



HISTORIOGRAPHY AND NATION-BUILDING  
AMONG TURKIC POPULATIONS



# Historiography and Nation-Building among Turkic Populations

Edited by  
Birgit N. Schlyter



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Front cover: Statue of a Central Asian "Thinker" at the Monument of Independence in the Republic Square (Respublika Alangy), Almaty.

Back cover: Camels in a caravan. Front view of a statue outside of Registan, Samarkand.

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# Preface

This book marks the end of a long-term project (2007–2014) for the promotion of Central Asia research in the post-Soviet era. The project was conducted within the framework of *Stockholm International Program for Central Asian Studies*, SIPCAS, initiated at Stockholm University and conducted since 2012 from the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul with funding from The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities and The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education.

The foreign partner institutions that cooperated with SIPCAS were Center for Central Asian Research and Education, University of Tsukuba, Japan, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Calcutta, India, both of which are represented in the present volume. Through the years we have co-organized conferences, seminars, panel discussions and graduate courses, and we have jointly supervised students at all academic levels as well as post-graduate researchers. I am much obliged to my colleagues Timur Dadabaev, Tsukuba, and Anita Sengupta, Calcutta, for this inspiring and greatly rewarding cooperation.

Our joint activities have been documented in a number of publications that preceded the present volume, among others research reports in the SIPCAS series *Asian Cultures and Modernity* (13–14/2007 and 14–16/2008), issues of the Tsukuba Newsletter *Central Asian World* (2/2008 and 3/2010) and an anthology entitled *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Eurasian Geopolitics* (2013).

While still at Stockholm University (2007–2011), the SIPCAS program had a research assistant, Sharofat Nazimova, to whom I am most grateful for her devotion and readiness to assist in all situations. Without her, the program would have been much less colorful.

On a personal note, it is a great pleasure for me to be able to publish this volume during my current mission as Director of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, where work for the SIPCAS program will continue with new publications and future research in a broad Eurasian perspective.

Birgit N. Schlyter  
Director, SRII  
Professor, Head of SIPCAS





# Introduction

## Central Asian and Turkic History Revisited

Not long ago, we entered a new millennium. Among Inner Asian Turkic populations, where societies are developing with this new millennium, there is a search for cultural-historical legacies with the aim of identifying features of nationhood or arriving at some related comprehension of belonging to a specific societal community.

History means “past” – near past or remote past. Does this search for a cultural-historical identity entail efforts at resuscitating, or revitalizing, cultural features or patterns from the past? Is it possible to revive cultural patterns belonging to another era? The territory – the geographical area – is the same as it was in the past. Its inhabitants are people with memories and narratives of traditions and life among ancestors living on the same territory during long stretches of time. How is this past to be accessed and how is it to be interpreted by present-day man, in another era and in a world in which people’s lives are lived in quite another fashion and under quite different conditions than in bygone days?

From a more general perspective, it is often stated by those who are concerned about traditions and legacies that societies need to rest on history. If this is true and if societies do in fact need their history, why is this so, and, furthermore, what is it that constitutes our knowledge of past times, our knowledge of our own past? How is historical knowledge created, and how is it to be narrated in order to become historical knowledge for future generations? What is envisioned in historical narration, and where do we look in order to find that which can be turned into historical knowledge? Finally, what may trigger revisions of such narration? These are questions central to the accounts offered in the following chapters.

The need and search for cultural and historical images may seem to be determined and influenced to a considerable degree by current political circumstances at different levels – not least regional and other levels beyond the individual state. Some of the chapters focus on such synchronic circumstances rather than on long-term historiographies. Nevertheless, whatever temporal

settings and geographical extensions are chosen, all of the presentations are contributions to the study of nation-building or – to use a term from one of the ensuing chapters – “nation-branding”.

The first two contributions to the present volume are accounts from broad regional and interregional perspectives that draw attention to current post-Soviet changes in terms of both political conditions and identity formation. The chapter *On Oral History of the Soviet Past in Central Asia* by Timur Dadabaev, Tsukuba University, Japan, addresses methodological issues related to the question of how new historiographies can also be shaped by common-man “lived” experiences elicited from personal memories of the Soviet past on the part of elderly people who were once Soviet citizens living in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan.

In her chapter, *The Coverage of Central Asia in Turkey*, the Turkish scholar Büşra Ersanlı from Marmara University, Istanbul, comments on the development and modifications of Turkey’s foreign policy towards the young ex-Soviet Central Asian states and the endeavors of this country to determine its role as one – and, in many respects, the leading – member of a large Turkic world in which coordination and cooperation have assumed a greater potential than ever before.

Emre Gürbüz, Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University, Bishkek, with his chapter titled *In Search of New Historiographies for Ex-Soviet Turkic States*, likewise includes Turkey in his survey of works on new history writing in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. In this context, the former country is contrasted with the latter three republics from the point of view of territoriality, which the author identifies as “one of the main characteristics of post-Soviet historiographies”. The three ex-Soviet republics under investigation are shown to base their claims to legitimacy as sovereign states on “conventional territorial understanding”, albeit under partly different socio-political legacies and, furthermore, with differing visions of future objectives for their respective nation-states.

The account of *History-Writing and History-Making in Azerbaijan* by Zaur Gasimov at the German Orient-Institut Istanbul can be read as a comment on such future objectives with regard to one of these three states – Azerbaijan. The author offers a thorough survey of new trends in post-Soviet Azerbaijani history-writing with respect to both the choice of topics and interpretation as well as language (Azerbaijani rather than Russian) and style, although there may be new obstacles and taboos due to present-day policies.

From the perspective of “a post-modern world of images and influence”, Anita Sengupta, fellow of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian

Studies, Calcutta, puts the Republic of Uzbekistan under scrutiny in a chapter subtitled *The Politics of Nation-Branding in Uzbekistan*. There she writes that “modern nations are in actuality based on invented traditions and the continuous mobilization and adaptation of history” in order to “reposition themselves in a fluid globalizing world” and that “nation-state building is no longer an activity confined to the domestic arena”. As to the shaping of post-Soviet Uzbekistan, the author examines various “brand images” promoted by the Uzbek government, such as the image of a culturally rich state at the crossroads of the ancient Silk Road, the image of a sacred motherland under threat, etc.

The significance of language in sociopolitical development and nation-building is highlighted in the remaining three chapters of this volume. Two of them focus on the language situation in Uzbekistan and the interdependence of language and identity formation, while the third chapter deals with language development in late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Xinjiang. Rano Turaeva-Hoehne, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany, refers to ethnographic fieldwork among Khorezmian migrants in Tashkent when commenting on the use of different linguistic codes “for communicating collective and social identities in a multiethnic context” in her paper on *Linguistic and Social Contradictions within Uzbek National Identity*.

In her chapter titled *The Status of Uzbek as “National Language”*, the SRII Director Birgit N. Schlyter, Istanbul, examines the post-Soviet Uzbek state language from the point of view of three parameters – “distribution”, “corpus” and “manifestation” – for an evaluation of the chances for this language to become a symbol of Uzbekistani national identity. In particular, the third parameter is crucial in relation to the “narrative capacity” of language and loyalty towards a state or community through language.

The author of *Language and the State in Late Qing Xinjiang*, Eric T. Schuessel from Harvard University, wants to show how the very concept of language changed in the final years of Qing rule and writes that language “was conceived of not just as a system of varieties marking kinds of people, but as an instrument of reform and an institution of power”. He describes a rather complex language situation that cannot be characterized merely in terms of one language community (Chinese) dominating another (Turki). For a general comment on the relationship between language and society, he finds it “useful to examine national identity and language attitudes as part of an ongoing process of negotiation between state and other actors promoting competing language regimes and linguistic institutions”.

The authors of these chapters have all been participating in research work conducted within the framework of the Stockholm International Program for Central Asian Studies (SIPCAS). Their contributions originate from papers presented at conferences and workshops arranged or co-organized by SIPCAS focused on discussions of societal change and transformation in the wake of the demise of the Soviet Union. Issues of cultural-historical legacies and nation-state legitimacy have been at the top of the agenda.

As is commonly the case, in this volume, too, the spelling of names and titles has been an intricate issue, all the more so since variations are due not only to personal preferences but also to the fact that different alphabets (e.g. Cyrillic or Latin for Azerbaijani names) may have been used for one and the same reference. There has been a certain degree of homogenization, especially in the spelling of scientific terms (e.g. Kipchak, not Kypchak or Qipchaq). American, rather than British, spelling has been chosen whenever there has been an option. In certain cases, however, the authors have been free to use the spelling of their own choice, independent of the spelling of the same word or name in another chapter (e.g. Uyghur in one chapter as compared to Uighur in another).

The abovementioned SIPCAS program encourages and welcomes the participation of young researchers and students. During work on the manuscript of this volume, considerable help was offered by Nina Lind, while on a one-month internship at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, and by Azize Güneş, who was my assistant throughout the entire editing process and who worked with the proofreading of all of the chapters together with me. It was a great pleasure to work with them, and I am very grateful for their diligent efforts.

Istanbul, May 2014  
The Editor

# On Oral History of the Soviet Past in Central Asia

## Re-Collecting, Reflecting and Re-Imagining<sup>1</sup>

TIMUR DADABAEV

Throughout history, Central Asian states have experienced a number of historical changes that have challenged their traditional societies and lifestyles. The most significant challenges occurred as a result of the revolutions of 1917 in Russia, the incorporation of this region into the Soviet Union and independence as a consequence of the collapse of the USSR. However, impartial and informed public evaluation of the past, in particular regarding the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, has always been a complicated issue in Central Asia for various reasons.

Two of the most important and detrimental factors shaping public perception and opinion regarding the present and the past are the “official” historical discourse and the everyday life experiences of populations. “Official” historical discourses can take many forms and are very often exemplified in official historiographies, which characterize the “politically correct” determinations of “good” and “bad” events of the past. There is a long tradition of history construction in Central Asia, and political pressures and official ideology have always had a decisive say in how history is interpreted and eventually constructed. Such an approach to constructing history was practiced both in the Soviet period, with the aim of beautifying Socialist society (well documented in

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a developed and enlarged version of Dadabaev 2014.

the Communist-era archives), and in the post-Soviet period by criticizing the Soviet past and praising post-Soviet society building (demonstrated by current historical literature in Central Asia).

These “official” descriptions of the past sometimes confirmed, but more often contradicted, the interpretations of the past as viewed through the everyday experiences of ordinary people resulting in the notions of “kitchen conversations” (*kubonnye razgovory*) implying private unofficial criticism of the Soviet system by ordinary citizens. This contradiction in depicting history is one of the intellectual dilemmas central to the oral history project to be discussed in the present chapter as to its methodological prerequisites.

## Oral Records of the Soviet Past in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan

The idea of exploring the theme of memory in Central Asia was first used to investigate attitudes of people in Uzbekistan towards their past and present within a project initiated at the University of Tokyo (Islamic Area Studies Project) in 2005. In 2006, the project expanded its geographic coverage to Kyrgyzstan in collaboration with the University of Tsukuba in Japan and Manas University in Kyrgyzstan. From 2009, the scope of the project further enlarged to include Kazakhstan. While interviews, recordings and their processing are complete in the cases of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, interviews and data collection are still going on in Kazakhstan. The analysis of the interviews in Uzbekistan is planned to be published as a monographic volume in 2014–2015, with Kyrgyz and Kazakh cases to follow shortly.

This study was thematically very broad focusing on the everyday experiences of people throughout Soviet times. The most interesting responses tended to focus on the periods of time during the respondents’ most productive years. Because the target group of the study consisted of senior citizens in their 60s and 70s, they often tended to reflect on everyday experiences during their youth and mature years, from around the 1950s onward. In terms of topics, the most inclusive responses dealt with traumatic Soviet experiences, relations with the state, issues of linguistic, religious, and ethnic policies and people’s narratives with respect to their nostalgic recollections of the Soviet past in the post-Soviet era and their praising Soviet life styles. The choice of everyday life experiences of people as the main focus is considered to present a relatively apolitical picture of

societal life at that time, which has been largely ignored in Soviet and post-Soviet studies. In addition, the information provided by those interviewed in the older age group represents unique data, which, if not collected and recorded now, could be lost due to the rapid decrease in the number of those who remember the social environment of Soviet times.<sup>2</sup> The loss of such data would result in false interpretations, assumptions and speculations without the opportunity for verification against the reality of everyday lives.<sup>3</sup>

To operationalize the enquiry of this project, the members of the interviewing team collected, recorded and interpreted the views of the public regarding their experiences during the days of the Soviet Union and memories of the Soviet past in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Interviews were held with elderly citizens of these three states for the purpose of contributing to the understanding of the relationship between the governmentally endorsed history of the Soviet era and people's private lives and beliefs. The aim of our study is to contribute to academic knowledge concerning how people remember their Soviet past and their memories of experiences during that time. Such an enquiry may lead to a better understanding of how these memories relate to the Soviet and post-Soviet official descriptions of Soviet life. In addition, this study may as well shed new light on the transformation of present-day Central Asia from the perspective of personal memories. The way in which people in Central Asia reconcile their Soviet past is to a great extent through a three-fold process of recollecting their everyday experiences, reflecting on their past from the perspective of their post-Soviet present and re-imagining. These three elements influence memories and lead to selectivity in memory construction.

## Previous Oral-History Research in Central Asia

Similar or comparable approaches to that of the current study have been adopted in other works. Studies published relatively recently include *Deti imperii' v postsovetskoy Tsentral'noy Azii*<sup>4</sup> (hereafter referred to as *Deti imperii*), *Utomlyonnye*

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<sup>2</sup> For analysis of life-history as a field of enquiry, see Kansteiner 2002:179–197.

<sup>3</sup> For an approach similar to that of this study, see Crane 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Kosmarskaya 2006.



*Proshlym*<sup>5</sup> and *Life at the Edge of the Empire: Oral Histories of Soviet Kyrgyzstan*.<sup>6</sup> Although these studies are based on a similar approach of interviewing people at length on certain pre-determined themes, their research focus, target groups and purposes differ significantly both from each other and from the intellectual dilemma addressed in the study commented on in the present chapter.

