to these documents, it was done in a systematic manner. Even the Russian commanders that manipulated the Armenian guerrillas were horrified by their violence. For this reason, many Armenian officers and soldiers were tried in the military courts of the Czarist army and even were sentenced death penalty. It is particularly important to note that these massacres and lootings were committed before the deportation of the Armenians.

The "Armenia without Armenians" project of Czarist Russia:

The internal communications of the Czarist authorities provide evidence of Russian plans to provoke the Armenians to massacre the Turks and to settle Dinyeper Kazahks in the invaded regions. Czarist authorities called this project "Armenia without Armenians".

Armenian Records in Soviet Archives:

Most of the records in the Soviet archives primarily cover the period after 1917; however, they also include the explanations of the Soviet officials who evaluated the past events.

The Armenian question is an imperialist issue:

Soviet leaders such as Lenin and Stalin and Armenian Bolshevik theoreticians made a number of statements concerning the root cause of the Armenian question reflected in many reports and communications. According to those statements, the Armenian issue was used by the imperialist states as a means to break up the Ottoman territory. While the Turks fought a legitimate war to defend their fatherland, the responsible parties of this tragedy were the imperialist countries that pursued the policy of using the Armenians and the Dashnaks that played according to their plans.

The Dashnak Armenia and the Policy of Ethnic Cleansing:

The Soviet leaders observed that, according to the British policy, Dashnak Armenia was meant to be wall between the reformist Turkey and Soviet Russia and that following World War I, it was one of the subcontractors in the region serving the imperialist intentions. Dashnak Armenia also served as a base of the Western countries in the East to materialise their plans.

The Soviet documents provide evidence of the ethnic cleansing the Dashnaks undertook within the boundaries of what is known today as Armenia. In order to create a "pure" national state, the Dashnak powers annihilated the majority of the Muslim population. Furthermore, the Muslim population of the Adana and Maras regions, then called Cilicia, was slaughtered under the supervision of the French.The Armenian population had also its share from the Dashnak dictatorship. Soviet documents provide evidence of the violence the Armenian population suffered under the Dashnaks.

Turkish-Soviet Entente and the Suppression of Dashnak Armenia:
Soviet documents show that the collaboration between the Turkish Army and the Red Army in Armenia brought an end to Dashnak power and resulted in Soviets taking control. The Turkish Army's operation towards Armenia, that is claimed to be genocide today, was supported and considered as a progressive move by Soviet officials. This Turkish operation was taken as legitimate defence of their land.

It is for this reason that today the Armenian nationalists attack the Soviet leadership as much as they do Talat Pasha and Enver Pasha. The Armenian Union of Russia published a book entitled *The Protectors and Partners in the Armenian Genocide* which is a compilation of documents on this particular issue charging leaders like Lenin and Stalin with taking part in the Armenian genocide. The Armenian diaspora as well as politicians and academicians underline that Russia bears equal responsibility in the "Armenian genocide" as that of Turkey. Many have otherwise also published documents and organised meetings to disseminate their alleged theories in a deliberate effort to condemn Russians and the Soviets.

The Dashnak Policies Spurred by the Nazis in World War II:
Dashnaks continued playing their WWI role during WWII, this time on the side of Hitler's Germany. Dashnaks, as voluntary units within the fascist German army, committed crimes against local populations.

Muslim Population Versus Armenian Population:
Czarist as well as Soviet records substantiate that the Muslim population of the region was in irrefutable majority compared to the Armenian population.

These records are therefore fundamental to reconstruct the history of Turks, Ottomans, Armenians and that of the Russians besides many others who played their role during pre and post World War I. Howsoever a nationalist one can be, history writing demands objectivity and truthfulness and Russians records help to lead towards both.

INDIA AND GEORGIA
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Vazha Kiknadze*

Abstract:
India-Georgian relations might have been established with the operation of the Silk Route trade from Europe – via Caspian to Central Asia and then onwards to India. The early sources reflecting upon India-Georgian connections are Georgian chronicles, which establish Iranian campaigns to India in which Georgian soldiers formed an auxiliary unit. The chroniclers seem to have drawn from oral narratives and passing references with regard to Indian treasures as trophies of war and some legends. The Iranian military campaigns are substantiated by the Greek and Arab sources, besides 12th Century Georgian historian of Queen Zamar, who testifies to this campaign and booty acquired there from. In the following centuries the evidence of interaction are drawn from Georgian philology, in poetry and translations. From 15th Century onwards there are plenty of travelogues by travelers, traders and adventures, where facts about India are mixed with legends and mysteries. However, the intensive trade and cultural relations were established in 18th – 19th centuries advanced through ambassadorial missions by Erable the Zend. The merchant accounts of Khurtsidze, Stephen Zubalashvili, Catholic priest Anton Khulsishvili and diplomate Rafiel Danibegashivili testify to the activities of Georgian interests and involvement with India. The relations during Soviet rule were governed by Moscow, which are marked by mutual visits and bi-lateral trade agreements after independence.

Keywords:
India, Georgia, Black Sea, Caspian Sea, Silk Route, Persian army.

Introduction:

The links between Georgia and India[1] supposedly should have established immediately after the commencement of the Silk Route, connecting Europe and Asia, intermittently for more than two centuries. The way from India to Georgia should have crossed the river Amudaria and through the Caspian Sea stretching the ancient cities of Iberia and Kolkhida: Mtskheta, Fazis coming to the Black Sea coast[2]. According to the Georgian sources, the renowned king of Georgia, Vakhtang Gorgasali, invaded India in the 60s of the 5th century BC. His campaign was determined by the order of the Shah of Iran, to whom the King Vakhtang served as a vassal at that time.

The notes about his campaign to Iran bear some legendary characters, although we could claim that the campaign took place indeed. According to the Georgian chronicler, the Persian army, in which the

* **Director, Javakishvili Institute of History and Ethnology, Georgia**.

1 The historical territory of India is meant here.

2 Lortkhipanidze, O.Antic, *World and the Kingdom of Khartli,* Tbilisi, 1968, p. 119, (In Georgian).

Georgian military unit was also included, first came to Gurgan ("Jorjan"), and later on marching to India. It seems the chronicler did not have any concrete notes on the campaign at hand, thus he only mentions some Eastern treasure, in the form of trophy of war. The list of articles of the treasure includes musk ambergrish, as well as ruby (sapphire) and emerald, gold and silver. It should be mentioned that "*India*," the one mentioned in the Georgian source, should be the land around the Ganga basin and the Northern India.

The Georgian chronicler writes, the Persian and Georgian army entered "Sind." It is hard to denote the area that the chronicler implied, but the contemporary central India should be mentioned along with the southern areas of the river Sind and part of Pakistan. As for the mentioned cities: "Sindia", (Sindila), "Tophor", "Kimrai", it is also hard to identify them as well. The cities are not mentioned by the famous astronomer and geographer of the Middle Ages, Ulugbek in his Geographic Table. Only one city is mentioned by Ulugbek under the title of "Sindi" – "Mansura" (Mathura).[3]

It is evident that the Georgian chronicler had only the oral notes with regard to the above-mentioned military campaign, as he narrates the Eastern parable on the hawk and raven instead of the description of the real battle scenes. The chronicle informs that the King of "Sind" made his fortress as a stronghold, telling a parable to the King Vakhtang Gorgasali; according to the story, the raven that brought up the hawk became the victim of the hawk itself.[4] Telling the parable the King of Sind allegorically warned the King Vakhtang over the deadly consequences of his service to Persians. In his turn, King Vakhtang somewhat vaguely responds to the King of Sind, mentioning that he accompanied to Persians, but not in sake of their service, but according to the will of God and for the glory of God.[5] Finally, King Vakhtang defeated King of Sind, but petitioned him for the Shah of Persia to set the wounded king free in return of a ransom.[6]

Still, there is a real relationship between Georgia and India behind this legendary story. The Georgian source tells us that Persians and Georgians came to Gurgan and "Abash Land" except India-Sind. In the Georgian sources, Abyssinia (Ethiopia) is meant under the ethnic word "*Abash*", although it is obvious that it is not the one that of Africa. As

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3 S. Gorlenko, *Ulugbeg and his Geographical Table*, Works of the A.Navoy State University of Uzbekistan, New Series, #74, Samarkand, 1957, p. 68 (In Russian).

4 Juansheri, *Kartlis Tskhovreba* ("The Life of Kartli"), Vol. II, Tbilisi, 1959, pp. 193-195 (In Georgian).

5 *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 194.

6 *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 195.

Georgian scholars presume this is the state of the "Small Khushan", created on the territory of Sistan[7], or the harbor of Gurgan on the Caspian Sea – Abeskun, near Astrabad.[8]

The Greek and Arabic authors also mention the military campaigns of the Persian Shahs against Khushans, Huns and Ephtalits. [9] Although some notes on the military campaign of the Georgian King in India is preserved only by the Georgian sources, but the fact is determined by some objective circumstances as well. Obviously, the military campaign of the then Georgian King and his army would have had a little significance for the World History. On the other hand, the fact that such military campaigns indeed took place is testified by the Georgian historian of the famous Queen Tamar, 12th century. The so called "first historian" of Queen Tamar writes that "the flag of Gorgasali was a bit faded after the military campaign of Sind".[10] Thus, the official historiography of the 12th century considered it to be trustworthy that the King Vakhtang Gorgasali participated in the campaigns to India and Sind.