*Deti imperii*, for example, raises the subject of belonging and self-identification among people who formerly lived in Kyrgyzstan, spoke Russian as their main language and later chose to migrate from Kyrgyzstan to Russia. Through the results of fact-finding surveys, opinion polls and references to secondary sources, this study examines their circumstances and problems in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union as well as their views on the lives they have experienced up to the present point in time. What needs to be noted here is that, as *Deti imperii* focuses on subjects that are important from the perspective of knowledge construction and the correlation between the present and past, its study sample is limited to those who can be categorized as Russians and so-called "Russianized" people who were born or spent a considerable period of time in Kyrgyzstan. Therefore, the limitation of *Deti imperii* is that it does not provide material about the views of the public in Kyrgyzstan in general, which leads to difficulties with generalizations regarding the material presented since it is representative of the views of a certain Russianized population and does not include other diverse views and interpretations. This is problematic as well because perceptions belonging to people in this group are often biased in favor of their Soviet experiences due to the fact that Russians and the Russian-speaking public in their daily lives were granted special societal status during the Soviet era. In many cases, it was these "Russianized" residents, many of whom were brought along to Central Asia from other regions, who assumed posts of leadership or otherwise distinguished themselves. Furthermore, with regard to the region of Kyrgyzstan addressed in *Deti imperii*, it was more common for them to speak Russian than Kyrgyz and the majority of the "Russianized" Kyrgyz populace during the Soviet era were members of the Communist Party, who used Russian both at work and at home. They were among those most heavily impacted by the collapse of the Soviet Union, making it safe to say that their social status underwent dramatic changes following the Soviet breakup. Taking

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<sup>5</sup> Tokhtakhodjaeva 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Tranum 2009.

this background into consideration, *Deti imperii*, which focuses on these “Russian and Russianized” residents originally from Kyrgyzstan, differs from our project and the perspective of this article in terms of its tenor, objective, methodology and other characteristics. To avoid the sampling bias observed in *Deti imperii*, our study attempted to include people of many different ethnic origins and social statuses within the sample in order to provide a better understanding of the diversity of public views on everyday experiences in Soviet times.

Conceptually closer to our study are the works *Living in the Country Known as the Soviet Union* (which was originally written in the Japanese language),<sup>7</sup> *Utomyonnye Proshlym* and *Life at the Edge of the Empire: Oral Histories of Soviet Kyrgyzstan*. These works have close similarities with the investigation undertaken by our research team, since they target the views and memories of people regarding their Soviet past. In addition, these studies primarily use an interview-based methodology for data collection and have similar tools for sampling.

*Living in the Country Known as the Soviet Union* presents profoundly interesting episodes concerning the lives and livelihoods of intellectuals before and following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It expresses a solid sense of people’s thoughts during this historical period, the identity of the Soviet Union as a nation and the identities of individual persons and precious, unadulterated data focused on Russians and people residing in Russia. In contrast, our study differs from *Living in the Country Known as the Soviet Union* in terms of the interview targets, timing and methods used for the interview results. Our study does not aim at covering both Soviet and post-Soviet developments simultaneously. Instead, it focuses on people’s memories of the Soviet Union recorded and narrated after the Soviet collapse and the period in which the republics formerly comprising the Soviet Union emerged as independent states. The targets of the current enquiry and interviewees were not residents of the rather privileged cities of Moscow or Leningrad or persons who enjoyed comparatively blessed lifestyles. In contrast to the sample group of *Living in the Country Known as the Soviet Union*, our study focuses on the ordinary citizens of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan in Central Asia – states that lie on the periphery of the former Empire both geographically and in other respects.

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<sup>7</sup> Iwakami 1992.

Another work that focuses geographically on Uzbekistan is *Utomlyonnye Proshlym*, which explores the social changes following the age of socialism through the eyes of women against the backdrop of the revival of Islam. The strength of this work is due to the fact that it focuses on the complicated topic of the relationship between Islam and women. However, it differs from our study in its rather limited focus in terms of its exclusive coverage of women's experiences, which does not allow the "silenced" voices of the public to fully reflect on various aspects of their everyday lives in the Soviet era.

A number of studies also focus on recollections written and published in Uzbekistan. For instance, the Andijan-based researcher Sayfiddin Jalilov visited people who fled the country following the defeat in the struggle with the Soviets during the 1920s and 1930s after the Russian Revolution or later in order to avoid repression at the hands of that regime, eventually establishing lives for themselves in Saudi Arabia.<sup>8</sup> Jalilov effectively recorded the tumultuous life sagas of these people, conducting his interview study during the period of 1994–1997.

The last one of the abovementioned works, *Life at the Edge of the Empire: Oral Histories of Soviet Kyrgyzstan*, presents the results of a project organized as one phase of course work focused on faculty members and students of the American University in Kyrgyzstan. More specifically, this project compiled testimony from several dozens of persons collected by students, as a part of their assignment regarding the lifestyles of average citizens in Kyrgyzstan. The aim of the work was directed more at recording and documenting the testimonies of these individuals, and very little, if any, effort was made to analyze those narratives.

Taking into account the lessons from these previous studies, time has come to pave the way for a broader discussion of everyday living experiences of the Soviet era and to provide a forum where the views of ordinary people can be voiced and discussed.

## Sampling Method and Respondents

The process of collecting, recording, storing and analyzing the data used for the current study in oral history of the Soviet past in Central Asia was a difficult task

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<sup>8</sup> Jalilov 2006.

because it had the potential to influence and, in certain cases, shape the answers to the questions asked. To cover the conceptual gap in the literature mentioned above regarding the views of ordinary citizens about Soviet society, the chosen interviewees were from older generations, especially those beyond the retirement age, which are not covered in any of the previous studies mentioned in the previous section. They were selected to cover the memories of the Soviet time from those who spent the most active years of their lives in a Soviet cultural and social environment. These recollections were then recorded on audiotapes (in the case of Uzbekistan) and video-recordings (in the cases of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan), transcribed and translated and are currently in the process of being archived.

Of the five possible options for sampling, namely, convenience sampling, deviant case sampling, homogenous sampling, maximum variation sampling and network sampling, the team members involved in this study chose to avoid as much as possible convenience sampling and homogenous sampling to prevent the outcomes of the interviews from being too similar and predetermined in their content. The project attempted to locate people who led very diverse lifestyles based on various regional, ethnic, educational, social and professional affiliations.

In terms of regional representation for the overall sample size of 75 people in each country, great effort was made to select more (than just one from a particular urban area) interviewees (5–6 people) from capitals and larger (thus more densely populated) regions while ensuring that interviewees from the demographically smaller regions were also represented.

Network sampling was applied to overcome difficulties associated with political restrictions and self-restraint on the part of the interviewees due to fear of repercussions, while in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan network sampling was used to locate people from remote areas that are difficult to access.

## Interviewing

To facilitate an open and interviewee-friendly environment, the project used the following techniques during the interviews. First, special attention was paid to the cultural flexibility and proper wording of the questions. Given the choice of structured (with strictly defined questions), semi-structured and open-ended options for formulating questions, the study opted to use the semi-structured method due to its better applicability to the realities of the region. Using structured interviews in Central Asia often results in short, non-inclusive, non-

comprehensive answers because of the lack of rapport between the interviewee and interviewer. On the one hand, using an open-ended interview might also have the potential risk of developing into an extensive exchange of opinions and develop in a direction that is unrelated to or far from the topic of everyday life experiences of Soviet times. Therefore, the semi-structured interview, which includes clearly defined questions and some sub-questions to clarify the meaning of the main questions, was used, with interviewees given the opportunity to develop their stories as long as they did not depart from the main topic of the interview.

Second, interviewers attempted to establish rapport with the interviewees by discussing subjects unrelated to the project topics, such as the general well-being of those interviewed and the weather. In addition to establishing trust between the interviewers and interviewee, a long introduction has deep cultural meaning in Central Asia, where people are used to engaging in relatively long introductory conversations before proceeding to the issue at hand. This type of discussion, within the course of this project and daily life in general in Central Asia, develops a basis for smoother conversation and offers the chance for interviewees to become familiar with the other person and form their own attitudes towards them.

Following the introductory entry into conversation, the interview proceeded with questions concerning topics related to everyday life experiences during the Soviet era. To facilitate an open discussion, the project employed an approach in which interviewees' assumptions were critically assessed or even challenged on several occasions during the course of the interview, in order to provoke them into offering a deeper insight regarding how they came to the assumptions and conclusions they were presenting. However, care was taken not to radically challenge the flow of the talk or discourage the interviewee from stating his or her assumptions.

Third, project members attempted to make the process of interviewing more "participatory" for both the interviewee and interviewer by not simply listening to the memories recalled by interviewees but also by having the family members of interviewees and close neighbors listen and sometimes make their own comments, which further encouraged the process of remembering and forced interviewees to use more detailed recollections of the past to support their own logic. This was particularly the case with older generations of interviewees, who, at times, seemed to have problems understanding the essence of questions or remembering the periods in which certain events took place.

## Narrating the Memory

Methodologically, critical discourse analysis was used for the processing of interviews. The video/audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed. These texts/interviews were then treated as elements mediating social events that occurred during the Soviet times. In the process of interviews, the topics that the respondents touched upon the most were related to the analysis of various actors, such as the Communist Party, the Soviet government, religious institutions, local communities and respondents, and their social roles. This study joins other studies that analyze Soviet-era social actors using techniques “to include or exclude them in presenting events; assign them an active or passive role; personalize or impersonalize them; name or only classify them; refer to them specifically or generically”.<sup>9</sup>

Our study in Central Asian oral history has arrived at a number of conclusions based on public recollections of Soviet times. The first conclusion is related to the patterns of history construction and the role of the public in this process. The public view of history in post-Soviet Central Asia and particularly Uzbekistan often falls between Soviet historiographies advocating advances in the Soviet past, and post-Soviet historical discourses rejecting the Soviet past. Public perceptions of history are primarily shaped by and related to the everyday needs, experiences, identification and mentality of people, in contrast to the ideologies and political doctrines of the time. They often reflect not only the perceptions of people regarding their past, but also their perceptions regarding their present and imagined future.<sup>10</sup>

Second, recollections of traumatic experiences associated with the Soviet past are often placed within the dichotomy of depicting Soviet experiences. For instance, the political violence and state policies of the Stalinist era (such as collectivization and the deportation of ethnic groups) can serve as an appropriate example of the differences between the historical discourses of Soviet and post-Soviet times. Whereas Soviet historiography describes the events of collectivization and displacement of people as a state policy, which was painful yet unavoidable and necessary for the development of the country, the post-Soviet discourse on these issues suggests that these were policies of colonization and, in

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<sup>9</sup> Vanhala-Aniszewski 2013:223.

<sup>10</sup> For details, see Dadabaev 2010:25–48.

some cases, involved genocide of Central Asian peasantry and intelligentsia in order to control these republics. However, these polar opposite perspectives do not always accurately reflect how ordinary citizens regarded these issues at that time. These public memories alone cannot provide a full and impartial picture of public responses to the Stalinist era policies regarding collectivization, political participation, religion and ethnicity.<sup>11</sup> They represent “another venue of memory and identity transmission [...] operated simultaneously and competitively with history”,<sup>12</sup> which may need to be contrasted and counterchecked against archival data and other sources. In this sense, any discussion of how state policies and traumatic experiences of the past have influenced the formation of current political systems in Central Asia, purely based on “official” historical accounts and “master narratives” without oral recollections by individuals, is incomplete and often inadequate. In terms of public experiences, the recollections of the public with respect to traumatic experiences, similar to the ones described in recollections of people on Stalinist repression, often reflect the positions of the narrators and their (in)ability to adapt to the conditions in which they were placed during those years. Different social, ethnic, educational, religious and/or ideological backgrounds greatly influence the selectivity of these recollections and explain why certain individuals recollect their Soviet experiences with a sense of rejection, while others relate to it with the sense of nostalgia.

Third, in a related manner, although nostalgia in post-Soviet countries is frequently explained solely by the economic hardships and social pressures of the post-Soviet period, such descriptions do not accurately explain this phenomenon. Economic and social explanations for the nostalgia of respondents are obvious. However, such explanations are not the only ones, and there are a number of other nostalgia-inducing factors that are rarely discussed in the literature on this subject. From the narratives of senior citizens in Uzbekistan included in our project, one can conclude that many nostalgic views of the past reflect the respondents’ attitudes both to their adaptability to the Soviet realities and also to various aspects of their present lives. In such comparisons, Soviet modernization, freedom of mobility, justice and order, inter-ethnic accords and social welfare are emphasized as markers that predetermine the respondents’ nostalgia. In this sense, the respondents do not appear to long for the Soviet past *per se*. Instead,

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<sup>11</sup> For details, see Dadabaev 2009:108–138.

<sup>12</sup> Crane 1997:1372.

the respondents are nostalgic about the feelings of security and hope that they experienced during that era. From the perspective of the respondents' post-Soviet lives, they long to experience such feelings of security and hope again.

Fourth, in terms of specific issues such as ethnicity, oral-history research may contribute to the debate about how people in Central Asia recall Soviet ethnic policies and their vision of how these policies have shaped the identities of their peers and contemporaries. Such narratives demonstrate that people do not explain Soviet ethnic policies simply through the "modernization" or "victimization" dichotomy but locate their experiences in between these discourses. Their recollections again highlight the pragmatic flexibility of the public's adaptive strategies to Soviet ethnic policies. Soviet ethnic policy produced complicated hybrids of identities and multiple social strata. Among those who succeeded in adapting to Soviet realities, a new group emerged, known as "Russi assimilados" (Russian-speaking Sovieto-phones). However, in everyday life, relations between the assimilados and their "indigenous" or "nativist" countrymen are reported to have been complicated, with clear divisions between these two groups and separate social spaces for each of these strata.<sup>13</sup>

Fifth, the hybridity produced as a result of Soviet experiences can be traced not only to ethnic self-identification but also to the attitude of the public towards Soviet and post-Soviet religiosity. Such hybridity of discourse towards religion is demonstrated by the dual means of evaluating Soviet religious policies in the memories of those who were subjected to those policies. Among the many policies implemented during the Soviet era, it was religious policies that were the most difficult for the general public to accept. The Soviet administration promoted the rejection of religion as an official policy and utilized a vast range of opportunities to criticize religion and promote secular education. Many religious institutions (mosques and churches) were closed, and the buildings were converted to warehouses or other facilities or simply torn down. On the other hand, there were other policies that the public remembers as initially shocking to indigenous society but that was eventually accepted as positive because they assisted in the process of modernization. These policies are exemplified by the *Hujum* (unveiling) campaign to institutionalize safeguards against underage and forced marriage, introduce conventional education and promote the wider integration of non-religious Soviet men and women into public life. An analysis

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<sup>13</sup> See Dadabaev 2013b:1–23.



of the manner in which people have come to terms with their past and their recollections of anti-religious campaigns helps us understand how life under the Soviet government not only resulted in changes in lifestyles but also redrew the “boundaries” of “proper”/“modernized” religious life and of what is now considered to be the religious remnants of the past.

Finally, the current research project in Central Asian oral history also touches upon recollections related to the formation of local identity and its continuity and change by focusing on the local community of Mahalla. The primary message of this part of our research is that the Mahalla has historically represented one of only a few effective traditional structures that can unite representatives of various ethnic and religious groups through the creation of a common identity based on shared residence.<sup>14</sup> However, throughout the history of these communities, political authorities have often attempted to manipulate these institutions in order to enhance the state’s legitimacy. This type of manipulation has challenged the essential nature of residents’ attachment to their communities and called into question the authority and legitimacy of the structures of Mahalla.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, this manipulation has resulted in a new and pragmatic two-level mentality among the affected populace. In particular, residents increasingly exhibit ritualistic devotion to public interests (which are allegedly pursued by Mahallas); however, particularly in the post-Soviet environment, these residents also pursue their private interests, disregarding the interests of other members of their communities.

## Challenges, Limitations and Biases

There are a few conceptual and logistical issues to be considered in connection with interviews of the type discussed in the preceding sections.<sup>16</sup> First, the mentality of ordinary people has influenced the outcome of the interviews in Uzbekistan. The interviewers observed that respondents were often reluctant to speak about negative aspects of Soviet times, for which there are several explanations. One of the most important explanations is the issue of censorship,

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<sup>14</sup> See Dadabaev 2012:153–171.

<sup>15</sup> Dadabaev 2013a:1–16.

<sup>16</sup> For a longer discussion of challenges of survey research in Central Asia, see Dadabaev 2008:45–70.

which can largely be regarded as a legacy of the Soviet past. In particular, the censorship of questionnaires and answer choices remains one of the greatest obstacles to the wider development of survey research in Central Asia in general and of narrative interviews in Uzbekistan in particular. A related problem inherited from Soviet practices in survey research is the negative attitude of authorities toward independently conducted surveys and polls. Therefore, as in the Soviet era, many of the outcomes of various surveys are concealed from the international community of scholars to prevent "confusing" information from receiving international attention. Even today, the same attitude toward surveys seems to prevail in a majority of cases in post-Soviet Central Asia, which often leads to a situation in which respondents are under either imagined or real pressure to provide socially desirable answers to impress interviewers or please authorities. As a result, the views of people concerning various aspects of their lives and society are not reflected adequately.

It is these real or imagined pressures that force respondents to opt for "safe" answers, withdraw from the interview or choose a simple "do not know" option. Indeed, some of the respondents might have a genuine lack of knowledge or lack of confidence to judge particular aspects of their lives or certain issues. However, a majority of these responses can be better explained by the closed social, economic, and largely political environment that places additional (and at times self-imposed) pressure on respondents to choose a safe "do not know" answer in order to avoid complications with the authorities.

In addition to potential political and other related pressures, respondents may be of the opinion that talking about one's problems and criticism outside of society is shameful and should be avoided as much as possible. Therefore, in many cases, interviewees may be inclined to speak more about the positive sides of issues than the negative sides. In addition, the attitude of interviewees towards the interviewer may differ significantly, depending on the rapport or lack of rapport between the interviewee and interviewer. Normally, interviewers are "strangers" to the persons approached, and it is not an accepted social norm to speak about negative aspects of life to "strangers".

To encourage the interviewees to be more open about various aspects of their Soviet past during the interviews conducted in our survey, the interviewees were often joined by members of their family or grandchildren, in front of whom many elders could not misrepresent the realities of their past lives. When this occurred, which was not uncommon, members of the families listening to the

interviews often intervened, correcting and clarifying certain issues for both the interviewer and the interviewee.

Second, determining the language in which an interview should be conducted may be a challenge given the multiethnic nature of the environment in which our survey was carried out. Uzbek/Kyrgyz/Kazakh (depending on the country) was used by those belonging to the titular ethnic group, who preferred to answer in their own language. For the Russian and Russian-speaking groups (such as Koreans), Russian language questionnaires were used. In certain instances, questionnaires in alternative languages were drafted. However, the diversity of the languages used for the questionnaires did not present a technical problem, except for the logistical concerns related to translation.

A much larger problem was the obvious correlation between the language of the questionnaire and the pattern of asking questions and answering those questions. In the Uzbek/Kyrgyz/Kazakh languages, the interviewer had to go through the long procedure of first explaining at length the background of the issue and then asking the question. Otherwise, the answers were inadequate, too short or shallow. In the Russian language, however, proceeding with a long discussion of the background of the issues and their details irritated the respondents, who desired clear, short questions without a patronizingly long introductory interpretation and explanation of the problem. In the same manner, the answers in local languages were softer, long and extensively descriptive, with few short and clear-cut answers. Those responding in local languages preferred to give "middle-ground" answers, which can largely be attributed to the mentality of the people. Even when respondents answered in a straight and very critical manner, they still preferred to do so after extensive explanation and after "setting the stage" for it. In contrast, the Russian language responses were more direct, more critical or clearer in their message, omitting background information and offering very little explanation. In addition, in certain interviews respondents responded to only one part of the interview, the part regarding their lives and experiences, in the local language and then preferred to switch to Russian when they wanted to be more direct or blunt about their attitude about certain events or happenings.

Third, in certain cases, there were a few individuals among those approached who chose to cooperate with the project and be videotaped. Such cooperation with the project also resulted in respondents sometimes attempting to provide interviewers with the information that they believed the interviewers wanted to hear, which influenced the outcomes of the project since the information did not

always reflect the real lifetime experiences of people but rather interpretations of history acquired from other sources.

The fourth problem is related to the issue of sampling. The outcomes of any survey largely reflect the views of the sample group that is targeted. Therefore, the issue of sampling should also be regarded as no less important a problem than censorship, especially given the conditions of post-Soviet Central Asia. It is mentioned in many studies, that proper sampling remains one of the most difficult issues when considering interview-based research in Central Asia. Because the population of the region is very diverse in terms of ethnicity, religion, and lifestyle, compiling a representative sample of everyday Soviet-era experiences appears to be one of the greatest challenges, especially when assembling a sample occurs under conditions in which the census data, telephone directories, and listings of voters are either nonexistent or unavailable due to a lack of interest among local officials to cooperate with interviewers. Given such a situation, the sample of data for this study was from the very beginning not representative. As is the case with our data set, similar interview-based studies often cover primarily urban areas and just a few rural areas, mainly because of the logistical problems of reaching out to interviewees in rural areas and the problem of motivating them to cooperate. The lifestyles and perspectives of rural and urban populations are likely to differ considerably. Urban populations are usually more modernized and integrated into global information flows and economics. Conversely, rural areas usually include more traditional and self-sufficient communities than cities. Thus, ideally, comprehensive data on both urban and rural settings are required. However, for various reasons, this is not always possible. Cases of successful survey research are still very rare due to their limited focus and the unavailability of general information.

## Concluding Remarks

Recording, preserving and disseminating qualitative data on people's experiences in their daily lives and their relations to the ideology and political structure of the Soviet-era government and Communist Party is a very urgent and important task. The urgency of this task is a consequence of the fact that many of those who experienced Soviet life and have thorough and detailed knowledge of how people lived in Soviet times are becoming older and passing away. With their passing, they take with them data, which could serve as an essential supplement to the archival and other written sources of history, if they are properly collected,

preserved and distributed. As indicated above, the selection method, the number of people interviewed and the disparity in their economic, social, ethnic and religious statuses have an impact on the outcome of the interviews. Nevertheless, this type of project provides a new source of information for understanding socialist life and political structure.

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# The Coverage of Central Asia in Turkey

*The 1990s and Beyond*

BÜŞRA ERSANLI

During the past two decades, Turkey has pursued different courses of action in its foreign policy orientation toward what has been referred to as Eurasia:<sup>1</sup> The first phase was inspired by the idea of Turkism. Turkish peoples as descendants of Central Asian Turks rejoiced in the demise of the USSR as a great opportunity for celebrating their affinity with the Turkic peoples of the former Soviet territories, namely Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan along with autonomous republics within the Russian Federation such as Tatarstan and Bashkortostan. This diverse population was considered to have historical, literary, linguistic and cultural commonalities with the Turkish people of Turkey. Furthermore, the Central Asian republics, in particular, for some time saw Turkey as a model – secular and economically promising.

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<sup>1</sup> Many journals (academic and popular) with this name in the title were launched during the 1990s. There has been academic research conducted on Eurasia, such as *Akademik Araştırmalar Dergisi* with a special issue on Eurasia including European identity 2004–2005, and a number of Ph. D. theses on Eurasia have been published, for example, Imanov 2008 and Korkmaz 2006.



## Central Asia as a Strategic Issue

The major driving force behind Turkey's interest in Central Asia was a strategic alliance with the Turkic peoples. This enthusiasm was also related to anti-communism, which was very strong in Turkey, especially during the Cold War. Central Asia was at first thought of as a region including Azerbaijan and Tajikistan as well – Azerbaijan because it was a Turkic former Soviet nation, even though the country is in the Caucasus, and Tajikistan because it was considered to be an integral part of Turkestan, a former administrative unit where Turkic-speaking people were in the majority. This loose border of Turkestan was created by the Russian Empire after the complete takeover of the region in 1865.

Anti-Russian sentiments as an element in anti-communism cast their shadow over relations in the early 1990s. This strategic alliance and international stand was also encouraged by the USA, for example, with the promise of economic grants. The strategy inspired by Turkism was later developed into realistic pragmatic relations fed by international energy policies after 1994.<sup>2</sup>

Beginning in 1993, representatives of the Turkic states and communities came together regularly for an annual Congress in Turkey under the heading of "Friendship, Brotherhood, and Cooperation". Seven congresses have been held, however, after a few years this initiative started to fade out. It was first initiated by the Nationalist Action Party under Alpaslan Türkeş. The Congress was, however, immediately taken over by the government, in view of Mr. Türkeş' record of involvement in ultranationalist politics. In the same year, Özal and later Demirel (two successive presidents of Turkey) took over responsibility for the organization. The atmosphere at these congresses remained sentimental and superficial, although it did help to bring together many intellectuals, artists and politicians of the former Soviet Turkic world. During these congresses and the Turkic World History Congress organized by the Turkish History Society (Ankara, September 1994), Turkish intellectuals and media interested in the region could see that the political goals of the republics differed from one another. Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, in particular, rejected the leading role of Turkish academia. They wanted to write their own histories, sociologies, cultures and literature textbooks.

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<sup>2</sup> Ersanlı 1997.

During the 2000s, especially after the conservative nationalist Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in Turkey, the strategic importance of Central Asia continued but only as one of the regions of an extended neighborhood perspective, namely Eurasia. Turkish foreign policy enlarged the scope of its neighborhood from Europe to Asia and pragmatically employed the concept of Eurasia for the EU, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Russian Federation. In the initial years of the 2000s, relations with the European Union for enhancing future membership were emphasized more than relations with the other regions. After the mid-2000s, the new foreign policy line attempted to cover the larger Eurasian sphere, focusing primarily on the eastern parts of Eurasia. Finally, with the new foreign minister at the end of the 2000s,<sup>3</sup> this scope of interest also included the Middle Eastern countries.

This gradual change in foreign policy from seeking cultural, linguistic and educational integration with the older Turkic world, namely Central Asia, to a pragmatic/realistic policy for cooperation with a larger political space started during the mid-1990s and followed a course of emphasizing trade, energy and security issues in addition to the already established but somewhat declining<sup>4</sup> educational relations.

The AKP's position on Eurasia extending to the Middle East after 2007 has raised questions in liberal Western security and strategy circles. They have believed that Turkey "yielded little" in its Middle East policies. Both the EU and the USA also underline that "without a successful reform effort Turkey will continue to be just an aspirant to grandeur".<sup>5</sup> This analysis is based mainly on the vacillating position in the process of EU candidacy, increasing economic cooperation with Russia, and inadequate policies for meeting Kurdish democratic demands. All in all, Turkey's new foreign policy perspective, initially inspired by Turkic affinities with Central Asia and later enlarged to include a wider Eurasia, has met with both positive and negative reactions from the West.

Some have argued that Turkey could not meet the demands of the regimes of Central Asia,<sup>6</sup> others have pointed to the relatively weak strategic significance of

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<sup>3</sup> Aras and Fidan 2009:198.

<sup>4</sup> Yanık 2004:196.

<sup>5</sup> Abramowitz and Barkey 2009:126-128.

<sup>6</sup> Larrabee 2011:104f.

the Central Asian countries<sup>7</sup> in comparison with EU and USA relations, yet many others have drawn attention to the predominant political and economic role played by Russia. In fact, there is some basis to most of these arguments. Generally speaking, Turkey limited its involvement in Central Asian countries mostly because they did not contribute much to the amplified ambitions of the new foreign policy position adopted by Turkey, especially towards the end of the 2000s. Balancing the USA, the EU, the Russian Federation and Iran all at the same time and involving itself in the Middle East along with serious domestic problems was a grand task and created setbacks from time to time.

## Central Asia as a Regional Issue

Turkey was promoted as a role model for newly independent Muslim countries in the former Soviet territories, i.e. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. This was unofficially initiated by the USA. Many believe that tanks and researchers interested in regional and strategic studies on the area supported this view, in line with energy policies directing attention to the energy rich countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Turkey was involved in this wave of strategic intellectual currents but was more interested in a Turkic alliance for extensive economic and cultural cooperation. International relations came to prominence on the domestic front in Turkish politics after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Developments in the neighboring regions became an integral part of the domestic agenda. The region was then limited to the northeast, attaching Azerbaijan to Central Asia and not including the two south Caucasian countries, namely Armenia and Georgia.