There could not be found much information on the Georgian-Indian relations in the following centuries. Although it should be mentioned that in the classical poems of the Georgian poetry: "A Panter in the Knight's Skin" by Shota Rustaveli, "Abdulmesia" by Ioan Shavteli and "Tamariani" by Chakhrukhadze, India and even Sind are mentioned here and there. In the poem "The Wisdom of Bahlavar" the events take place in India. Some social scientists consider that the Georgian translation of the poem is an intermediate version of the texts between the Eastern (Sanskrit, Farsi, and Arabic) and the European (The poem "Iodasaf and Bahlavar") versions. (Accordingly Iodasaf, the son of the King of India, Abenes, was Christianized by the anchorite Bahlavar).[11] According to the fragmented sources, several Christians were tortured in the city of Thana, India, among them "layman, Dimitri from Tbilisi of Georgian nationality, with a good knowledge of the Eastern languages".[12]

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7 V. Goiladze, *Vakhtang Gorgasali and His Historian*, Tbilisi, 1991, p. 180 (In Georgian).

8 S. Kakabadze, *Vakhtang Gorgasali and his Era*, Tbilisi, 1994, pp. 259-260 (In Georgian).

9 *Vakhtang Gorgasali and his Era*.

10 *The First Historian of Queen Tamar. Kartlis Tskhovreba (Life of Kartli)*, Vol. II, Tbilisi, 1959, p. 73 (In Georgian).

11 I. Abuladze, *Sibrdzne Balavarisi ("The Wisdom of Balahvar"*), Tbilisi, 1957 (In Georgian).

12 I. Tabagua, *Georgia in the European Archives and Libraries (XIII-XVI*), Tbilisi, 1984, pp. 93-94 (In Georgian).

In the beginning of the 15th century, one Georgian happened to be in India, called Efrem, whose history was recorded by George Sphrandzes, ambassador of the Emperor of Constantinople, Constantin XI (1449-1453). According to his story, Efrem, was already 100 years old at the time when he met Sphrandzes. He found himself in India in his early childhood as Persians had kidnapped and sold him to a merchant. During one of the expeditions of the merchant to India, Efrem escaped. He lived in India for a long time and learned the local language as well. Finally, he reached to Portugal and Spain by ship and then returned to Georgia.[13] Although some fantastic aspects could be found in the narrative regarding India, but the main part of the story seems authentic.

The Shah of Persia, Nadir Avshar (1736-1747) waged the military campaign to India in 1738-1739. He brought a young Georgian Prince Erekle (later the King of the Eastern Georgia – 1744-1798) with him in the military campaign. Unfortunately, the Georgian historian, Oman Kherkheulidze, who wrote the story, traditionally provides the Eastern parable, rather than describing some details of the battle and the real picture of India. More precisely, he tells that there was a huge rock on the border of India and Sind, with the curse on it for those who cross the border. According to historian, King Erekle suggested King Nadir Shah to load an elephant with the rock, leading the army of Nadir Shah. Thus, they would be protected from the curse[14]. Some real details are also provided along with this legend. Namely, "Amad Shah" is named as the King of India, which could be "Mahmmad (Mohammed) Shah," the real head of great Moghal State. Besides, the source mentions that before his campaign to India, Nadir Shah captured Qandahar, which is testified otherwise as well.[15]

According to the historical sources, Georgian merchants had intensive trade relations with India in the 18th-19th centuries. The first serious activities in this direction were taken in 1770, when the King of Kakheti and Kartli, Erekle the 2nd, first time becoming acquainted with India in his early childhood, sent an ambassadorial mission, comprised of merchants and an ambassador, to India, with an aim to launch serious relations with the country.[16] A rich Armenian merchant, Jacob Shakhamirian, who was an owner of trading centers in Madras and

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13 George Sprandzes, *Ambassadorial Mission to Trapesund and Iberia, "Georgica" (The Byzantine Writers about Georgia),* Vol., 8, Tbilisi, 1970, pp. 50-53 (In Greek and in Georgian).

14 Oman Kherkheulidze, *The Reign of King Irakli II*, Tbilisi, 1989, p. 41 (In Georgian).

15 See: *History of Iran*, Edition of the Moscow State University, Moscow, 1977, pp. 204-205 (In Russian).

16 Z. Chichinadze, *Trade and Crafts of Georgia in Old Times: Grigol Khursidze and Stefane Zubalashvili in India*, Tiflis, 1905, pp. 6-7 (In Georgian).

Calcutta, served as a mediator in the negotiations. According to some information, Erekle asked Shakhamirian to arrange the transfer of 10 thousand Indians to Georgia in order to make them teach the processing of sugar-cane to Georgians and assist in foundation of the loom factory.[17] In the last years of the reign of the King Erekle the 2nd, the two Georgian merchants, Luka Khurtsidze and Stephan Zubalashvili travelled to India. The deed and activities of Luka Khurtsidze were kept by his son Grigol; he settled in India and was married to an Indian women. It seems he died on the island of Palang, in 1829[18]. Various goods were taken from India to Georgia: sugar, tea, coffee, alum, pepper, cinnamon, needles, embroidery, weapons (gunpowder), wool, cotton, paper, leather, umbrellas, vessels, glass ware, etc.

It is also a well-known fact that the Georgian Catholic priest, Anton Khutsishvili, moved to India in the beginning of the 19th century and stayed there for a while. He even studied the Indian language (probably "Hindi") in India as well.[19] His grave stone could be found in the city of Varanasi until recently, with an inscription that the Georgian trader Tamaz Khuduashvili was buried here. Originally he was from the villiage of Kojori (near Tbilisi)[20].

The travelling of a diplomat Rafiel Danibegashvili, sent with an ambassadorial mission to India by the King Erekle the 2nd, deserves special mention. He travelled to India for five times, but he left only the notes of his 3rd travel (1799-1813). After the death of the king Erekle the 2nd, Rafiel entered in the service of the Russian Emperor. He died in Russia, in 1827. It would be interesting to provide the details of the route and travelling of Rafiel to India. After the long journey and adventures, he happened to be in Calcutta, in the beginning of the 19th century.[21] Later on he travelled to the central India across the river Ganges. Rafiel provides the brief description of Calcutta and mentions that Armenians, Englishman, Frenchman, Danes and Portuguese were residing in the city apart from Indians. He says that Europeans were mainly living in the tower, located nearby sea. Rafiel mentions that the company of West-

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17 *Trade and Crafts of Georgia in Old Times: Grigol Khursidze and Stefane Zubalashvili in India*.

18 *Trade and Crafts of Georgia in Old Times: Grigol Khursidze and Stefane Zubalashvili in India*, pp. 18-19.

19 *Trade and Crafts of Georgia in Old Times: Grigol Khursidze and Stefane Zubalashvili in India*, pp. 34-35.

20 L. Maruashvili, *The Life of Rafail Danibegashvili, in: The Travels of R.Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, Moscow, Publishing House "Progress," 1969, p. 181 (In Russian, English and Hindi).

21 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827,* p. 27 (Russian Text).

India is located in Calcutta, governed by an English lord.[22]. According to his information, the Company had a huge annual income (approximately 500 million rupee), although a great amount of money was spent on the maintenance of the English-Indian army. According to the traveler, the rain-water was used for drinking by the inhabitants of Calcutta. As Rafiel says, "Bangla" (Bengali) language was spoken in Calcutta.[23] On his way to the central India, Rafiel crossed the main trading centers: "Sirampoor" (Serampore) and "Chichra" (Chinsura), located northward to Calcutta. Afterwards, Rafiel describes the city of Machsusabad (Murshidabad) – the abode of the ruler of Bengal (Navab), controlled by Englishmen. Then he crossed Azimabad (Phatona), modern-day Patna. The Georgian traveler mentions a barbarian tradition of drowning of old men and old women in river (filling the mouth of a person with the water), was followed in the city. Those who survived were taken to the so called "Village of Dead".[24]

Continuing his travel, Rafiel visited the city of Banaras (modern day Varanasi). According to his information, the city was considered to be the holy place and everyone tried to spend his last days there. The description of the following cities is provided by Rafiel: Laknahore (modern-day Lucknow), Camber (Cawnpore or Kanpur), Mered (Mirud or Meerut). Much more time is devoted to the description of the city of Delhi. Rafiel wrote that Delhi was called "Shahchinabad" (Shahjanabad) as well, after its founder Shah-Jehan. Besides, describing the city of Delhi, he wrote: "The Royal Palace is gilded from top to the bottom. One of the mosques is called Chuma-Machet, which is covered with pure gold and is so tall that it might be seen twelve versts away from the town." The nearby, small, beautiful, fort also comes in his description, which is "built of the purple stone. In the middle of the fort the royal palace is located, built of pure marble... in front of the palace the small, but lovely garden could be found, filled with fragrant trees such as clove, pomegranate and so forth".[25] It seems Rafiel stayed for a long time in Delhi, as according to his notes he was assigned the task of collecting taxes. He was paid 200 rupee per month for it.[26]

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22 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p.28.