It was with this euphoria that the Foreign Ministry diversified its organization along these lines and founded a semi-official agency devoted to regional cooperation in 1992: the Agency for Turkish Cooperation and Development – TİKA (Türk İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Ajansı). For Turkey, the world had been de facto enlarged from Europe to Central Asia – later Eurasia – and finally to include the Middle East. TİKA started a number of projects and assisted in communication between the countries of the Caucasus, the Balkans and Central Asia, along with its publications, *Eurasian Bulletin* and *Eurasian Studies*, by the

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<sup>7</sup> Kassimeris 2010:332f.

mid-1990s. The latter, in particular, soon became an academic periodical allocating space not only to strategic issues but also to history and culture. With scholarships being launched by this same organization, many young people started learning Russian, in addition to those coming from Turkic nations to learn Turkish in Ankara and Istanbul. Under the AKP government, TİKA, as a development aid organization, also sponsored economic and industrial infrastructure as well as the health and education sectors, spending 60% of its budget on Central Asia and the Caucasus in 2007.<sup>8</sup>

Later in 1995, another affiliate organization of the Foreign Ministry, the Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi (Strategic Research Center), was founded, and its journal *SAM* devoted its pages to international – though primarily regional – relations in an attempt to combine Europe with Asia, in particular Central Asia. Additionally, Uluslararası Stratejik Araştırmalar Kurumu (USAK; International Strategic Research Institute) started a new academic journal.<sup>9</sup> Yet another organization launched a publication entitled *Eurasian File*. It was initiated by a foundation called ASAM, Eurasian Strategic Research Center, in Ankara. *Eurasian File*, first published in 1994, devoted its pages to articles on Europe and the former USSR. The tone of most of the articles on Russia was highly suspicious and generally reflected a cold-war mentality. However, the same foundation, in its later publication entitled *Stratejik Analiz* [Strategic Analysis] from 2000, adopted a relatively neutral tone. This journal provides a chronology of events from Europe, the Middle East, the Caucasus, Russia and Ukraine, China and East Asia, also offering new websites related to all of these regions and issues. The Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK) was always interested in the concept of Eurasia in order to embrace the economic potential of the wider region. They convened an international business meeting in 2003, including Süleyman Demirel, Nursultan Nazarbayev, Yevgeni Primakov, Chinghiz Aitmatov and Hans Dietrich Genscher.<sup>10</sup>

In one interesting article in the early 2000s, it was suggested that Turkey have a representative at the CIS meetings, even if only with observer status.<sup>11</sup> This

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<sup>8</sup> Aras and Fidan 2009:202.

<sup>9</sup> *Orta Asya ve Kafkasya Araştırmaları Dergisi* [Journal of Central Asian and Caucasian Studies], with its first issue in 2006, published by USAK, which started by providing an extensive bibliography of Eurasian geography.

<sup>10</sup> *Avrasya Nereye Gidiyor* 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Öztürk 2000.

proposal – explained and analyzed in an academic tone – was a good example of the change in attitude towards the Russian Federation, that country now being viewed as an indispensable partner in the interests of Turkey. In addition to this, we should also underline the growing self-confidence of the Turkish government in beginning to behave as a regional actor.

Similar shifts in attitude were observed among the Turkologists that are primarily involved in cultural and intellectual work in the Turkic republics. Some academics who thought that the Turkish language would be sufficient for all kinds of cultural, intellectual and educational work and communication in these countries and who initially resented and ignored Russian, have already begun studying Russian and shifted from cultural stress points to energy-based regionalism. With the prospects of linking energy lines, the name of the region changed from Central Asia plus Azerbaijan to Caspian.<sup>12</sup> Particularly teachers and professors working in private Turkish schools and in newly founded universities have understood the contribution of the two cultures in a reciprocal way. In 2004, an Istanbul-based private university called Okan University, for example, started a Russian Language Department and a Eurasian Center, and later a Russian Culture Center in 2011.

After the first attempts during the early 1990s, subsequent phases witnessed greater emphasis on Turkey's regionalism, on the possibility of becoming a regional power or creating a special space within a sub-system in the context of international relations. Attempts to strengthen Turkey through a pragmatic, diversified realist regionalism was the end product of emotional Turkist foreign policy. This rapid transformation may, in part, be due to the initial basic interest in economic development. Some argue that less promising relations with the EU have given special impetus to Turkey's interest in the former Soviet territories.<sup>13</sup> This was even described as a promotional tactic by some analysts. For example, Demirel, then president of Turkey, viewed Eurasia as a way of opening the door to the EU. He further declared that when Turkey becomes a full member of the EU, its role as a bridge between Europe and Eurasia will be further strengthened.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Larrabee 2011:106.

<sup>13</sup> Yılmaz 1998:14 wrote that "Eurasia" as a concept was introduced as a reaction to EU's discouraging attitude towards Turkey's accession. Furthermore, Dağ 2002 and Berkan 2009 drew attention to Eurasia's opposing position to the EU.

<sup>14</sup> BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 20.10.1994. See also Yanık 2009:538.

In addition to the intensified positive relations with Russia, some Balkan and East European countries started to be included in the journals mentioned above. Bulgaria, Moldova and Bosnia-Herzegovina were the initial ones, included due to the Turkic populations there. Albania was also included because of religion. Thus, Muslim and Turkic became significant in identifying political space for the expanding region under the concept of Eurasia. The following section underlines the importance of a Turkic-Islamic/neo-Ottoman sphere of influence.

## Linguistic and Educational Relations

After 1992, the Turkish Ministry of Education initiated regular meetings with specialists in history and literature from the Turkic republics. In relation to books on literature, this project has been partially successful. However, in relation to history books, no consensus could be reached.<sup>15</sup>

The first meeting took place in Bishkek from October 29 to November 3, 1992. The Ministers of Education from the Turkic republics underlined linguistic and cultural commonalities and decided to convene a special meeting for a common history textbook for elementary and secondary schools. At the end of November, the representatives of the ministries of education met in Yalova, Istanbul. At this meeting, a decision was taken to focus jointly on certain subjects. This decision, however, was not implemented, since the newly independent countries were eager to write their own history books.

In the cultural and educational fields, both the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education initiated a number of projects and activities in collaboration with intellectuals and bureaucrats both in Turkey and in the Turkic republics. The major step was the decision to educate and train 10,000 Turkic students in Turkey (the number was around 7,500 in the early 2000s). This enterprise was radically blocked by Uzbekistan when the Uzbek state expressed its resentment over the Turkish state supporting Uzbek dissidents. Actually the leader of the so-called dissident movement was the leader of the *Birlik* [Unity] movement, which was the only opponent force working on human rights in Uzbekistan. This was not the only reason, however. The Uzbek leadership openly stated that it did not want a new big brother, with Turkish

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<sup>15</sup> Ersanlı 1995a.

bureaucrats from various ministries wanting to orchestrate the content of linguistic and educational enterprises in the country. Finally, most of the Uzbek students were recalled, and by 2002 there were only 3 Uzbek students in Turkey. The number of scholarships distributed were nearly two thousand in 1992, but by 2002 only 273 had completed their education and graduated.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, hundreds of teaching personnel were sent to work in the Turkic Republics, and some university professors and lecturers came to teach in Turkey. By 2000, three universities had been established in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Another privately initiated university was founded in Georgia. In addition to this, 14 primary and secondary schools established by the Turkish Ministry of Education and almost 100 private local Turkish schools had begun education and training in these countries since 1993.

Changes in alphabets in these countries were encouraged at a number of conferences and academic and official meetings held in Istanbul (first at Marmara University) and Ankara. Joint dictionaries were prepared. Meanwhile, Turkish textbooks in history and literature were revised in an attempt to meet the demands of cultural regionalism. Regular meetings were held among the ministers as well as associations of writers and artists. Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) launched its Eurasia International broadcasting immediately after the independence of the Turkic republics. Special programs were prepared for the region. Telecommunication (NETAŞ) and transportation projects were gradually extended to most of these countries. Gallup encouraged the international research company SIAR to open local bureaus in the Turkic republics in order to monitor social and economic trends (Türk Cumhuriyetleri Kültür Profili). Reports from academic research projects initiated in 1992 with funding from the Turkish Ministry of Culture were published between 1994 and 1998.<sup>17</sup>

## Central Asia in Turkish History Textbooks

Central Asia has always been a mythical and unknown source of origin for the Turkish people. Although in history textbooks it was clearly stated that Turks of

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<sup>16</sup> Yanık 2004:296f.

<sup>17</sup> Ersanlı et al. 1994; Ersanlı 1995b; Ersanlı & Ekaev 1998.

Anatolia came from Central Asia due to draught during the early Middle Ages, there was never a subsequent follow-up of these people. These peoples were behind the "Iron Curtain", and the anti-communist and anti-Soviet strategy of the government systematically ignored the area. Although during the 1930s the major policy of the Ministry of Education was to promote Turkism in official national education, this policy did not extend to providing information about the cultural, economic or political lives of the peoples of the region. Most of the works produced by historians interested in the area were from Turkist movements before the demise of the USSR. Nihal Adsız is one such example.

University Professors of the Turkic-Islamic persuasion usually placed emphasis on language and literature. Some books were published during the 1930s and 1940s on, for example, Alişir Nevai. Among these academics, very few were independent academic historians. Zeki Velidi Togan was one of the few scholars encouraging independent academic research. His work, in particular, on the Turkic epic revealed that his interest in the area was both academic and sentimental. This work underlines the relationship between historical evidence and the method of epic writing.<sup>18</sup>

Immediately after the disintegration of the USSR and the declarations of independence in those countries, the Turkish Ministry of Education started rewriting history textbooks for elementary and secondary schools. History 1 and History 2 (for the academic year 1993–1994), prepared by a commission of 9 professors, are especially noteworthy. They used the titles decided on at the official meeting with Turkic representatives in Yalova. The titles and subtitles were determined in accordance with the phases of general Turkic history. Prior to 1993, there were lessons called "General Turkic History" in accordance with the wave of Islamic Turkic synthesis initiated during the late 1970s and 1980s. In those previous books, there are phases such as "Turkic States before Islam", "Turkic Islamic States", and "Other States constructed in Central Asia and the Near East".

In the new books written by the commission, a distinction was made between Turkic World I and Turkic World II. Within Turkic World II we see the relationship between the Fatimi, Mamluk, Moguls, Timur and Babur empires and the political identities formed for the new Central Asian and Caucasian republics with reference to the Kazak Khanate, Altaic Turks, Kyrgyz, the

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<sup>18</sup> Ersanlı 2002:337–349.



Bukhara, Khiva and Kokand Khanates, Turkmens, Eastern Turkestan and Azerbaijani Khanates. The political bridge is constructed under the subtitle "Russian Tzardom expanding in adversary to Turkic lands". The new emphasis was thus on gathering information about the Turks that were liberated from Soviet/Russian enslavement.

These steps were taken on the basis of the Yalova Conference, however, only in Turkey. The ex-Soviet Turkic ministries of education did not follow suit. Some of the historians from the new Turkic republics stated that they were now facing the urgent task of writing their independent national histories and that they could not actively participate in writing common history textbooks. One prominent historian well known for his research on economic and social history of Turkmenistan, Prof. Annanefesov,<sup>19</sup> in a personal interview for example, said that "After all, history writing is a personal thing". The advisory board of the Yalova Conference, all from the Ministry of Education, also decided on May 3, 1993, that the following program of courses should be offered to students coming from Central Asian and other Turkic republics: "Social Life and Democracy Training in Turkey"; "Culture of Religion and Ethics"; "Common Turkic History"; "Common Turkic Literature"; and "History of Turkish Culture". The first, "Social Life and Democracy Training in Turkey", is not in the program for native citizens. It should be noted here that in history textbooks in Turkey, the contemporary history of Turkey under the label of Atatürkism ends with WW II. More recently, certain events were added, however in late 2008 a decision was made to omit them once again under the pretext that "controversial incidents disrupt the development of democracy".

In the primary school history textbooks written during the early 1990s, there is an appended section entitled "WW II and the 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Turkic World". In this section, each Turkic Republic is very briefly covered – on one page each. This includes Northern Cyprus, as well. In the geography books, there is also a section entitled "Turks in Asia" in which all Central Asian countries are presented as independent. Once again, in the same year a map was appended to the concluding section of the textbooks – a map of the Turkic World.

When disintegration and ethnic strife had just begun in the USSR in 1989, the American national security specialist Paul Henze made an interesting remark in an English daily newspaper in Istanbul, *The Turkish Times*, to the effect that

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<sup>19</sup> Murat Annanefesov 1998:21–34.

the new peoples of the USSR would learn what nationalism is from the Turkish nationalists.<sup>20</sup>

It is common knowledge for all of those interested in Turkey that the Turks are descendants of Central Asian, Altaic Turks. In this respect, the textbooks written during the 1930s had the ambition of covering a broad geographical area in order to clarify the roots of Anatolian Turks. However, they could not really cover the areas where the people of Turkic origin lived at that time and where they live today. This was because the mainstream historians who wrote these books and who delivered the trendiest contributions during the first two history congresses (in 1932 and 1937) wanted to prove that the essential geography of the Turks was Anatolia. The hypothesis was that there had been devastating sand storms in Central Asia during the early ages of history and that, as a consequence, the Turks had migrated to the West, i.e. to Anatolia. In this sense, Central Asia seemed to be void of importance. There was barely any recognition of Turkic peoples under different political regimes. Anti-communism was an important impediment to providing information about Soviet Turks. Europe was obviously chosen as the crucial cultural/political geography for Turkic identity. However, neither the Turks of Central Asia nor the European peoples were taken up independently.

On the other hand, the history textbooks written by the Central Asian countries, especially Uzbek and Turkmen books, turned out to be much more flexible in relation to the recent and ancient past in defining their identity than Turkish history books. Both refrained from sharp breaks with their recent histories, although Uzbeks tried to accomplish this gradual change by putting emphasis on the independence and sovereignty of their state, while Turkmen used their name for identity, namely Turkmen as a family name.<sup>21</sup> While Turkish history teaching has improved in method with some recent changes throughout Europe, it has not abandoned its mental set inspired by strong *étatisme*. In the coverage of Central Asia, this *étatisme* is always accompanied by an equally strong Turkish/Islamic identity.

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<sup>20</sup> For a general Western analysis of Turkey's position in relation to the former Soviet world, see Fuller et al. 1993.

<sup>21</sup> Ersanlı 2012:89f.

## Regionalism: Organizational Initiatives

Throughout this course of developments, the Turkic republics naturally assumed a special place. Turkism, though sentimental for reasons already mentioned, also created an impetus for various activities on the part of the Turkish Government and other organizations in the Turkic republics. This was beneficial primarily for cultural and educational relations, which had already started in 1992–1993, and for medium and small-scale entrepreneurship in the economic field. Joint ventures with foreign and local companies rapidly increased. The Eurasian Chamber of Commerce and Industry was founded, and the volume of trade started to increase in 1993. The volume of foreign trade (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan ranking first) doubled in the following years. By the end of 1995, one-half of all Eximbank credits (1 billion USD) were used by the Turkic republics.