23 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p.26.

24 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p. 27.

25 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p.29 (159-160).

26 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p.29.

Afterwards, Rafiel crossed several cities northward of Delhi, among them Lahore and Norpore (Far), at the foot of Himalayas. Rafiel mentions that the ritual of "Sati" (burning wives of the dead men) existed there. He provides the description of a small volcano that evaporates the constant fire. According to the traveler, Indians considered it to be a holy fire and worshiped it.

Rafiel Danibegashvili visited the city of Kashmir (Srinagar), the capital of Kashmir. He erroneously said that the city is located on the river of Radawa (Ravi) while the fact is that it is on the river Jhelum. The traveler mentions that "this is the only town in India where it snows, but the snow does not cause any harm. Besides, there are many small rivers on which the people sail on boats. From here come the shawls known to all nations. There are some twenty-four thousand looms in and around the city, on which shawls are woven".[27] Rafiel informs us that the main dishes of the city includes boiled millet, butter and cabbage, whereas tea, "Chuckhon Butter" (melted butter – "ghee") and milk could be found in the daily ration of the rich people. The traveler further tells that there are numerous canals in the town, whereas in the middle is the lake which is nineteen versts in circumference.[28] From Kashmir Rafiel, crossing Tibet moved to the Central Asia first and later on came to Moscow.

In the 50s of the 20th century, in September, 1954, the new stage in the Georgian-Indian relations started. In that year, the famous film maker and representative from the cultural sector of India, Raj Kapoor, visited Georgia, besides the other parts of the USSR. This was the first foreign delegation that visited Georgia and the population was allowed to publicly meet them. The relations were kept at an official level, when on June 13, 1955, PM of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, with his daughter Indira Gandhi, visited Tbilisi. They paid visit to the city of Gori and city of Rustavi as well and attended the concert at the Tbilisi Opera and Ballet Theater.[29]

India was one of the first countries, establishing an official diplomatic relations with Georgia after the country gained its independence (September 22, 1992). Georgia joined the programmes of Indian Technical-Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Irakli Menagarishvili paid an official visit to India in 2000. Later on, in December, 2004, the deputy

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27 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p. 32 (In Russian).

28 *The Travells of R. Danibegashvili in India, Burma and other Asian Countries, 1795-1827*, p. 33.

29 Newspaper *"Komunisti*", 1955, June 14, p.1 (In Georgian).

Minister of Foreign Affairs of India, Rajiv Dogra, paid a counter-visit to Georgia. In 2005 delegation exchange took place between the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and the Indian Chamber of Commerce. The memorandum regarding their collaboration followed shortly.[30] Thus, Georgia goes on its ancient traditions and is eager to collaborate in the spheres of culture, economy and security with the India in future.

[30] Web-Page – www.indoeti.blogspot.com

CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS IN MONGOLIA

Maqsooda S. Sarfi*

Abstract:
With the collapse of Soviet Union, the Mongolian government besides introducing democracy attempted to re-introduce the traditions and customs that existed there before the Socialism. In 1990, Mongolia proclaimed its new constitution where it stated the basic human rights including freedom of religion. Shamanism and Buddhism are back in every family; likewise construction of both yellow and red sect of lama monasteries are in full swing, Muslim *Kazakhs* have full freedom of worship, and many Christian churches are operating in different parts of Mongolia. Both young and old visit religious places and feel pride in their traditions. One finds in every corner near the monasteries fortune teller lamas predicting the future of the people who stay in queue for long to know about their coming years. *Chingiz Khan* is now the hero and founder of the Mongol *Ulus.* Old script is back in schools.
The paper will throw light on the customs and traditions of Mongols. How Mongols have retained past traditions and what is happening with this revival of customs and tradition and its affect on the society on the whole.
Keywords:
Tsagan sar, *Naadam*, name ceremonies, hair cutting ceremonies, greetings, hospitality, India, Mongolia.

Introduction:

Mongolia *Khox Tengir* or blue sky as called by Mongols, and *Sogen no Kuni* or grass land called by Japanese, lies in between the two big powers Russia in the north and China in its east-west and south. Mongolia covers the land of 1.5 million sq km, half of the size of India, with a small population of 2.7 million. Today there are more than twenty ethnic groups in Mongolia. The *khalkha* Mongols are in majority constituting about 86 %, the other ethnic groups are *khazaks*, majority of them living in Byan Oligi, *Buryats*, *Bayats,Kalmaky*. Mongols speak *khalka* Mongolian and other languages spoken are Russian and now a day's English as well.

Mongols once shaped the course of history for the whole of Inner Asia and extended their empire up to Europe. They left their imprints on different civilizations and connected East with the West through the famous Silk Road. Like in the past, today as well the geographical location of Mongolia makes it very significant in this whole area. It is no more a buffer state between the two great powers but it does play an important role by strengthening its bilateral ties with Russia and China.

* **Visiting Faculty, Center of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir Srinagar/0165, Fukatani, wo-37-2, Kanazawashi, Ishikawa, Japan:** shiotanim@yahoo.com

Mongolia has maintained balanced relation with its close neighbours and has created a multi-faceted foreign policy, which has linked it with the outside world politically, economically and culturally.

India and Mongolia although geographically very far of countries are linked with each other since ancient times. Mongols and Indian share a common cultural legacy. In the distant past Mongol Buddhist monks visited India to acquire knowledge in all the fields of life and in contemporary times too Mongolian students are evincing interest in the Indian universities to learn English, Information Technology and religious subject. Indian government has been providing scholarship for Mongol students in different educational areas. In Mongolia a center of information and technology after the name of Atal Behari Vajpayee has been established. A Rajiv Gandhi Art and Production school is enabling Mongolian youth on different skill courses. Mahatma Gandhi street with Gandhiji`s statue is in the center of Ulaanbaatar. Mongolian people call Indians as their spiritual neighbours.[1] The strong factor in their relations is Buddhism, which along with religious philosophy gave Mongolia its language, literature, folklore, medicine, culture, customs and traditions.

Buddhism reached Mongolia from Kashmir[2] via Tibet and Central Asia where people embraced it and kept it very close to their hearts. It became their strength when uniting against Manchu's or going through transition in modern period. Even in Socialist period when religious practice was not allowed Mongols in the heart of hearts were Buddhist. Seeing an Indian, they will say "*burkhanni gazraaas irsen khuun*" (they have come from the land of Buddha) and showed a lot of respect towards them.

Before the breakup of the Soviet Union, Mongolia was wholly relying on it both politically and economically, and obviously with the

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1 In 1996 James Baker, State Secretary of United States of America visited Mongolia and it was he who said in his speech that United States, Japan and other donor countries are the third neighbour countries to Mongolia besides its two close neighbours Russia and China. Since that time Mongolian Government has used it often.

2 It becomes clear that Kashmir played a significant role in the spread of the faith there, as Prof Shi. Bira writes, ("The Indo-Mongolian Relationship: A Retrospective outlook on Buddhism," *Studies in Mongolian History, Culture and Historiography,*(selected papers) Ulaanbaatar, 2001, pp.362-370) "from Chinese's sources we know that in the reign of *Ogedei Khaan* the Kashmiri monk Namu and his brother came to the Mongolian court. He stayed in the reign of *Ogedei Khaan*`s successors *Guyuk* and *Monke Khaan*. The later appointed him as *Guo-shi,* the state preceptor. He was given a jade seal to administer Buddhist affairs. He was much honored at the Mongolian court. He was assigned to be the head of ten thousand Kashmirian households".

collapse of socialist system, Mongolia was left alone with tremendous economic and social crises. Many donor countries came to its rescue to help and along with erstwhile socialist Central Asia, it too choose the road to democracy and market economy. Although the transition period was very painful, it has emerged out of it with its new polices, planning and is heading towards a successful path of democracy.

The socio-cultural trends are to some extent the continuation of the great past as the civilizations do not exist in isolation and present cannot be detached from the past and future. Mongolian nomadic customs and tradition are closely linked with its religion. The religious customs and traditions inherited by the Mongols are: "*Tsang Sar*" (white moon month), naming, haircutting ceremonies, greetings and so on. Apart from the religious ceremonies, the Mongols celebrate, *Eriin gurvan naadam* i.e. three games of the men, wrestling, archery and horse racing. Following are a few ceremonies and other customs that show how the traditions exist today in Mongolia.