Turkey was not reluctant to adapt itself to the new international atmosphere and forged new links with countries in the region. Within the realm of what we call Eurasia, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization founded in 1992 represents the first attempt at pragmatic non-NATO regional partnerships. BSEC is not involved in great projects but has been confined to small-scale ones in order to develop the capacity to undertake larger transportation, communication and environmental projects. However, this initiated a new style of neighborhood cooperation. Right after the independence of the Turkic republics, alternative markets were created for Turkish exports. The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), initially founded by Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan, was expanded with the addition of five Central Asian states as well as Azerbaijan and Afghanistan as members in 1993. ECO, with a total population of 300 million, gradually became a catalyst for the development of private sector banking, construction of infrastructure and scientific and technical cooperation.

This economic leap from the first days of independence, however, cannot simply be linked to a series of negative developments in the course of relations with the EU. It is directly related to Turkey's special interest in the Turkic peoples and their various positions within a large geographical setting extending from the Balkans to China. It is very natural for a country with isolationist policies, mostly due to the NATO alliance, to attempt to break this inward looking foreign policy on the basis of cultural affinities, which obviously extend to the Russian Federation.

Another reason for initiating new regional and bilateral relations was that the US support for Turkish aid to the Turkic republics was cut. Turkey realized that

it was economically incapable of meeting the numerous demands of these countries. Turkish authorities and, even more so, the Turkish private sector have since 1995 started to differentiate between short-term and long-term interests and projects. The state sector led the way during 1992–1993, however, by 1997 it was the private sector that was most active in small-scale investments, such as small markets, bread factories or larger bakeries, textile firms, construction works and tourism. Turkish investors are also active in joint ventures. They often work with third parties, usually from Europe, to provide technical training in banking and agriculture.

Starting in 1994, the private sector, as in the case of private schools, began taking over the public sector, both in business and education. All of these activities were extended to non-Turkic republics as well. Russia, Georgia and Bulgaria are among the countries with which Turkey is expanding both bilateral relations and regional cooperation in relation to third parties. Turkey tries to translate “self interest” into “regional interest” by balancing investments in and trade with the Turkic republics with those of other CIS and East European states.

Policies oriented towards the possibility of becoming a regional power were also inspired by the fact that the entire world started to see Russia, Turkey and Iran as rival powers in relation to Central Asia and the Caucasus as a consequence of their obvious cultural and political impact on both regions. Analysts very often discussed this issue within the context of Eurasianism versus Atlanticism.<sup>22</sup> Thus, a sophisticated interpretation of the cold-war tradition was observed within the literature of geopolitics. Nonetheless, there is still more NATO/Atlantic oriented geopolitics in the Turkish Foreign Ministry, highlighted in particular by the neo-conservative government reaffirming its power for a second time in the 2007 general elections and for a third time in 2011.

The Turkish quest for regional self-confidence began with euphoria over being able to communicate with the Turkic peoples outside of Turkey. The region was thereby opened up on the basis of cultural affinity rather than cultural diversity. This affinity was Turkic-ness. Today, the regional challenge in the Middle East is promoted on the basis of a second affinity, that of Muslim identity. Changes in Turkey’s foreign policy relate to cultural “closeness”, not yet to democratic codes and principles. The regional closeness with Europe

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<sup>22</sup> Rahr 1992:17–22. For Eurasianism, see Schapentokh 1997:129–151.

remains problematic, in spite of a very long period of Westernization by political choice.

Turkey's difficult task of balancing the EU, the USA, Eurasia (the Russian Federation, the Caucasus and Central Asia), and Asia in harmony with its new foreign policy perspective still faces a number of challenges. In addition to the organizations cited above, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (2001) created another dimension, namely the inclusion of China, within the Eurasian equation.<sup>23</sup> Central Asian countries, especially Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, have strong economic relations with China, rating second after the Russian Federation. These countries have been trying hard during the last decade to balance their relations with the USA and the EU and at times even with Turkey and Iran.<sup>24</sup> Independence is growing parallel to the economic capacities they have in energy resources as well as some minerals, for example gold in Uzbekistan. Turkey is to an increasing extent including Afghanistan in Central Asia as well. Turkey is no longer a bridge but an extended regional player in as much as it pays close attention to Russia's and China's moves. Finally, one can say that relations with Central Asia are not as lively as they once were, given that this is only one of the regions of interest for Turkey's growing ambitions.

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<sup>24</sup> Tunçer Kılavuz 2013:307f., 318.

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# In Search of New Historiographies for Ex-Soviet Turkic States

*Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan*

Y. EMRE GÜRBÜZ

The dissolution of the USSR forced the ruling elites in Central Asia to shift the source of shared values and common goals to something new. For their state- and nation-building, they had to prepare the ground for ensuing generations through providing them with new interpretations of their past and with new future prospects. History education has a prominent role in the identity formation of young citizens by teaching them about the achievements of their ancestors and the characteristics of their people. This type of pedagogical and pragmatic evaluation of history developed parallel to the introduction of history courses in the modern period as part of the process of nation-formation. It goes back to John Locke and his claim in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* that "As nothing teaches, so nothing delights more than history".<sup>1</sup> Locke formed his ideas in a period following political turmoil in England. His main argument was that children should read history, understand the reasons for creating laws and acquire a deep loyalty toward England. Later on, with the rise of new nation-states and ideologies, Locke's liberal, patriotic arguments were reshaped under nationalist,

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<sup>1</sup> Locke 1996 [1693]:183.



socialist or liberal governments around the world in order to create new generations, however, the general idea of using history for pedagogical purposes remained.

The presidents of the young Central Asian states are well aware of the role of history in shaping new generations. They often refer to history and are focused on delineating the historiographies of their states. Former President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev, for example, was a graduate of the Department of History at Azerbaijan State University.<sup>2</sup> The main book of the Uzbek President Islam Karimov is called, in its English-language version, "Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century: Tradition and Survival".<sup>3</sup> Here the reevaluation of the past and the emphasis on the achievements of past civilizations across the territory of present-day Uzbekistan are viewed as inalienable ingredients in the formation of a new ideology.

As a result of molding reformed historiographies in relation to previous generations in a process of transition, both continuities and new trends can be noted in contemporary history books. One of the main characteristics of post-Soviet historiographies is their territoriality, which displays continuity with the Soviet period. All peoples and populations who at one time lived on the territory now within the borders of a certain republic are considered to be the ancestors of citizens in the nation-states existing today. Consequently, the newly created borders have become historical realities long past the Soviet era.

## A Counter Example for Territoriality: Historiography in Turkey

It is true that Soviet historiography is not unique in constructing a territorial history. In countries like Sweden, where, according to the Roman historian Tacitus, the Swedes (*Suiones*) have been living for at least two thousand years,<sup>4</sup> the past of the people coincides with the past of the territory, which is not the case for all countries. It would probably be more illuminating to start with a non-

<sup>2</sup> Official website of Heydar Aliyev: "Biography". *Heydar Aliyev – National Leader of the Azeri Nation* [http://www.heydar-aliyev.org/index\\_en.jsp](http://www.heydar-aliyev.org/index_en.jsp).

<sup>3</sup> Karimov 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Tacitus, 98 AD, sections XLIV, XLV.

territorial historiography in order to highlight the contrast. The historiography in Turkey might present a useful example, since Turkey shares with post-Soviet Turkic countries the heritage of nomadic states and tribal unity, although Turkey has shown a different approach to its past.

The massive migration of Turks to Anatolia began as recently as approximately 1000 years ago. The final turkification of the territory, on the other hand, was the result of the last period of the Ottoman Empire, during which the political and intellectual elites were in search of a new identity to create a strong sense of unity. The social traumas during the last decades of the Ottoman Empire left their marks, and their effects can be seen in the shaping of the Turkish nation, in turkifying the past of the territory and in glorifying the Turks as a nation. It is interesting that some of these tendencies are now shared by different post-Soviet Turkic historians, as is the case in Azerbaijan.

The aim of turkifying the territory of the Turkish Republic was first reflected in the official Turkish historiography when it was stated that Anatolia was a perennial Turkic land, since the founders of ancient Anatolian civilizations were actually Turks who had to leave their original fatherland in Central Asia following a – highly speculative – desertification. The first history textbooks of the Turkish Republic claim that founders of the ancient civilizations, such as the Hittites, who were the first state-founders in Anatolia, were Turks. But even other civilizations in other parts of the old world, like Sumerian or Etruscan civilizations, were claimed to have been founded by Turks.<sup>5</sup> This official thesis was not well founded, and it has faded into oblivion during the last 70 years without being officially and openly criticized.<sup>6</sup>

Today, the emphasis is not on claiming the Turkic origin of ancient Anatolian peoples but on the construction of a history based on the migration of the Turks from Inner Asia to Anatolia. On the first page of most history atlases, a famous map with imaginary pictures can still be seen showing the heaven-like, mythical, original Turkic land in the heart of Central Asia and the routes of

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Tarih 1*. For an analysis of the formation of Turkish official historiography, see Ersanlı 1992 and Copeaux 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Copeaux 1997.

migrating Turks moving to different parts of the old continent and planting the seeds of civilization in Egypt, Rome, China, and India.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast to a territorial historiography, ancient peoples and empires of the Middle Ages, like the Byzantine Empire, present within the borders of modern Turkey, do not occupy a significant place in the Turkish history textbooks, whereas Turkic khanates of the same period assume special status. However, as was mentioned above, this is a history of migration, and it does not cover the history of all Turks but proceeds selectively. The “Turks” migrating from Central Asia are described in the history books irrespective of their religion or territory. In the next phase of history, the focus is on “Muslim Turks” to the exclusion of Buddhist or Christian Turks as well as non-migratory Turks around Kazan or in Inner Asia. In the end, history is about “Muslim Turks of Turkey”, especially the Ottomans, who are hailed as the founders of a “golden age” for the Turks of Anatolia. As of today, half of the history education in Turkish schools is devoted to the Ottoman period. Books and magazines in Ottoman history are bestsellers, and one of the most popular Turkish TV series is still in 2014 – after more than one hundred episodes – “The Magnificent Century” (*Muhteşem Yüzyıl*), which is about the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent.

## Azerbaijan: Territoriality and Nationalism

In Azerbaijan territoriality is still one of the main aspects of historiography. However, the country faces the same type of problems as the state-founders of Turkey in the 1930s. The aim is to prove that Azerbaijan was since time immemorial a land for the Turks. Their conflict with the Armenians, as a result of the occupation and declaration of independence of the autonomous Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh on the part of its Armenian population, certainly exacerbated the need to prove the presence of Turkic peoples in Azerbaijani territories, including Nagorno-Karabakh.

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<sup>7</sup> *Özetli Tarih Atlası*. Editors and publication date are not written, but the date of official recommendation by the Turkish Ministry of Education, Board of Education and Discipline, is 1980, which gives the impression that it is a publication for all times, written by the state apparatus itself.

## Ancient Turkic Peoples of Azerbaijan

The perenniality of Azerbaijan's Turkic origin is clearly exemplified in a history book for 7<sup>th</sup>-grade school children.<sup>8</sup> In this book the founders of one of the first states in present-day Azerbaijan, the Albanians<sup>9</sup> (3<sup>rd</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> centuries), are presented as a population of Turkic origin. The map of the territories under Albanian control covers modern Azerbaijan and neighboring regions. The Turkic origin of the people in Nagorno-Karabakh is emphasized in a separate paragraph, which reads:

*The historical Arsakh region was one of the western regions of Albania (today, the mountainous part of Karabakh and Mil Valley). The people of this region were of Turkic origin, such as the Albanians, Qarqars, Huns and Khazars. [Mahmudlu et al.:18]*

Another point about “the resistance against the Armenian invasion” was underlined during the reign of “Sanatürk” (290–338), who was the local ruler of the Albanians. He is also presented as a ruler fighting against the Armenian “invaders” with the support of the Roman Empire. It is mentioned that according to some chronicles he was a Hunnic leader. During his struggle against the Armenians, he called on the “brother Turkic tribes” (Huns, Basils) to form an alliance. According to the same textbook, the migration of Turkic tribes to Azerbaijan continued with the Sabirs in the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>10</sup>

## Ethnogenesis in Azerbaijan

The ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijani people was considered to have crystallized as the outcome of two great migrations of Turkic tribes. This is explained under the title “The Role of Turkic Tribes in the Formation of the Azerbaijani People” as follows:

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<sup>8</sup> Mahmudlu et al. 2010.

<sup>9</sup> They are also called “Caucasian Albanians”, not to be confused with the Albanians of modern Albania.

<sup>10</sup> Mahmudlu et al. 2010:32.

*In clarifying the language and ethnic formation of the people living in Azerbaijan, primarily information found in written sources is being used. According to the chronicles, Turkic groups were known under various names during this period. They were intermingled with the local Turkic people in various periods. In the early Middle Ages the populations living in Azerbaijan were called Albanian, Caspian, Mûq, Qarqar, Udi and Gardman.*

*Most of the population groups (Albanian, Qarqar, Udi, Sovde, Shakashen, Hun, Gardman) living in Azerbaijan were of Turkic origin. In ancient times and in the early Middle Ages, there were two massive ethnic migrations to Azerbaijan. In the first migration Kimmerian, Scythian and Saka tribes of Turkic origin settled in Azerbaijan. The migration created the conditions for the settlement of the Hunnic tribes (Kengerli, Pecheneg, Bulgar, Onogur, Sabir, Hun, Kherlat, Oghuz) of Turkic origin. These migrating tribes were close in language and ethnic composition to the local people of Turkic origin. Among the Turkic tribes, the Oghuz Turks were in the majority. [Mahmudlu et al. 2002:40f.]*

The critical stage in the formation of the Azerbaijani people is generally believed to be the period under Sasanid rule before the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when both southern<sup>11</sup> and northern Azerbaijan<sup>12</sup> were united under the same authority.<sup>13</sup>

Sasanid control, which occurred before the occupation of the Islamic armies, is evaluated as a positive and progressive factor. As a general method applied in Azerbaijani textbooks, first the subjective conditions were described, and then an external factor is mentioned as the trigger for further change. Here, first the ethnic-Turkic composition of "Azerbaijan" is described and then Sasanid control is introduced as a positive factor for the ethnic, political and cultural unification of the country. Peoples of Turkic and non-Turkic origin were united against the oppression of the Sasanids in order to protect their independence, and as a result of this process the Azerbaijani nation was formed.<sup>14</sup>

This early turkification of Azerbaijan can be understood not only on the basis of continuity with the former Soviet understanding of territorial historiography. It is also the outcome of the recent political need to lay a claim on Azerbaijani

<sup>11</sup> Currently Azerbaijani territory around Tebriz in Iran.