Tsagan-Sar:

Tsagan Sar is celebrated as the New Year as per the lunar calendar, usually in the month of February or March. The preparations start a day earlier when *ger (*apartments), livestock barns are cleaned to make the festivity. On the other hand *bituun (*the last day of the year ceremony) includes burning off candles to symbolize enlightenment of the *samsara (*world). In every household Mongols put three pieces of ice at the doorway so that the goddess could take it when visiting the house hold. Along with it there is a large amount of covered food where animal meat is covered by a pile of *boov (*ceremonial bread) in an odd number of layers and heap of candies are put in the form of pyramid. Grilled and minced meat steamed inside a pastry called *buuz* forms part of the offering. The celebration would last for three days but one could visit the relatives or friends for about seven days. *Tsagn Sar* is also associated with the Shamanic faith as the Mongol families remember the spirit of their dead family members. To commemorate it nine bowls of water and sticks are placed on a small table and Shaman performs the prayers in honor of the dead kin and especially for the patrilineal

ancestors.[3] In the early days on this occasion Mongols used to wear white clothes, ride a white horse and eat *tsagan idée* (milk products) like milk and cheese as white is considered auspicious. In the decorated monasteries celebration start a month ago and people visit these in large numbers and chant Buddhist prayers for a rich future and sound health. In many such places dances are also performed. Outside every *ger* people build a big mound towards its southern side where they leave eatables, usually green tea and food with a prayer.

For *Tsagan Sar* people make preparations many days earlier and make variety of food. They also visit their friends and relatives. The youngsters go to pay respect to their elders. When a guest enter a *ger* he or she extends his/her hands towards his elders, palms upwards, bows and present a *khadakh*[4] *(*a blue silk scarf) and says, *tani amar sain uu (*I hope all is well with you). The elder puts their hands on the younger one's shoulder and says, *mend amar bain uu (*may your life be prosperous), the younger ones stretch both hands towards the elder. That he has come with an open heart and the placing of his/her hands underneath the elders hands symbolizes one's readiness to help the elder person in their hour of need. The second day is for women and third for the youth. Younger people receive gifts and presents from their elders.[5] The special dish of the day is *oji* (mutton).

Eriin Guran Naadam:

Another traditional national festival that Mongols celebrate since the ancient past is *Eriin Guran Naadam.* The three games, horse race, wrestling and archery have been celebrated since the beginning of their military and tribal past along with the poetry, which also represents an unbroken tradition. It is celebrated in the month

[3] http://www.nadammongoliannaadamfestival.com/

[4] *Khadak* has a special significance in Mongolian traditions. To present a *khadak* is a sign of respect and reverence. Acceptance of *khadak* is a sign of compliance of the wish.

[5] A few families in Ulaanbaatar invited me on such an occasion. The whole ceremony was just like the religious festival in India very similar to *Eid-ul-Azha* or *Navratari*. I too was given presents by telling me *miin okhiin (*My daughter).

of July and many foreign delegates also come to watch it. Except wrestling, which only men could participate, both men and women could participate in archery and horse riding. Mongols have great respect and love for both the horse and the saddle. "A Mongol is born in the saddle and he dies in the saddle", says a Mongol proverb. A saddle is never thrown on the ground but is kept vertically facing the north. Saddle of women and men are kept in the *ger* in a fixed position, women's on the left and men's on the right.

During the *Naadam* festival the children who take part in the game are between eleven to five years of age. The age of the horse is also three, four and six years. Jockeys wear very colorful dress made especially for the occasion and they are trained for months. Both the rider and horse are praised by reciting the poetry. Capacity and strength of the horse and its birth place is also mentioned. The winners are given gold, silver and bronze medals but the one who did not perform well is also rewarded to boost up the horse owner so that the horse could perform well in the next race. Sarcastic songs are sung for the horse.

Wrestling is another game that Mongols are very fond of. In wrestling the rules are not fixed but the one who first touch's the ground with his hand or knee is a loser. Wrestlers wear tight fitting *shudag* (trunk), *dzodug (*short jackets with long sleeves) leaving the chest bare. The *gutal (*boots) are traditional with toes upturned. Each wrestler has his own herald who chants the poetry and attributes it to his champion. These contestants come to the ring leaping, sprawling, and flapping their arms like an eagle. The one who losses have to pass under the arm of the winner to express that there are no grievances between them. After the match the contestants shake hands with each other. The titles given are like Falcon, Elephant and Lion etc.

The game of the archery is believed to have originated in the 11th century. Bows and arrows have remained much like the same over

the centuries. Both men and women take part in this game. It is a wonderful scene to watch them compete with each other according to the rules, which have come down from the past generations.

Name Ceremonies:

Some other traditions are like giving the name. As in the past so is the practice now among the Mongols; they consult lamas for giving the name to a new born as well as for fixing the date of the marriage. This practice has come down since the time of Chingiz Khaan and even persisted during Socialist period. During the 12th century, as described by the sacred legend, Mongols have had purely Mongolian names such as:

Mongolian Names		
Narantsetseg	"*Nar*" (sun)	*"Tsetseg"*(flower)
Mongkhuu	"*Mong*" (silver)	"*Khuu"*(son)
Altantoya	"*Alth*" (gold)>	"*Toya*" (light)

After the Buddhism penetrated into Mongolia the language of the religion was Tibetan or Sanskrit so the names were given like:

Sanskrit Names		
"Tuvan" (One of the names of Buddha the god of mercy)	"*Dashzevga*" (Double happiness)	"*Yanjma*" (Goddess and patroness of poetry)

Tibetan Names		
"*Dava*" (Monday)	*"Myadag*" (flower) "*Maa*" (mother)	"Nyma" (Sunday)
"*Myagmar*" (Tuesday)	*"Lobsan*"(Developed) "*dorj*" (interest)	"*Ragcha*"(guardian) "S*uren*"(genius)
The Name Meant for the Evil		
"*Terbish"*(That is not)	"*inbish*" (This is not)	"*khuunbish*" (Not a human)
"*Nokhoi"*(dog)	"*Nergui*" (without name)[6]	

[6] Maqsooda Sarfi, *Society of Mongolia, with special reference to Religion and Culture*, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, 1995.

During the Socialist period it became fashion to give Russian names also but now people have switched to the old names and these days for boys popular name is *Temujin* after Chingiz Khaan.

Hair Cutting Ceremonies:

Referring to the ritual of the first haircut, the Mongols avoid using the word hair; instead they use *dakh* (something fine, characteristic of the steppe flower). In the past the ritual was performed on a fixed date of the year for the well being and good health of the child. In the case of boy's hair was cropped, and only a tuft was left at the top of the head symbolizing manliness. For the girls tufts were left on both sides of the head symbolizing the future maiden's beauty. Now-a- days we do not find these customs but what is still in practice are consulting lama for the date of haircut. Hair is usually cut with the mothers working scissors, to which is tied *khadhak* (a blue scarf). The first hair lock is cut by the elder person of the family and begun from the left side. After cutting a small lock of hair the scissors are given to the mother; she also cuts a lock and then it is the turn of the father and other close relatives.[7] After cutting a few locks of hair, the final shaving is done by the elder person. The child is given a cup of milk after the hair cut, placed on the same blue scarf. After the baby sips, it is then passed on to the other people present in the function. Gifts and presents are given to the child that includes money; alcoholic beverages, koumiss, cheese. Close relatives of the family on this occasion bring valuable presents including cattle. After the hair cut, the mother collects all the clipped hair into a kerchief and sews them into the child's pillow.[8] This is followed by a feast, songs and dance.

Greetings of the Mongols:

Greetings of Mongols are very loving. The way they greet each other is very unique and depends upon the season and circumstances. Seasonal greetings are associated with the cattle breeders. During summer and autumn people greet each other by asking; *mal chin sain uu* (how has the cattle fattened). In spring and winter they greet by saying how the cattle has withered in winter. If somebody sees another person milking the cow, the person is told, *sureg amgala sun shim arvin boltugai (*let

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7 In one such function of the baby who was very attached to me I was asked to cut a lock of hair with the same scissors. I felt honored.

8 In Kashmir the first hair (*zare)* cut of the new born baby is cropped on the date, which family think is auspicious. Among some families these *zare* are buried under a tree. Close relatives bring gifts to the baby.

the herd be peaceful and milk be in abundance or may the milk yielded be plentiful and may your herd grow bigger).

In professional greeting, a student is asked, *sain sorchee bain uu* (how are your studies going), if a person is seen writing he is wished, may your pen be sharper. And if someone is seen building his *ger* he is wished may it be beautiful and the person always replies may your wish be fulfilled. To a person traveling to a far off place is wished as, *altan shar zaam tani ulziteibaih boltugai (*let your journey be safe and successful). If a person is seen doing some evil thing they say *ner khugraas yas khugar (*better the bone be broken than ones reputation).

Hospitality:

Mongolians are often referred as "*zochilomtgoi"* i.e. hospitable to guests and as the proverb goes, happy is he who often has guest, cheerful is the home near which stands the horse of a visitor. They treat their guest with a lot of respect. Before asking anything the guest is served tea and *tsagaan idée (*milk products). Mongols do not like to ask the guest whether he or she would like to have tea, as the Mongolian proverb goes, "*asukhaar asgachikh*" (if you ask the guest the tea, it is better to serve it).[9] As a sign of respect the host always extends his both hands, right arm supported with the left at the wrist or elbow and offers the cup of "*airag*" (koumiss) to the guest, and the guest in turn takes it with both hands. Both these gestures are sign of respect and politeness. On leaving the *ger* the host always wishes him /her good journey by splashing milk and hopes that the guest will come again as he/she is always welcome.

Exchange of Snuff Bottles:

Mongols use *khoorog* (snuff bottle) as a visiting card and their exchange show the pleasure of meeting the family. The exchange is a sort of introduction called "*tamkhilakh".* The amazing thing is that changing the snuff bottles is like an art with which one can make good friends or spoil the relationship. When a guest enters into the *ger*, after enquiring the health of the family, he exchanges his snuff bottle with the host. Men put a pinch of tobacco on their nail of their thumb and smell it while the women only smell the bottle without opening it. To accept the snuff bottle with ones "*deel*"[10] unfastened or sleeves rolled up are a bad taste and not permitted. These bottles are made of precocious stones, metals, bones, and crystal and are carried in the special silk pouches.

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9 In Kashmir it is also considered bad to ask a guest whether they like to have something.

10 *Deel* is the national costume of Mongolia.

Some other Customs and Totems:
The other customs that they keep dear to them is that the first cup of tea or first meal is always served to the head of the family; if he is not in one's home the food is put into his cup. Mongols do not lick the teacups and cups used for "*airag"* but it is a must to lick the meal plate and curd plates. The articles like cups, glass, socks and shoes are considered good for bringing luck so are favorite items to give as gifts. On the other hand cap or hat should not be kept mouth open towards the sky as it may bring illness. It is considered good if a child falls while entering the house but bad if leaving the house. It is a taboo to praise small children as pretty, wise, beautiful.[11]

Use of Colors:
Colours play an important role in the Mongol life. White signifies honesty, truth, and open heartedness. Blue symbolizes eternity, loyalty and consistency, red is victory, golden yellow is the most honorable colour and is used in documents and diplomas, which are written on a yellow paper. Black is not considered a good color.

Conclusion:
Ulaanbaatar of early 80`s and 90`s was green, beautiful, clean and fresh. There were very few buildings, environs were open and lively. All that has changed; high rise apartments have replaced *ger*. *Ger* is now considered out of date and hazardous to life and in some cases people who still live in *gers* are looked down upon as poor and traditional by the urban population. Now one could hardly hear the echo of a friend across the road that asks you, *integ khun yumo* (hi are you Indian), *naiz bolkhou* (do you want to be a friend). The roads are awfully crowded with vehicles jarring and rushing along the streets. There is not even a place for pedestrian to walk; even ten minutes drive

[11] Shiotani Shigek, E. Purevja *初級モンゴル語 монгол хэл эхлэн сурах ьичиг (Mongolian for the beginners) 東京大学書林、Tokyo daigaku shurin,* 2001, pp. 201-202.

takes more than an hour due to heavy traffic jam. The city is brimming with the eateries. Restaurants, bars, cafes and kiosks are filling vacant space. This scenario was not known in earlier days. Ulaanbaatar has become smaller in size. Although Mongolia is changing very fast in its outlook yet their nomadic culture is alive. The heart of the people is still nomadic and allied with their herds, living and letting the steppe culture to live.

Acknowledgement; All photographs used in the article are courtesy to Shiotani Shigeki.

ARAB UPRISING
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIMENSIONS

Aijaz Ashraf Wani*

Abstract:
Famous English historian Arnold Toynbee while analyzing the causes of the rise and fall of civilizations in his twelve-volume book "*A Study of History* (1934-1961)" said "Civilizations die from suicide, not by murder", thereby putting the blame for the downfall more on internal factors rather than external forces. When a civilization responds to challenges, it grows. It declines when its leaders stop responding creatively, and sink owing to nationalism, militarism, and the tyranny of a despotic minority. This is happening in the Middle East, however, at the same time the external powers with nefarious designs play a great part, creating conditions where their interests are best served. The present crisis of the Arab World is therefore the result of the mixture of internal problems and the external manipulations. The present paper seeks to know what happened recently in many countries of the region; how the regimes have responded and how the external forces are playing their game for their own interests.
Keywords: Middle East, Mis-governance, dictatorship, uprising, corruption, Emergency Laws, non-violent resistance, Qaddafi, Hosni Mubarak, Basher al Assad, Egypt, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Bahrain, Iran, US, Wikileaks, New Middle East policy.

Introduction:

Some of the primary characteristics of 'Failed States', writes Noam Chomsky, are (a) their inability or unwillingness to protect their citizens from violence and perhaps even destruction, (b) their tendency to regard themselves as beyond the reach of domestic or international law, and (c) if they have democratic forms, they suffer from a serious "democratic deficit" that deprives their formal democratic institutions of real substance.[1] Over the decades most of the Arab states have only witnessed authoritarianism, denial of democracy and mis-governance. The present crisis in the Arab world is largely an outcome of these reasons, thereby turning them into 'Failed States' and now into battle fields. However, it will be naïve to think that the present crisis is solely outcome of internal factors without any external influence. Historically Great Powers have done everything to control this area either directly or through installing their favoured person on the throne. Such forces are again playing their part actively in the current crisis in order to safeguard their vested interests.

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* **Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, India.**

1 *Failed States-the abuse of power and the assault on democracy*, Allen & Unwin, Australia, 2007 edition, pp. 1-2.

Internal Dimension:

When Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old Tunisian set himself on fire on December 17, 2010[2], little did outside world knew that it will set virtually the whole of the Middle East into frenzy. For people outside the Middle East someone committing suicide is condemnable but not one that can outrage the vast majority. In the Arab world suicide is unheard of. What may seem banal event of a Tunisian immolating himself is grave matter for Arabs. First that he was slapped by a woman and second committing suicide is unpardonable sin in Arab. "The reality," wrote Michele Penner Angrist, "was much grimmer: dissidents were tortured and everyday Tunisians struggled to earn livelihoods, while the families of the president and those connected to him enriched themselves and flaunted their wealth … and Ben Ali regime was contemptuous of its citizens, treating them as too unsophisticated to entrust with freedoms-and betting that they would be too meek to call the regime to account for its excesses". [3]

Today young generations of Arabs, who, according to Regge Omar of Qatar's news channel Al Jazeera: "have grown up in a period where an independent, brave and global Arab media has developed, and are able to see and empathies with each other's lives. Young Arabs see the repression, corruption, dashed aspirations and youth culture that is emerging from Iraq to Morocco – and what's more they are able to communicate about it".[4] Add to it the hundreds of thousands of natives studying and working outside their homes: learning about different type of socio-political environment which they aspire to have in their native places. These nonresident Arabs feel that they can make changes in their homelands. Representing various countries of the Arab world these young Muslims are uniting Arabs in one group as they are socially, linguistically and culturally one community. Most of these young Arabs in the age group of 15-35 communicate through 'social' networking sites and upload or watch videos. A study has revealed that 80% of the world's uprisings between 1970 and 1999 started in states where 60% of the population was under 30 years.[5] Arab uprising reaffirms it.[6]

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2 This was in protest of the confiscation of his wares and the harassment and humiliation that was allegedly implicated on him by a municipal officer and her aides.

3 "Morning in Tunisia", *Foreign Affairs,* Jan 16, 2011.

4 "They all watch Arab Pop Idol. They all follow their own hip-hop artists rapping about poverty and corruption ... and yes, they're all on Facebook"; Regge Omar, "The west clings on to the old Arab order at its peril", *Guardian*, February 8, 2011.

5 Elizabeth Leaky, Robert Engelman, Carolyn Gibb Vogel, Sarah Haddock & Tod Preston, "The Shape of Things to Come – Why Age Structures Matter to a Safer, More Equitable World", *Population Action International,* Washington DC, 2007, p. 24.

6 The Arab Human Development Report of 2009—a United Nations project staffed by Arab researchers, said that Arabs are overwhelmingly young, the median age 22,

Hosni Mubarak and Egyptian Politics:

Historically Egypt has been leader of Arab resistance against colonialism and the champion of the Palestinian cause. President Ghamal Abdul Nassar vehemently followed the policy of Pan-Arabism but didn't succeed. Following the assassination of President Sadat in October, 1981, by a Jihadi cell in the military led by Lt. Khalid Islambouli, Hosni Mubarak became the President and the Chairman of the National Democratic Party (NDP) on 14th Oct 1981. He was the longest serving President lasting for 29 years. Mubarak continued his predecessor's policy of periodic rigged elections to get re-elected by majority votes for successive terms in 1987, 1993, 1999 in referendums. The referendum in itself is of questionable validity. No one could run against the President due to a restriction in the Egyptian constitution in which the People's Assembly played the main role in electing the President. It was only in May 2005 that a national referendum approved a constitutional amendment that changed the presidential election to a multicandidate popular vote.

Like many other Arab countries that have remained under dictators for a long time now, Egypt was also put under Emergency Law in 1967 [7] which continued to remain in force, except for an 18-month break in 1980s. Under the law, police has been given extensive powers to make extra-judicial imprisonment of individuals[8], certain constitutional rights suspended, censorship legalized, political activities prohibited, etc. The very basic elements of a democracy: right to vote, right to contest elections, rule of law, etc, have remained absent in Egypt.