<sup>12</sup> Currently the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

<sup>13</sup> Mahmudlu et al. 2010:41.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

territory as a result of the question of Nagorno-Karabakh and the actual need to form a modern, independent nation-state.

These two trends – nationalism and territoriality – seem to be the main issues in the writing of Azerbaijani historiography. There are, however, also other continuities and discontinuities worth noting.

## Continuity with the Soviet Historiography in Azerbaijani Textbooks

There is still a strong influence from historical materialism in Azerbaijani history writing. Many chapters start with descriptions of economic and political conditions, and the base for historical developments is defined concomitant with the Marxist understanding of history. This is especially true for textbooks on world history. In addition to the primary position of the “base”, history is understood as a general, linear, evolutionary and progressive process, as was mentioned above in the example of the Sasanid invasion.

At the expense of both world history and general history of Azerbaijan, great portions of the textbooks are devoted to themes like popular unrest, peasant revolts and fights against oppression. These aspects were of special importance in the textbooks of the Soviet period, where according to Marxist theory history is to be learnt through studies of class struggle. One example is the account of Mazdek, who led a rebellion in the Sasanid Empire against the wealthy, property-owning class in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Not only the frequency of popular revolts but also the assessment of them corresponds with the Soviet period, as is exemplified below:

*The basic point of Mazdek's principles was to establish a just society and to create the equality of property among the masses. In one of the sources this point was mentioned as follows: "God gave men property, so that they can share it among themselves. But people act very unjust towards each other." Mazdeki were stating that they wanted to take property from the rich and give it to the poor. [Mahmudlu et al. 2010:29]*

This example of early communism is one of the continuities with the Soviet period, underlining popular revolts as a sign of the permanent class struggle and the eternal fight for equality in “Azerbaijan”. The general terminology of the textbooks is based on feudality. The periodization is made according to the stages

of development borrowed from the terminology of feudalism. Some of the main titles of the books are coined accordingly. For example, the title of the introductory chapter from which the quotation above was taken is "Part 1: Feudal Relations in Azerbaijan".

## Change in the Assessment of "Feudal Lords" and Continuity in Materialism

After independence some historical "Azerbaijani" rulers rose to glorious ranks in the new history writing, after having been evaluated negatively as "oppressive feudal lords" during the Soviet period, in contrast to the leaders of popular revolt, such as the above-mentioned Mazdek.

One example of these recently popularized feudal rulers is Shah Ismail, who was the founder of the Safavid dynasty in Iran. He was also the ruler who completed the shiification of Iran. Shah Ismail's portraits and small statues can be seen in some academic institutes and on one of the main streets of the capital Baku. He does not hold a position similar to that of, for example, Amir Timur (Tamerlane)<sup>15</sup> in Uzbekistan, where Amir Timur is celebrated as the greatest historical leader of Uzbekistan with statues in every city. However, Shah Ismail is still one of the most celebrated historical figures in Azerbaijan. This is not because of his Shiism but because he was a Turcoman (Azeri), a great ruler, a great poet<sup>16</sup> and the founder of a large empire with the capital in Tebriz. Relying on the fact that most Azerbaijanis are also Shiite, it could be expected that his role in the shiification of Azerbaijan and Iran would also be praised. This act, however, is condemned, since in doing so he divided the Turks.<sup>17</sup> Turks' unity is clearly more important than his role in spreading Shia among the Turcomans or Azerbaijanis.

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<sup>15</sup> Amir Timur is known by his moniker "Tamerlane" in the West. This name comes from "Timur Lang" meaning "Timur the Lame" in Persian.

<sup>16</sup> His poems are studied in literature classes. In the textbooks on literature it is stated that as a "magnificent ruler and authoritative poet Shah Ismail Hatayi possesses an honorable place in the history of the people of Azerbaijan" (Sofarli & Yusufli 2002:184).

<sup>17</sup> Mahmudlu et al. 2009:128.

Not only recent nationalism but also the materialist Soviet education reappears in the textbook while evaluating the shiification of Azerbaijan. It is stated that Shah Ismail used Shia “as a tool” to win over the masses to his side.<sup>18</sup> The paragraph below reveals both these nationalist and materialist perceptions:

*Shah Ismail started to attract the masses to his side in order to achieve his military-political goals. After establishing his hegemony, he declared Shia as the superior school in all the realm of the Safavid State. This was a major historical development. With the establishment of Shia as the state religion by the great Azerbaijani Turkic dynasty, the Safavids divided the Turkic world and even the Muslim world into two fronts. Western diplomacy cleverly made use of this situation when establishing its hegemony in the East.* [Mahmudlu et al. 2009:128]

Here it is clearly demonstrated that religion is understood in a manipulative and instrumentalist manner and that Turkish nationalism is a more vital characteristic for the construction of Azerbaijani identity than religion, which used to be the main antagonism between the Sunni Ottoman Empire and Shiite “Azerbaijanis” and Iran until modern times. This nationalist perspective is further strengthened by underlining the loss of Turks’ unity as a result of Western intrigues.

The re-evaluation of battles between two “empires of Turks”, the Ottomans and the Akkoyunlus or Safavids, sheds light on what is considered to be the lesson taught by history. These battles were destructive events in the history of the Turks. Although the Ottomans were the winning side in these battles, it is stated that all Turks lost, and the Westerners were the real victors by benefitting from the “war of two magnificent Turkic-Islamic states”.<sup>19</sup> It is the unity of the Turks that must be protected.

The combination of nationalism – triggered by the present endeavors to found a nation-state – and the conventional Soviet aspect of territoriality results in claiming a perennial Turkic land in Azerbaijan.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.:280.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.:129.



## Uzbekistan: Territoriality and Uzbekistani Patriotism

In Uzbekistan as well, territoriality is an important factor for continuity in history. The first history textbook published after independence was called "History of the Peoples of Uzbekistan". Uzbek history teaching is presently divided into two parts, as in other Central Asian countries. One is "World History" (*Jahon Tarikhi*), the other "History of Uzbekistan" (*O'zbekiston Tarikhi*), in which Hephtalites, Samanids, Karakhanids, etc., all have their place in the history of Uzbekistan.

One main difference from Azerbaijani history is that the Uzbeks tend not to define the Uzbekistani territory as a land of the Turks until the establishment of the Turk Khanate in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. There are some references to small Turkic groups in present-day Uzbekistan, but the land and the population at large are not solely related to the Turks. Before the establishment of the Turk Khanate during the period of the Hephtalites in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the situation in terms of spoken languages in present Uzbekistan is described as follows:

*People in Central Asia were speaking various languages. People engaged in animal husbandry generally used to speak a Turkic language. Some of the settled peoples spoke Sogdian, others a Turkic language. In this era, Sogdian entered Eastern Turkistan through Yettisu [Semirechiye] and Fergana Valley as a lingua franca, and reached as far as the Chinese borders. [Muhammadjonov & Usmonov 2005:13f.].*

As is reflected here, the emphasis is not on ethnic composition. The presence of Turkic speaking groups is not exaggerated, and the existence of Sogdian is also mentioned due to Sogdian culture being regarded as one of the foundational elements of Uzbekistani culture.

## Historical Unification through Ethnogenesis

The ethnogenesis of the Uzbek people is defined as a mixture of both Turkic and East Iranian peoples. The aforementioned history textbook provides the following information about the formation of the Uzbek people:

*Just like other peoples, the Uzbek people was formed through long-lasting ethnic movements [...] The nucleus of the Uzbek people was constituted by groups like local and settled Sogdians, Bactrians, Khorezmians and Ferghanis, who were conducting agricultural*

*activities and handicraft, semi-nomadic Qang tribes and nomadic Saka-Messaget tribes. In addition to these, other ethnic groups, who in different periods migrated from Southern Siberia, Altai, Yettisu, Eastern Turkistan, and the Volga and Ural rivers to Transoxiana and settled there, also became part of the ethnogenesis. The ethnic groups mentioned above primarily spoke Turkic and East Iranian languages. [Muhammadjonov & Usmonov 2005:82]*

This is a very inclusive approach, acknowledging every social group irrespective of its ethnic origin. The determining factor is being settled within the borders of recent Uzbekistan. Consequently, the ancestors of the modern Uzbeks are generally introduced as a union of the Turkic and Iranian (Sogdian) peoples. One of the first states established in Syr Darya, the Qang State (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), is also presented as an alliance of Iranian Sogdians and Turkic peoples.<sup>20</sup>

The cornerstone of the intermixing of peoples and the creation of Uzbek ethnogenesis is considered to be the migration of Turks during the Khanate of the Turks. It is emphasized that “after the 7<sup>th</sup> century our country began to be called “Turkistan””.<sup>21</sup> After the fall of the Khanate of the Turks, the ruling dynasties in Central Asia were either Iranian or Arabic. It is argued, though, that this did not change the ethnic structure of the region. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the turkification was strengthened, and during the 9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> centuries, Uzbek ethnicity came into being through amalgamation of the local peoples with the newly arrived Turks.<sup>22</sup>

## Defenders of Uzbekistan Against Chinggisid<sup>23</sup> and “Uzbek Invaders”

After the formation of the Uzbek ethnogenesis, all tribes fighting to conquer the realm of present-day Uzbekistan are regarded as invaders. History is evaluated from the side of the “united and mixed people of Transoxiana” against the invaders, irrespective of their ethnic origin. For example, the Khwarezmians and

<sup>20</sup> Muhammadjonov & Usmonov 2005:83.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> The successors of Chinggis Khan, generally spelled in English as “Genghis Khan”.

their ruler Jaleleddin, who is stated to have fought to protect the motherland from the Mongol invaders under the motto of “land or honorable death”,<sup>24</sup> is presented as a patriot in the history textbooks.

This is one of the critical periods in history, where a choice had to be made between territoriality and nationalism, since the tribes called Uzbek emerged out of Chinggis Khan’s empire.

The origin of the word Uzbek is still open to discussion, however, it most probably appeared after the 14<sup>th</sup> century and goes back to a khan of the Golden Horde, Özbek/Özbeğ Khan. Edward Allworth writes:

*Evidence now shows that Tatar warriors made up that first conglomeration of people called Uzbeks but does not show their point of origin. Their name, however, was the more important element, not their race or ethnicity. They were in fact Tatar tribesmen following [...] Uzbek (Özbeğ) Khan [...] His prestige and still-strong Mongol custom [identification of the pupil with their leader or dynasty] led the mobile Tatar troops that he commanded to take his name during his life time. In histories written then in Persian, references to ozbekiyan (Uzbeks) and to Ulus-i ozbek (the country of the Uzbek) concern Uzbek Khan and his subjects. [Allworth 1990:32]*

This tribal confederation, ‘Özbek ulusu’, was later moved under the leadership of a successor of Özbeğ Khan, Abulkhayr Khan (1420–1468), to Khwarezm.<sup>25</sup> At the time of his successor, Muhammed Shaybani Khan, Uzbek tribes moved to Transoxiana, pushed away the resisting Timurids and established their long lasting sovereignty in Transoxiana. The history textbooks, however, do not consider the arrival of the Uzbeks as an historical event having any great impact on Uzbekistan and Uzbekistani people.

The main idea in the official historiography is that Uzbek(istani) ethnogenesis was largely established before the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and that the following waves of migrating tribes did not change this. The waves of nomads were absorbed by the already formed ethnic amalgamation. In addition to this general position, the emphasis on the Timurid legacy also overshadows the arrival of the Uzbeks.

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<sup>24</sup> Muhammadjonov & Usmonov 2005:92.

<sup>25</sup> Allworth 1990:35.

## The Legacy of Amir Timur

Since independence, Uzbekistan has designated Amir Timur (Tamerlane) as the most influential historical personality in its history. His statues can be seen in central places in Uzbekistan, on the currency and in popular and tourist iconography. There are many books published on Amir Timur, and his sayings, like *Küch Adalettedir* ('Power is in justice'), are to be seen in many places.

This is also reflected in history textbooks. Nearly one-third of the "History of Uzbekistan" textbook is devoted to Amir Timur and the Timurids (49 of 151 pages), despite the fact that the book covers 12 centuries (from IV c. to XVI c.), and the period of Timur and Timurids makes up only 130 years, i.e. less than ten percent of this period.<sup>26</sup>

Timur seems to be the right historical figure for the Uzbek leadership in their search for an ideal hero and founding father of the Uzbek nation: A strong leader, a unifier of various peoples and founder of a great empire covering vast territories in Central Asia and Iran. Timur's empire was a regional great power established by a strong leader. The time of the Timurids is considered to be the golden age of Uzbekistan. The recognition of Amir Timur as a great leader was not something completely new. In the 1930–1940s, the Soviet historian Yakubovsky argued that instead of celebrating the nomadic Uzbeks, who were the successors of the Golden Horde and the long time enemy of the Russians, Soviet historians should bring Amir Timur to the forefront.<sup>27</sup> Amir Timur did not immediately become a celebrated figure, due to the fact that he was a "feudal lord". Only after the dissolution of the USSR and the independence of Uzbekistan was Amir Timur finally relieved from being a "feudal lord" and, on the basis of contemporary political needs, placed on top of the pantheon of historical heroes of Uzbekistan, in spite of the fact that he was not an "Uzbek" and that his grandchildren were driven out of Uzbekistan by the "Uzbeks" themselves. The celebration of Amir Timur seems to be a consequence of the territorial understanding of the traditional Soviet historiography and the current requirements of establishing a strong and centralized nation-state.

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<sup>26</sup> Muhammadjonov & Usmonov 2005.

<sup>27</sup> Allworth 1990:241.