Political corruption in the Mubarak administration increased dramatically, due to the increased control of the cabinet over the institutional system. In 2005 'Freedom House', an NGO reported that the Egyptian government expanded bureaucratic regulations, registration requirements, and other controls that feed corruption.[9] This significant problem, under Mubarak, was not tackled effectively and accordingly Egypt continued to earn bad name on this account.[10] Following the recent

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compared with a global average of 28. They have become overwhelmingly urbanized: 38% of them lived in urban areas in 1970; it was now close to 60%; Ajami, "Demise of the Dictators", *The Newsweek*, Feb 2, 2011.

7 Emergency Law No. 162/1952: Official Gazette of 28 September 1958, No. 28, Bis.

8 As per non official records some 17,000 people were detained under the law, and estimates of political prisoners ran 25,000 to 35,000 **(**between 1967 & 2010**)** because under the "state of emergency", the government acquired the right to imprison individuals for any period of time without any trial, and for virtually no reason, William Fisher, "U.N. Slams Abuse of Emergency Law", Inter Press Service News Agency, March 11, 2010; http://ipsnews.net.

9 http:// en.wikipedia.org.wiki/Freedom_House.

10 In 2010, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index Report assessed Egypt with a CPI score of 3.1, based on perceptions of the degree of corruption from business people and country analysts, with 10 being very clean and 0 being highly

non-violent uprising in the country there were many media reports regarding the illegal wealth accumulated by Mubarak since the time he was an air force officer amounting between US $ 40 and 70 billion on kickbacks, military contracts, etc.[11]

Besides muzzling and choking the voice of the Egyptians the high level corruption played significant role against Mubarak and his regime for the eruption of mass protests in Cairo and other Egyptian cities on 25 January 2011, leading finally to Mubarak's resignation.

Libya under Col. Qaddafi:

On September 1, 1969, a small group of military officers staged a coup d'état against King Idris of Libya and launched what is known as the Libyan Revolution. The Libyan army's Free Unionist Officers' Movement, led by the then 27 year old Lieutenant Muammar Qaddafi, took over power. On 16th January 1970 Qaddafi became the primer of Libya and immediately thereafter evacuated American and British bases from Libya. Inspired by Nassar's ideas of Pan Arabism, Qaddafi also attempted to seek the unification of Arab world. However, all his attempts to achieve the "Union of Arab Republics" with Egypt and Syria, or with Egypt and Tunisia, failed. Without an official title, he is sometimes described as the "Brother and Leader", and other times as the "Leader of the Revolution".[12]

Qaddafi controls virtually all the main political and economic institutions of the country. In 1973, he delivered his famous "Five-Point Address"[13] announcing: Suspension of all existing laws and implementation of *Shar'ia;* Purging the country of the "politically sick"; Creation of a "people's militia" to "protect the revolution"; Administrative Revolution and Cultural Revolution. Following this, in 1977, the Libyan Arab Republic was renamed as *Jamahiriya* (state of the masses) when Qaddafi assumed the title of "Leader and Guide of the Revolution" and forming "people's committees"[14] to monitor the functioning of the government. It was then, in 1979 that he resigned from

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corrupt. Egypt ranked 98th out of the 178 countries included in the report; www.transparency.org, Also see, datastore@guardian.co.uk

11 Susanna Kim, "Egypt's Mubarak likely to retain vast wealth", *ABC News*, Feb 2, 2011; http://abcnews.go.com/Business/egypt-mubarak-family-accumulated-wealth-days-ilitary/story?id=12821073; *The Washington Post* (February, 13, 2011) reported that the illegal assets of Mubarak were up to $70 billion (£430bn); *The Guardian* (13 April, 2011) said that the fortunes of Mubarak and his family might be worth up to $70 billion accumulated due to corruption, kickbacks and legitimate business activities.

12 For details see, John L. Wright, *Libya: A Modern History*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1982. Also see, George Tremlett, *Gadaffi: The Desert Mystic*, Carroll and Graf, New York, 1993.

13 *Libya: A Modern History*, pp. 179-80

14 *Gadaffi: The Desert Mystic.*

the position of General Secretary of the General People's Congress of Libya in 1979, but retained power as de-facto dictator.

For the past 42 years Qaddafi has issued countless orders and passed hundreds of laws restricting the activities of the citizens, including laws directly related to public freedom and the exercise of political, cultural and economic activities. Most of the laws reflect the regime's interest in protecting itself and closing the doors to dissent or competition.[15] The laws were used against Libyans to deprive them of their legitimate fundamental rights. The repeal of the 1951 constitution which established and embodied the state's constitutional legitimacy was Qaddafi's first step to tighten his grip on the state, followed by all sorts of restrictions on the citizens to curb their democratic rights. Qaddafi's word became law and his "Green Book" the political Bible for Libya.[16]

The draconian laws have curbed political liberties of the people to make them suffer. For example, the "Law for the Protection of the Revolution," makes it a criminal offense to proselytize against the state, to arouse class hatred, to spread falsehood, or to participate in strikes and demonstrations.[17] There have been instances when political opponents were booked under this law on flimsy grounds. The Abou-Salim prison massacre on 29 June 1996 that killed about 1,200 political prisoners is one of the worst crimes against humanity.[18] Qaddafi used light and heavy weapons against unarmed detainees whose only crime was strike due to

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15 Interestingly these laws were not issued by the Legislative, but by the Executive Authority represented by the Revolutionary Leadership Council.

16 *The Green Book*, Public Establishment for Publishing, Advertising, and Distribution, Tripoli, Libya; The Green Book consists of three parts: "The Solution to Democratic Problems," published in 1975; "The Solution to the Economic Problem," in 1977; and "Offering Solutions to Complex Social Problems," in 1981. Enacting the Green Book eviscerated every aspect of society. Qaddafi used the second part to justify the confiscation of private businesses, nationalize private property, and cap the income of Libyan families. Libyan society, once tolerant, grew less so. The third part undercut the position of women, which it labeled the "feebler sex," and berated black Africans, whom it labeled a lazy race liable to multiply without limit.

17 Geoffrey Simons Leslie, *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1996, p. 192-3; Article 1 of the 'Revolution Protection Law' issued on 11th December 1969 states that anyone bearing arms against the 1st September republican regime or joining an armed gang for the same purpose shall be executed. Law 45 of 1972 prohibits strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations. Law 71 of 1972 treats political parties as criminal. An article of this law considers the exercise of political party activities as treason. Articles 3 and 4 prescribe a penalty of death or no less than 10 years' imprisonment for anyone who calls for establishing any prohibited gathering, organization or formation of any political group. Dissent is illegal under Law 75 of 1973; Lillian Harris Craig, *Libya: Qadhafi's Revolution and the Modern State*, West View Press, Boulder, 1986; Also see, *Gadaffi: The Desert Mystic.*

18 The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, *The Long-Aged Dictatorship 40 Years of Qaddafi Rule in Libya,* http://www.anhri.net/libya/lw/pr040700.shtml

poor health conditions, inhumane treatment, torture, humiliation and their continued detention without trial. One of the obligatory instructions is an order that says: "We execute even innocent people with the aim of terrorizing real culprits who may not be known at the moment. The locations of those who wish to defy the revolution shall be attacked and destroyed inside Libya, even if in a mosque. If the location is external we have to move to its location and attack and execute the perpetrators".[19] According to the US State Department, 10 to 20% of Libyans work in surveillance institutions,[20] a proportion of informants on par with Saddam Hussein's Iraq or Kim Jong II's North Korea. Perhaps the most dangerous tool of judicial oppression is the "Law of Collective Punishment", passed in 1997, which allows the state to sanction entire families, towns, or districts for the so-called wrongdoing of individuals.[21]

The rampant corruption and accumulation of wealth by Qaddafi and his close associates is another feature of his regime. His nationalization of private property has allowed him to exert complete control over the economy and also keep foreign investors in check. Fulfillment of the needs of all Libyan citizens depends upon their absolute obedience.[22] There are varying estimates on Qaddafi's wealth. Some estimate it to be as much as £60 billion – which has been squirreled away in safe havens across the globe. The main vehicle for the Qaddafi's wealth is the $70 billion Libyan Investment Authority (LIA), a "sovereign wealth fund" set up in 2006 to spend the country's oil money.[23]

Syria and the Assads:

In an interview recently Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said that he was unlikely to face a popular uprising similar to the ones in Tunisia and Egypt because change inside Syria was shaped by "the people's feeling and dignity, [it is] about the people participating in the decisions of their country". The President remarked that while Syria faced circumstances more difficult than those in most Arab countries, the country remained stable "because you have to be very closely linked to the beliefs of the people".[24] However, the policies of Hafiz al Asad, who ruled the country

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19 The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, *The Long-Aged Dictatorship 40 Years of Qaddafi Rule in Libya,* http://www.anhri.net/libya/lw/pr040700.shtml

20 "Libya," *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2004* ,Washington, D.C (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State), Feb. 28, 2005

21 Mohamed Eljahmi, "Libya and the U.S.: Qadhafi Unrepentant", *Middle East Quarterly*, Winter, 2006, pp. 11-20.

22 *Green Book*, p. 54. Also cited in Mohamed Eljahmi, *Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2006.*

23 Admin, "Exposed: Gaddafi Inc." *Telegraph*, Feb 27, 2011.

24 *Wall Street Journal*, Jan 31, 2011.

for three decades, and Bashar had provided enough reasons for the people of Syria to explode and demand a change.

In 1970 Hafiz al Assad became the first Shiite 'Alawi' President ruling over majority Sunnis. He placed members of his family, clan, tribe and sect, personally loyal to him, at important positions of power in the military, security, party and state institutions. He invested heavily in the military, giving privileges to the security forces and creating for them a vested interest in the survival of his regime. To protect himself from potential army coups, he created independent "Defense Companies" as a party militia, and an independent Presidential Guard. He never allowed any opposition to his power. In Feb 1982 Assad responded with unprecedented force to Muslim Brotherhood's opposition to him resulting in the killing of five to ten thousand people.[25] After announcing a state of emergency in 1963, his Baath Party regime quickly declared martial law.[26]

Bashar assumed power in 2000 and has continued with his father's policies conciliating moderate Sunnis by promoting loyal Sunni Ba'athists to important positions.[27] Bashar maintained his supremacy by methodically undermining all potential alternative centers of power and legitimacy. Opposition parties and NGOs are banned, and an emergency law introduced in 1963 allows police to arrest and detain anyone they suspect of "opposing the goals of the revolution". All forms of dissent are quickly and violently crushed, and the *mukhabarat* (secret police) is everywhere.

However, the nature and magnitude of present uprising clearly revels that government does not care much about the wishes and beliefs of the people who are not allowed to shape their political sphere. The recent anti-government protest is almost unheard of in Syria where the brutal response of the government has resulted in the death of many people.

External Dimension:

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25 Robin Wright, *Dreams and Shadows: the Future of the Middle East*, Penguin Press, 2008, p.243-4.

26 The government shuttered all newspapers and magazines, abrogating Press Law 35/1946, which had been in effect since Syria's independence in 1946. The martial decree also banned the licensing of any newspaper or magazine, confiscated all printing equipment, and seized the movable and immovable assets of printing house owners; Moh'd Anjarini, "Oppressive Laws in Syria: Laws of Emergency issued upon the Legislative Act No. 15 on 22.12.1962 by the Council of Ministers in Syria," *Justice Online Journal*, October 2001.

27 Like prime minister, foreign minister and defence minister, Bashar even married a Sunni girl – Asma Fawaz al-Akhras.

Middle East has a tremendous geo-strategic and economic importance and hence was one of the hot beds of cold war confrontation. The area is an important communication land bridge to three continents, and the gateway to the undeveloped but great continent of Africa. Endowed with oil, the Middle East is one of the economic life-line for the West.[28]

The US started to look towards the Middle East after the World War II for two main reasons—oil and the containment of Soviet Union. Oil was originally a commercial interest, but with the onset of the cold war it also took its place in a general political-military strategy.[29] Accordingly, US provided economic and military aid to many countries in the Middle East under "Truman Doctrine"[30] to stop the influence of Soviet Union. And, henceafter, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in 1953-54 under *Pactomania*[31] drove deep into the heart of Middle East to seek military pacts like NATO, CNTO, etc. Where it could not CIA dislodged governments like that of Mohamed Mosaddeq in Iran in August 1953 to be replaced by US-friend Shah. It helped the governments in the region that looked "moderates" and opposed those "radicals" that took sides with the USSR. It was an open policy.[32] US has ever since continued to oppose and suppress the regimes that tend to oppose it or pose threat to its interests in the region like Hamas in Palestine and Qaddafi in Libya, including for the sake of Israel which has been its greatest ally in the region.

On the other hand, Russian policy of expansion to the South dates back to Tsarist era and it continued under the Soviets. Stalin, without success, tried hard to put pressure on its southern neighbours and increase its influence in Iran to obtain concessions from Turkey. The new Soviet offensive in the mid-1950s was far more intelligently conceived

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28 Hanson W. Baldwin, "Strategy of the Middle East", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 35, No. 4, 1957, pp. 655-56.

29 John C. Campbell, "The Soviet and the United States in the Middle East", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Sage, Vol. 401, 1972, p.127.

30 The Truman Doctrine was a policy set forth by US President Harry S Truman on March 12, 1947 stating that the US would support Greece and Turkey with economic and military aid to prevent their falling into the Soviet sphere. It was later extended to other countries also.

31 Pactomania is a term used to describe a period of treaty making by the United States during the Cold War. During the Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, the United States, mainly through the efforts of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, formed alliances with some 42 separate nations along with treaty relations with nearly 100 countries, which scholars described as "pactomania".

32 *The New York Times* (Aug. 6, 1954) described it an "object lesson" for the "underdeveloped countries with rich resources", an "object lesson in the cost that must be paid by one of their number which goes berserk with fanatic nationalism" and tries to take control of their own resources thus becoming "radical"; Cited in Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New*, Pluto Press, London, (new edition, Viva Books Ltd., New Delhi, 2007), p.112.

and executed.[33] Khrushchev's strategy was primarily based on manipulation of local forces rather than a campaign to intimidate local governments or to make gains through negotiations with contesting powers. Kremlin exploited the new dynamic Arab Nationalism and its distrust of the West. Soviets supported Arab regimes that were more or less dedicating their efforts to revolutionary changes, and became the major supplier of arms to them who obviously were opposed to the West. Taking advantage of Arab-Israel conflict they endorsed Arab position gaining thereby favour throughout the Arab world. However, after the collapse of Soviet Union the US influence has increased in the Middle East and has exercised its power to shape future in the area in a way its interests are secured.

US continue to ensure its control over the major energy resources of the Arabian Peninsula. It is not, therefore, surprising that US supports "moderate nationalists", such as the ruling elite in Saudi Arabia.[34] On the other hand it opposes "radical nationalists" who stand in the way of US objectives. Libya is a case in point. Initially there was a feeling in the West that Qaddafi like King Idris will follow a pro-West policy. However, armed with ample petrodollars, he descended into an increasingly self-contained and self-reverential world, a closed system fed and reinforced by the sycophancy that always surrounds dictators and that accepts no opposition. In the early 1970s, by nationalizing the country's oil companies, the Colonel increased the suspicion of the West but boosted popularity and legitimacy of his rule at home. While US appears to have supported Qaddafi's efforts to raise oil prices in the early 1970s "in order to strengthen the position of 'moderates', such as Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Libya has increasingly been an obstacle to US objectives and was designated as prime target from the earliest days of the Reagan Administration under the pretext of a "war against international terrorism".[35] Qaddafi came to be called as "mad dog" of the Arab world and US even carried out air-strikes on his compounds on April 15, 1986 as a backlash of Lockheed bombing episode.

To strengthen its position further, US, in the year 2006, was hotly pursuing a policy of redrawing the maps of the Middle East including parts of South Asia. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was the first to coin the term "New Middle East" in June 2006 in Tel Aviv.[36] The

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33 John C. Campbell, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 401, 1972. Also see, Freedman O. Roberts, "Patterns of Soviet Policy Towards the Middle East", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Sage, Vol. 482, 1985, pp.40-64.

34 *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New*, p.117.

35 *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New,* see chapter 3, *Libya in US Demonology*.

36 Mehdi Dorius Nazemroaya, "Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Prject for a New Middle East", Nov. 18, 2006, www.globalresearch.ac. The map of "New Middle East" was drawn by retired Lt. Col. Ralph Peters in his book, *Never Quit the Fight*, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, released in July 10, 2006. This redrawn

motive was to give death blow to insurgencies that were carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as creating an arc of instability, chaos and violence from Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Iraq to the Persian Gulf, Iran and Afghanistan with the expectation that Lebanon would be pressure point for realigning the forces of 'constructive chaos' to help the West and Tel Aviv to redraw the Middle East map. However, with the entry of Al Qaeda in Iraq, US had to shun the idea and pursue the policy of exterminating the militant forces first.

Revolution is allowed because one of the strongest institutions helps it, i.e. Army. Tunisian Presidential "orders were to make the protests end, with live rounds if needed …. The armed forces didn't listen. Troops moved into the streets and reportedly even deployed helicopters to stop paramilitary snipers who were shooting demonstrators from rooftops".[37] Egypt's Army mostly allowed protestors to have their day although it receives 'an incredible $1.3 billion military aid annually. All this comes under US doctrine of 'necessary pain' which is used to destabilise any state. And those familiar with US 'New Middle East policy' would easily realise the designs behind it.[38]

In the present crisis, US and other countries are again making every effort to secure their interests in the region. This is not the first time that that US has supported a so-called revolution for strategic interests. It organized the so-called "orange" and other "colour revolutions" some years ago in Central Asia. These "revolutions" were also ostensibly for the realisation of "democracy", but a necessary component of such "democracy" was the pursuit of neo-liberal policies, which were designed to hand over control of Central Asian gas to US multinational bodies. What is striking about the current Arab uprising is that similar efforts on the part of the big powers have failed till now because the actors of the uprising are aware of their machinations. Egypt and Tunisia were "fortunate" not to have oil, so the imperialist concern about their uprisings is confined only to the potential implications of such uprisings for Israel. But in the case of oil-rich Libya, it has resorted at direct intervention. It is why the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, sent agents to make contact with the Libyan resistance, ostensibly to inquire about the requirements of humanitarian aid, but in reality to attempt imperialist penetration into the Libyan resistance as a

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Middle East map was also published, under the title of *Blood Borders: How a better Middle East would look*, in the US military's *Armed Forces Journal*, June, 2006 issue, with commentary from Ralph Peters (Mehdi Dorius Nazemroaya, *Global Research*, November 18, 2006).