## Kazakhstan: Historiography under Expanding Political Interests

In the writing of the history of Kazakhstan, the territorial aspect also has a fundamental place in constructing the past. The main idea shaping the official history in Kazakhstan is that all peoples who have lived on the territory of present-day Kazakhstan had a role in the formation of the Kazakh people and that, consequently, they have a place in the history of Kazakhstan. While it is inclusive in terms of territory, it excludes peoples outside of the Kazakhstani borders. As a result, the common history with the Uzbeks as well as their branching off from the Uzbeks are deemed to be insignificant aspects of their history.

According to historical sources, both the Uzbeks and the Kazakhs originated from a conglomeration of tribes succeeding the Golden Horde and migrating from the northern steppes of the Caspian Sea to Central Asia in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century:

*When Abulkhayr had made himself master of the whole of the Dasht-i Kipchak,<sup>28</sup> he desired to remove several of the Sultans of the race Juji [...] Karai Khan and Jani Beg Khan, perceiving the intentions of Abulkhayr Khan, fled together with a few other Juji Sultans, to Moghulistan [...] On the death of Abulkhayr, differences arose between the Uzbek Ulus. As many as were able, repaired to Karai Khan and Jani Beg Khan, for the sake of peace and security: and in this way [the two khans] became very powerful. Since they have first of all separated from the mass of their people, and for some time had been in an indigent and wandering state, they got the name of Kazakh, which has clung to them [ever since]. [Elias 1972:272f.]*

The term *kazakh* corresponding to Janibeg and Karai Khan means "free and independent man, vagabond, adventurer".<sup>29</sup> At least until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it was used for independent khans or begs. The tribes called Kazakh took their name from their leaders, who acted as *kazakhs* by leaving their khan, Abulkhayr. The common name for the tribes under *kazakh* leaders transformed from "Uzbek" to

<sup>28</sup> Dast-i Kipchak: the land to the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea; realm of the Golden Horde.

<sup>29</sup> Barthold & Hazai 1999.

“Kazakh-Uzbek”, meaning Uzbeks acting as *kazakhs*, then finally to Kazakh after the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Throughout the ages, both the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks intermingled with the local people and with different newcomers. In addition, their cultures continued to diverge. Today, several centuries later, they can be considered as different nations, and, once again, the conventional territorial understanding proves its strength in the abandonment of the shared past.

## Kazakh Historiography in Textbooks

The history of Kazakhstan starts with the first human beings in present-day Kazakhstan.<sup>30</sup> Kazakh archaeologists continue to excavate ancient sites, and they are proud of having found artifacts as old as 30,000 years, which proves that the first human beings had settled in Kazakhstan long before anything happened in Russia.

During the Soviet period, when Russian culture was at the core of education, Russians were introduced as the transmitter of modernization to the “backward” Kazakh steppes. There were common history textbooks for all of the Soviet republics, and they followed historical developments from the viewpoint of Muscovite and Russian history. Kazakh history was taught in a small booklet supplemental to the history book for the last classes.<sup>31</sup>

After independence, there was increased impetus for studies in Kazakh history. New history textbooks were written, and Kazakh history became the most important course program in the education system.

Currently, an official committee of historians in the Academy of Sciences is writing a revised official Kazakh history for students and scholars. The first issue in a five-volume series of textbooks on the history of Kazakhstan starts with general ideas about scientific approaches to history and moves on to the prehistory of Kazakhstan, which is written according to the version of Kazakh history as revised by the Academy of Sciences. One of the themes introduced is the “Andronov civilization”.<sup>32</sup> The main author of the book is in fact the same

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<sup>30</sup> Turlygul et al. 2001.

<sup>31</sup> Turlugulov 1984.

<sup>32</sup> Turlygul et al. 2001.

scholar that wrote the Kazakh history book during the Soviet era (see above).<sup>33</sup> The new book, however, relies on recent excavations, which show that the history of Kazakhstan is older than that of Russia.<sup>34</sup>

The next book starts with the Iron Age in Kazakhstan and continues with other ancient civilizations, such as the Sakas, Huns, Usun, Kangly and Sarmat states. Although the territories of some of those political formations cover areas beyond the borders of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the maps and information in the book are limited to the Republic of Kazakhstan. Even in the ancient maps, the borders of the present republics are clearly drawn so as to delimit the zone of historical curiosity. The book itself begins with a map of Kazakhstan including the names of ancient states mentioned in the book.<sup>35</sup>

The book for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade differs from the first two books in terms of territoriality. Modern borders are not visible on the map, and the “Türk Khanate”, for example, is not restricted to the borders of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Chinggisid Khanate and the Golden Horde are also presented from the point of view of achievements beyond Kazakhstan.<sup>36</sup>

The textbooks for the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades cover the period from the 18<sup>th</sup> century up until 1914. In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade pupils read about the formation of Soviet authority in Kazakhstan, the establishment of the Kazakh SSR and the “Great Patriotic War” (Second World War). In the 11<sup>th</sup> class students are taught about developments in Kazakhstan during the post-war era, including the independence of Kazakhstan. In all of these books, scholarly interest is limited to “Kazakhstan” itself. Although the borders of Kazakhstan were not drawn until 1924, the subject matter is the events within the recent borders of Kazakhstan, which is coterminous with those of the Soviet period.

## Changes in Recent Historiography

In the history textbooks starting with the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the focus is on the different embodiments of “Kazakhness”. This is represented in sections about Kazakh

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<sup>33</sup> Turlugulov 1984.

<sup>34</sup> Turlygul et al. 2001.

<sup>35</sup> Turlygul et al. 2002.

<sup>36</sup> Zholdasbaev & Babaev 2003.

statehood and Kazakh civilization before annexation by the Russian Empire<sup>37</sup> and the resistance against the Russians.<sup>38</sup> The stress on these issues triggers a shift in historiography in the evaluation of the relations between Russia and the USSR, on the one hand, and the Kazakhs and Kazakhstan, on the other.

In the first decades of the USSR, the Tsarist conquest of Central Asia was denounced as an imperialist move. This approach was promulgated by the Bolshevik historian Mikhail Pokrovsky. According to him, the Bolsheviks ended Russian colonialism and brought freedom to all peoples of the USSR. After 1937, however, this assessment and Tsarist Russia became "less evil". This transition was promoted by changing party policies, and the revised historiography was intact until the independence of Kazakhstan. This can also be seen in the aforementioned history booklet from 1984, where the Russians were presented as "big brother".<sup>39</sup> This was a general trend in the Soviet historiography and in the history books of all of the nationalities of the USSR. Russians were considered to be a friendly big brother.<sup>40</sup> The argument was that the Kazakhs had been devastated by the century-old Kalmyk attacks and that the Russians saved them in these dire times.

In the revised history books of the post-independence period, the voluntary acceptance of Russian sovereignty by *Kichi Jüz*<sup>41</sup> has remained unchanged, since there is a letter sent by the khan of *Kichi Jüz* to the Tsar asking for protection.<sup>42</sup> However, the claim of the voluntary annexation of *Orta Jüz* has changed, and it is stated that they accepted Russian authority under duress.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> These issues can be seen in many chapters under titles such as "The Kazakh Khanate" and "Kazakh Civilization in the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> Centuries" (Zholdasbaev & Babaev 2003).

<sup>38</sup> For example, the revolt of Kenesary Kasymuly; see Kasymbaev 2004:77-88.

<sup>39</sup> Turlugulov 1984. There is also an illustration presenting a Russian officer with a Kazakh nomad under his arm, a picture resembling two close friends but with one under the protection of the Russian big brother. This is on the last page of the booklet, where a pictorial chronology underlines the historical epochs. The illustration symbolizes the "voluntary incorporation" of the Kazakhs into the Russian Empire.

<sup>40</sup> Mazour 1971:104.

<sup>41</sup> Kazakh society is divided into three subsections or hordes called *jüz*. *Kichi Jüz* means 'Junior Horde', *Orta Jüz* 'Middle Horde', and *Ulu Jüz* 'Senior Horde'.

<sup>42</sup> Kasymbaev 2004:15.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*:19-21.



The position of the Kazakh khans also changed. During the Soviet period they were judged as oppressive feudal lords, but with the revision they became national heroes of the independence struggle against the Russian colonialists.<sup>44</sup>

## Popularization of Historical Heritage in Public Places

These new trends in history writing are manifested not only in history books but also in other books, celebrations, souvenirs and monuments in public places. The main square in Almaty is decorated with ten plates representing historical turning points in Kazakhstani history. They surround a long obelisk in the middle of the square. Atop the obelisk stands the most important figure in ancient Kazakh history, *Altyn Adam* ("Golden Man"). In a burial site near Almaty a warrior, most probably a prince (or princess) of the Sakas or Scythians, was found buried with his (or her) golden arms and costume. The elaborate craftsmanship of the artifacts is proof of a developed civilization as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Later, more burial sites were found in various places within the borders of present-day Kazakhstan. Today their replicas<sup>45</sup> are displayed in the main hall of the History Museum in Almaty welcoming visitors. Those golden warriors do not only reveal the glory of ancient Kazakhstan, but they also show that the reach of this ancient state corresponds to the reach of present-day Kazakhstan. The understanding of the formation of Kazakh identity is concomitant with the views of the Soviet era on territoriality – that all peoples who have lived within the current borders of Kazakhstan up until the Kazakh Khanates are considered to be ancestors of the Kazakh nation. In a poster found in schools, the genealogical tree of the Kazakhs represents this inclusive understanding very well. The tree can be studied in three main sections: the center, the branches and the trunk together with the roots. At the center lies the term Kazakh surrounded by Alash and Turik (Turks). The tree has three main branches, one for each *Jüz* (*Akarys*, *Bekarys* and *Janarys*),<sup>46</sup> and many sub-branches connecting all of the tribes through the main branches to the

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<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*:77–88.

<sup>45</sup> The originals are kept in the state treasury.

<sup>46</sup> Father Alash is considered to be the ancestor of all Kazakhs. He had three sons (*Akarys*, *Bekarys* and *Janarys*), who became the ancestors of the three main branches (*jüz*) of Kazakhs.

trunk of the tree. It has three roots (*Scythians*, *Sakas* and *Huns*) representing the ancient tribal confederations that reigned over the land of modern Kazakhstan. The trunk connecting the ancient empires to recent tribes forms the historical continuity between the ancient and the present peoples of Kazakhstan. It consists of tribes (Sarmat, Massaget, Alan, Kangly, Oghuz, Karluk, Turgesh, Kypchak, and others) with various ethnic and linguistic differences. However, it is not their origin that is crucial, but rather the fact that they have all lived within a certain territory.

This inclusiveness applies to historical figures as well. Coterminous with the Soviet tradition, scientists, writers and musicians of previous periods are honored with sculptures in public places and pictures in educational bodies, such as the brilliant Islamic thinker, Al-Farabi (870–950), the legendary story-teller Korkyt Ata, the musician Kurmangazy Sagyrbayev (1818–1889), the father of Kazakh social sciences Chockan Velikhanov (Shoqan Walikhanov in Kazakh spelling, 1835–1865), the poet and reformer Abai Qunanbaiuli (or Kunanbaev, 1845–1904), the writer Mukhtar Auezov (1897–1961), and others. This territorial inclusiveness, however, has its limits, and it does not extend to the peoples that moved to Kazakhstan after the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Germans, Uighurs, Dungans, Ahyska Turks (Meskhetians), and Koreans. The Kalmyk (Jungar) attack in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> centuries unified and merged the Kazakhs, closing the inclusiveness of their *Jüz* organization to newcomers. The inclusiveness of the peoples of Kazakhstan is manifested at another level. They are all citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan as *Kazakhstanis*, as is also reflected in the National History Museum in Almaty. The museum welcomes its visitors with the Golden Man at the main entrance, and on the top floor, which is devoted to the Republic of Kazakhstan, all of the peoples of Kazakhstan are presented in individual sections.

Today, Kazakh historiography shows a tendency to pass beyond the limits of territoriality. The study of Kypchaks outside of Kazakhstani borders is promoted by the President. The khan of the European Huns, Attila, is presented as a figure in the history of Kazakhstan. More than two decades after independence, while still dealing with the problems of state-building, Kazakhstan has great goals of becoming the leading country at the heart of Eurasia. History education may well also be revised so as to encompass areas beyond Kazakhstani borders considered to have been ruled by ancestors of Kazakhstan.

## Expanding and Deepening New Histories beyond Territorial Boundaries

The dissolution of the USSR created a need for the ruling elite to present a new social bond and new motivation for the people to live as united and proud citizens of a newly-born republic. The historiography is clearly influenced by the requirements of the process of state- and nation-building.

Continuity in territoriality is partly related to the very need of founding a state within existing borders. The conventional territorial understanding cannot be regarded merely as an external influence adopted from the Soviet period, since it is also a product of internal demands. In Azerbaijan the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and the conflict with Armenians created a need for a claim on the territory and on its Turkicness. In Uzbekistan, the fact that it was divided by age-old boundaries of different khanates with perceived risks for regionalism, and, in Kazakhstan, the fact that the Slavic majority spread to northern and central Kazakhstan as well as to urban centers triggered the need to justify existing borders. The primary goal was to claim the legitimacy of a state within given borders. Today, on the other hand, history books seem to be based on greater visions. In Azerbaijan, the history of greater Azerbaijan together with Iranian Azerbaijan as well as the history of all Turkic/Turkoman dynasties stemming from greater Azerbaijan are both considered to be part of Azerbaijani history.

In Uzbekistan, the territory of relevance in the teaching of Uzbek history is expanding southward. The period under Amir Timur and his successors is glorified. This was one of the rare periods when Uzbekistan was united under a strong leader, with the capital Samarkand, now in Uzbekistan, becoming "the pearl of the Silk Road". The Timurids were able to conquer vast territories and become a regional great power in Central Asia and the Near East.

In Kazakhstan, the aim is to become the rising power of Eurasia. Recent studies based on new archaeological excavations claim to prove that Kazakhstani culture is much older than Russian civilization. On the other hand, they are expanding the sphere of interest by including the glories of all of the tribes that constituted the Kazakh people. Historiography in Kazakhstan is, thus, on its way to becoming a field that studies not only the past of peoples who lived on the territory of modern Kazakhstan, irrespective of ethnic origin, but also the past of all of the Kazakh tribes, irrespective of the land that they lived on.

Historiography in these three ex-Soviet countries is a reflection of the process of state formation. It is a dynamic process that is open to changes in the coming years due to new findings in history and due to the changing political needs of the individual states.