37 Ellen Knickmeyer, "Just Whose Side Are Arab Armies On, Anyway?" *Foreign Policy*, Jan 28, 2011.

38 Ellen Knickmeyer, *Foreign Policy*, Jan 28, 2011.

means of achieving future control over Libyan oil.[39] In its statement of April 4, 2011, Solidarity National Committee (A Socialist, Feminist, anti Raciest Organization) said, "France, Great Britain, the United States, and other European powers claim to intervene out of concern for human rights and democracy, but these claims are contradicted in practice. These nations support other dictatorial regimes in the Arab world and around the globe, even during the course of events in Libya doing nothing to stop the use of Saudi troops against protesters in Bahrain. They intervene in Libya due to their own economic interests and concerns for geopolitical control. Qaddafi was already a willing client of empire, and Euro-American powers have intervened in the civil conflict to broker deals with disgruntled and ambitious members of the Libyan elite who are backing the uprising. Power abhors a vacuum. The principal goal of the imperial powers, France, Britain, and the US, whether individually or acting in concert as the UN or NATO is to dominate and shape the unfolding Arab revolution. As new governments form in the region and new political actors emerge in the course of the revolutions and uprisings, these powers will not stand idly by and let events take their course. The intervention is a show of force to an entire region but Libya was not chosen arbitrarily".[40]

According to a report "Even as the United States poured billions of dollars into foreign military programmes and anti-terrorism campaigns, a small core of American government-financed organizations were promoting democracy in authoritarian Arab states".[41] These attempts on the part of US agencies were a constant source of tension between the ruling elite and the US government. In Bahrain, officials were worried that the political training being imparted by these groups "disproportionately benefited the opposition". In Yemen, where the US has been spending millions on anti-terrorism programmes, officials complained that American efforts to promote democracy amounted to "interference in internal Yemeni affairs". Hosni Mubarak was "deeply

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39 Prabhat Patnaik, "Struggle for Democracy- At the first stage of a protracted process", *The Telegraph*, Kolkata, March 23, 2011.

40 *Libya: Revolution, Intervention and Crisis*, April 4, 2011. www.solidarity-us.org

41 "A number of the groups and individuals directly involved in the revolts and reforms sweeping the region, including the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt, the Bahrain Center for Human Rights and grass-roots activists like Entsar Qadhi, a youth leader in Yemen, received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, a nonprofit human rights organization based in Washington, according to interviews in recent weeks and American diplomatic cables obtained by Wikileaks. … Some Egyptian youth leaders attended a 2008 technology meeting in New York, where they were taught to use social networking and mobile technologies to promote democracy. Among those sponsoring the meeting were Facebook, Google, MTV, Columbia Law School and the State Department"; Ron Nixon, "US Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprising", *The New York Times*, April 14, 2011.

skeptical of the US role in democracy promotion," said a diplomatic cable from the United States Embassy in Cairo dated Oct. 9, 2007.[42] Even in Bahrain the outside players like Iran and Saudi Arabia with their own respective interests are playing an important role in the present crisis. Ironically certain Arab countries are building mercenary forces with the help of western agencies to deal with such crises. One such battalion of 800 members trained by Erik Prince, the billionaire founder of *Blackwater Worldwide*, on the behest of Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi at the cost of US $ 529.167 million is intended to conduct secretly special operation missions inside and outside UAE including defending oil pipelines and skyscrapers from attacks and put down internal revolts like pro-democracy demonstrations.[43]

Conclusion:

What we are witnessing in Libya and other Arab countries is actually the culmination of decades of mis-governance together with the traditional interference of the external powers to secure their vested interests. Apparently it seems to be a fight of the common people for the establishment of democratic rights in their respective countries that have been denied to them but in view of the role being played by external powers the people of these countries need to be careful about the methods they use for securing their rights. The Egyptians have clearly shown the power of peaceful resistance as it does not provide much excuse to the rulers to perpetuate state terrorism. One area where Mubarak failed and Qaddafi succeeded is pushing people for violence. It gave Qaddafi a reason to use all his brutal methods to suppress the revolution. There are two major reasons for the success for non-violent campaign.[44] Firstly, a commitment to nonviolent methods enhances its

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42 Ron Nixon, *The New York Times*, April 14, 2011. According to the US embassy cable leaked to Wikileaks in April this year the US had channeled funds to Syrian pro-democracy groups. The cable claimed that, since 2006, $6m (£3.6m) had been channeled to groups including the Movement for Justice and Development, a moderate Islamist party based in London, and *Barada* TV, Guardian.co.uk, April 18, 2011. *The Washington Post* also reported that (based on a US State Department cable unveiled by WikiLeaks) US government secretly funded Syrian opposition groups and an anti-government television broadcast—the London-based satellite channel *Barada* TV, *The Washington Post*, April 18, 2011.

43 Mark Mazzetti and Emily B. Hager, "Secret Dessert Force Set up by Blackwater's Founder", *The New York Times,* May 14, 2011.

44 A recent study conducted by Maria J. Stephan and Eric Chenoweth explored the strategic effectiveness of violent and nonviolent campaigns in conflicts between non-state and state actors using aggregate data on major nonviolent and violent resistance campaigns from 1900 to 2006. The study shows the successful use of non-violent strategy in Serbia (2000), Madagascar (2002), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004-05), Lebanon (2005), Nepal (2006), to bring about the positive changes. The findings show that 53% of major non-violent campaigns have achieved success compared to 26% of violent campaigns, Stephan J. Maria and Chenoweth Eric,

domestic and international legitimacy and encourages more broad-based participation in the resistance, which translates into increased pressure being brought to bear on the target. Recognition of the challenge group's grievances can translate into greater internal and external support for them and alienation of the target regime, undermining the regime's main sources of political, economic, and even military power.

Secondly, whereas governments easily justify violent counterattacks against armed insurgents, state violence against nonviolent movements is more likely to backfire. Potentially sympathetic publics perceive violent militants as having maximalist or extremist goals beyond accommodation, but they perceive nonviolent resistance groups as less extreme, thereby enhancing their appeal and facilitating the extraction of concessions through bargaining. Or in other words, as Eric Chenoweth wrote, the non-violent resistance succeeds "for one thing, people don't have to give up their jobs, leave their families or agree to kill anyone to participate in a nonviolent campaign. That means such movements tend to draw a wider range of participants, which gives them more access to members of the regime, including security forces and economic elites, who often sympathize with or are even relatives of protesters".[45] The question remains whether the Arab world can resist the external intervention but win over their democratic rights by their own efforts even if it takes a bit more time and sacrifices. Consequences of external intervention for democratization are disastrous as has been witnessed in Iraq.[46] And finally it is very important for these countries to guard against slipping into anarchy or civil war once the revolutions are successful. It is also very important that the transfer of power is smooth and according to the wishes of people. After a successful resistance in Egypt that ended the regime of Mubarak the people are again on the streets only because the transition was partial. As Atul Aneja writes, "The magnificent Egyptian uprising, after a brief introspective but impatient pause, has flared up again. On February 11, it brought down dictator Hosni Mubarak and drove him into peripheral existence in Sharm-el-Sheikh, the resort city on the Red Sea. Yet, even when the euphoria generated by the exit of the oligarch was in full flow, many among Egypt's seasoned protesters observed, 'We have brought down the dictator, not the dictatorship".[47] He further writes, "By April 9, less

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"Why Civil Resistance Works-The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict", *International Security*, Vol.33, No. 1, 2008, pp. 7-44.

45 *The New York Times,* March 10, 2011.

46 The disastrous results of US involvement in other countries for restoring the so called 'stability' and 'democracy' is best captured by Condoleezza Rice in a speech delivered at the American University in Cairo in June 2005 saying "we have been trying to achieve stability at the cost of democracy in the Middle East but we ended up achieving neither stability nor democracy", Abbasi M. Arshid, "The Arab Spring of Discontent", *Weekly Pulse Magazine*, Islamabad, April 1, 2011.

47 Atul Aneja, "Egypt Enters Second Phase of Uprising", *The Hindu*, April 28, 2011.

than two months after Mr. Mubarak's unceremonious exit, the uprising gathered its second wind. With clarity and focus, it declared war on the remnants of the regime, which had remained largely unmoved from institutions and had, for three servile decades, served Mr. Mubarak unquestioningly. More significantly, the protesters' perception of the military top brass, who had taken over the state after Mr. Mubarak's ungainly departure, changed dramatically. It began to dawn on them that the military was not people's friend. It was as much part of the old oligarchy, which was yet to make way for people's power".

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