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# History-Writing and History-Making in Azerbaijan

## *Some Reflections on the Past Two Decades of Independence<sup>1</sup>*

ZAUR GASIMOV

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the opportunity arose for Azerbaijani historians to apply a new perspective to their country's past – before, during and after the Communist era. The history of Azerbaijan's short-lived independence during 1918–1920 was, and remains, among the favorite research topics. In addition, the subject of Karabakh and the history of Southern Azerbaijan (Northern provinces of Iran) figure prominently in the research agenda of historians. Obstacles to their work include the fact that many Azerbaijani historians have a limited command of foreign languages, problems created by the authoritarian conditions imposed by the Əliyev regime and corruption in the country's science and educational system.

Azerbaijani historiography was, up until the present day, a subject of research within the field of historiography in Azerbaijan itself,<sup>2</sup> within East European (Osteuropaforschung<sup>3</sup>) and Oriental Studies (Orientalistik/Turkologie<sup>4</sup>) in Germany, Turkey<sup>5</sup> and to some extent in Russia.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a revised and expanded version of my paper Gasimov 2009.

<sup>2</sup> See Xəlili 2010; Alizade 2011.

<sup>3</sup> See Gasimov 2011.

## Writing History in the Soviet Era

During the Soviet era, Azerbaijani historiography developed within the paradigms of Marxist theory, which considered historical development to be the result of a permanent struggle between the classes. Most Soviet Azerbaijani historians (for instance, Püstə Əzizbəyova<sup>7</sup>) viewed Russia and the Soviet Union as progressive forces. They glorified Russia's "progressive proletariat" and intelligentsia for having a positive impact on the modernization of Azerbaijan from the time of colonization in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as after the beginning of sovietization in the early 1920s.<sup>8</sup> The view of history as a permanent class struggle at times took absurd turns, such as when Azerbaijani historians described the 8<sup>th</sup> century anti-Arab rebel Babek as a "pre-Communist leader" simply because he used red banners.

Soviet historiography and school history textbooks published during the Soviet occupation described almost all personalities in Azerbaijan's past that criticized Islam and that had any affiliation to Russia as particularly enlightened. Soviet Azerbaijani historians condemned the period of the short-lived independence of Azerbaijan in 1918–1920 as anti-national. To mark the anniversaries of the October Revolution or the beginning of the sovietization campaign in Azerbaijan, the authorities produced a huge number of publications praising the "eternal friendship" between Azerbaijanis and Russians.

## "Perestroika" in Azerbaijani Historiography<sup>9</sup>

These trends dominated until the Perestroika years, 1988–1989, when a number of young Azerbaijani historians began to publish articles presenting an alternative

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<sup>4</sup> See Adam 2005; Morozova 2005.

<sup>5</sup> See Hacisalihoglu 2012.

<sup>6</sup> See Shnirelman 2003.

<sup>7</sup> The modern Azerbaijani alphabet was first introduced during the rule of the Azerbaijani Popular Front (1992–1993) and then reaffirmed in 2000. This alphabet is based on Turkish orthography, even though it has several special letters and sounds that Turkish does not have, for example, *ə* (cf. Persian *a* in *zamin*) and *x* (cf. German *ch* in *Dach*).

<sup>8</sup> See Azizbekova et al. 1969.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix 3.

view of history. During this period, it became fashionable to examine topics that were previously considered taboo. Historians such as Nəsib Nəsibli (in the 1990s Nəsibzadə),<sup>10</sup> Nəsiman Yaqublu,<sup>11</sup> Şirməmməd Hüseynov and Cəmil Həsənlı published several articles and booklets on the foreign policy of the Azerbaijani government in 1918–1920 and on its leader Məmmədəmin Rəsulzadə (1884–1955). These authors completely revised the historical role of Russia. They portrayed the role of the Soviet Union in annexing Azerbaijani territory and eliminating its independent statehood as negatively as the Tsarist Empire's colonial war against the Azerbaijani Khanates in the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Challenged by the liberalization brought about by Gorbachev's Glasnost and the conflict with Armenia over Karabakh, the main journal published by the Institute of History became a forum for Azerbaijani historians who sought to revise the national version of history. The Karabakh issue became a point of contention for historians on both sides. The young historian, İsa Qəmbər, and one of the patriarchs of the Soviet Azerbaijani historiography and Oriental Studies, Ziya Bünyadov (1923–1997), were particularly active in the debates with their Armenian counterparts. They challenged the artificially propagated myths of the “eternal friendship of all Soviet nationalities” and thereby exposed the existence of nationalism among the non-Russian nations in the USSR.

During this period, the Faculty of History<sup>12</sup> at Baku State University (BSU) became the second most important institution for the writing of history after the Bakıxanov Institute at the National Academy of Sciences. The Faculty of History<sup>13</sup> is the oldest center for historical research in Azerbaijan; it opened when the national government founded the university in the fall of 1919. By remaining

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<sup>10</sup> Nəsibzadə 1990.

<sup>11</sup> Yaqublu 1991.

<sup>12</sup> The Baku noble Abbasqulu Ağa Bakıxanov (1794–1847) founded Azerbaijani historiography (*tarixşünaslıq*) by writing a booklet about the history of Azerbaijan and Dagestan entitled “Gülüstani-İrəm” in Farsi (translated by M. Ələskərli and published in Azerbaijani in 1951, again in 2000 in Latin script). Bakıxanov was engaged as a translator by the Tsarist authorities in Tiflis. He translated the peace negotiations between the Persians and Russians in 1828, which resulted in the division of the territory settled by the ethnic Azerbaijanis. The Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan was named after Bakıxanov and has been regarded as the main institution for the writing of history in the republic ever since its founding in 1945.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 1.



in the shadow of the Bakıxanov Institute, the faculty gained more freedom to evaluate Azerbaijan's past.

The events of January 1990, when Soviet troops intervened in Baku and killed more than one hundred people, marked the beginning of a new period for Azerbaijani historians. From that time on, the works of émigré and Western historians began to appear in the major historical journals in Baku. In particular, translations of works by the Polish-American historian Tadeusz Świetochowski about "Russian Azerbaijan in 1905–1920"<sup>14</sup> were published and had a strong impact on Azerbaijani historiography. His work had originally been published in the USA and was based on detailed research in the archives of Europe and Baku. Świetochowski visited Soviet Baku in the 1980s and was well known at the Academy of Sciences.<sup>15</sup> As his field of research was devoted to the period of Azerbaijani independence in 1918–1920, his works became very popular once the Soviet Union disintegrated and critical research into this formerly taboo area became possible.

Almost revolutionary were the publications about the Azerbaijani legions, soldiers serving on the side of the German Wehrmacht against the Soviet Army. Questioning the meaning of the "Great Patriotic War" represented nothing less than a total break with probably the most important legacy of Soviet history. Other topics that Azerbaijani historians no longer feared to broach were the Stalinist repressions against the Azerbaijani intelligentsia in the 1930s and the activities of Azerbaijani émigrés in interwar Europe. Articles written by Məmmədəmin Rəsulzadə and other émigrés (Cahangir Zeynalöglü, Mirza Bala, Hilal Munsch) during their stay in Poland, Germany and Turkey were published for the first time in Azerbaijan, and Azerbaijani historians wrote introductory texts for these publications.

Yet, the period of 1989–1991 was also an ambivalent one for Azerbaijani historiography. On the one hand, this period witnessed the publication of books and historical essays, such as those by Manaf Süleymanov (1912–2001)<sup>16</sup> and Fəzıl Rəhmanzadə,<sup>17</sup> who criticized the Stalinist regime and described the policy

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<sup>14</sup> Świetochowski 1985.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Tadeusz Świetochowski in Warsaw on 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2009. Vilayət Quliyev, who worked at the Academy of Sciences in the 1980s and met Świetochowski there in 1983, translated parts of "Russian Azerbaijan, 1905–1920" into Azerbaijani and published them in 1989 in Baku.

<sup>16</sup> Süleymanov 1989.

<sup>17</sup> Rəhmanzadə 1991.

of russification in frank detail. On the other hand, Soviet ideology did not disappear overnight; the military historian Rizvan Zeynalov published in 1991 his dissertation on the development of the Azerbaijani army in 1920–1941 that corresponded completely with the Marxist-Leninist approach.<sup>18</sup>

## Orientation towards Azerbaijan's Ancient Roots

In 1992, when the Popular Front Movement with the orientalist Əbülfəz Elçibəy (1938–2000) at its head came to power, Azerbaijani historiography focused on the Turkic-speaking world. The philosophical book-length essay by the Kazakh writer Olzhas Suleymenov, "AziYa" was translated into Azerbaijani, and studies of Dədə-Qorqud were dominant in historical and literary research. Elçibəy saw Azerbaijan as a crown of the Turkic world and was known for his pro-Turkic as well as for his anti-Russian and anti-Persian position. For Azerbaijani historians and philologists who were members of the National Liberation Movement in the 1980s and the first political parties of Müsavat and the Popular Front, this signified a revolt against "Indo-European domination".

Some historians began to concentrate on the pre-history of Turkic settlements in the Caucasus region and revised the Soviet approach represented in Azerbaijan by the historian Iqrar Əliyev (1924–2004). After 1960, Iqrar Əliyev published several works on the history of Media (1960), Albania (1962) and Atropathene (1989). The Median state, which is considered to be a proto-Azerbaijani state formation, was established by an Iranian-speaking population, according to Əliyev. The opinion that Media and the more ancient state formation Manna were settled by Turkic tribes became dominant under Elçibəy. The key representative of this school was Professor Yusif Yusifov (1929–1998) of the Pedagogical Higher School in Baku, and Əliyev's attacks against it failed. Yusifov, an ancient history specialist, co-authored together with Sərraf Kərimov in 1987 a manual of toponymy, explaining the semantic origins of historical names for cities in the Caucasus.

In 1994, Yusifov, together with Bünyadov, published the "History of Azerbaijan from ancient times until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century",<sup>19</sup> which

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<sup>18</sup> Zeynalov 1990.

<sup>19</sup> Bünyadov & Yusifov 1994.

was accepted at the universities of Azerbaijan as a manual on Azerbaijani history. It continues to serve as the dominant historical narrative in Azerbaijan. Some historians concentrated intensively on Turkic and Central Asian history. Similar to the period at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Baku became the second most important center of Turanism after Istanbul. The books of the Turkish thinker, and one of the co-founders of Turanism, Ziya Gökalp, were translated into Azerbaijani and published in Baku, and his life work was discussed in school history books.<sup>20</sup> In addition, books on Azerbaijani and Central Asian history written by Azerbaijani and Turkish historians in Turkey were brought to Azerbaijan.

## The Nationalization of History

Under Elçibəy, a further de-sovietization of Azerbaijani historiography occurred. This movement dropped a number of terms that were commonly used in Soviet historiography. For example, the war between the Soviet Union and Germany was no longer called the "Great Patriotic War" but simply referred to as World War II. The sovietization of Azerbaijan beginning in 1920 was now called the "April occupation" (*Aprel istilası*).

At the same time, the main principles of Azerbaijani historiography survived the collapse of the Soviet Union. Azerbaijani historians saw their country's past in the context of an old civilization – five thousand years of age, with Azerbaijan being looked upon as the heir of Media, Atropathene, and Caucasian Albania. Furthermore, state formations that existed under Arab rule and afterwards on the territory of modern Azerbaijan, such as the state of Atabeks,<sup>21</sup> Shirvan-Shahs<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The historian Aydın Əbiyev published the first biography of Gökalp in Azerbaijani, where the name is spelled Göyalp; see Əbiyev 2006.

<sup>21</sup> The monograph by Ziya Bünyadov is still considered to be a fundamental work on this issue. See Bünyadov 1989. It was a translation into Azerbaijani from the original text of his Ph. D. thesis written in Russian, which was published by Bünyadov in 1965 in Moscow. Another book by Bünyadov on the latter period was published in Russian in 1978 and in Azerbaijani in 1985. See Bünyadov 1985.

<sup>22</sup> See Aşurböyli 1998.

and the medieval states of Ağ Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu,<sup>23</sup> were assumed to have had relations with European states.

Currently, Baku historians such as Fəridə Məmmədova (Farida Mamedova)<sup>24</sup> and the archaeologist Rəşid Göyüşov, are actively exploring both the religious traditions of monotheist Caucasian Albania, where Christianity is as old as the Armenian and Georgian Churches and where there was strong resistance to Islamization under the Arabs, and Islamic traditions, particularly those under Shah Ismail Khatai (İsmail Xətai).

In 1993 a monument for Khatai was inaugurated in one of the districts of Baku. Khatai, an ethnic Azerbaijani from the Safavid dynasty, ruled the Persian Empire and is regarded as one of the founders of classical Azerbaijani literature, since he wrote several poems in Azerbaijani. He remains a favorite subject of research for many historians of literature as well. While many acknowledge Azerbaijan's ancient history, most historians concentrate their research on the period of the late 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## Main Trends in Modern Historical Writing

Several current trends can be discerned in modern Azerbaijani historiography: *Karabakh*: Karabakh (*qara* 'black', *bağ* 'garden') – a tiny mountainous region in Caucasus Minor – is a place of shared Armenian-Azerbaijani history. Governed by the Muslim nobles, Karabakh, with its mixed population of Azerbaijanis, Kurds, and Armenians, was made a Russian province in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It became a borderland between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, where both sides competed for political and cultural control over the region. There were mortal clashes between the Armenian and Azerbaijani armies in 1918–1920, when the two nations existed as independent states. Karabakh was a part of the Republic of Azerbaijan from 1918 till 1920. After Armenia and Azerbaijan became Soviet-

<sup>23</sup> See Mahmudov 1991.

<sup>24</sup> Fəridə Məmmədova's monograph on Caucasian Albania emerged in 1977. In 1993, she published her *opus magnum* on the historical geography of Albania in 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC – 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. Her last publication "Caucasian Albania and Albanians" (Mamedova 2005) led to a broad discussion at the Bakxanov-Institute of History. The head of the Institute Yaqub Mahmudov criticized the book by Məmmədova for being pro-Armenian, inasmuch as she had shown the neighboring state of Caucasian Albania – Greater Armenia – on the maps published in the book.

governed in 1920, Karabakh was included in the Republic of Azerbaijan, while Zangezur – a borderland region between Armenia, Iran and Azerbaijan – became Armenian. The population of Soviet Karabakh, which had an autonomous status within the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, was mostly Armenian. During the Perestroika period, the Armenian national movement laid claim to Karabakh as well as Armenian-populated regions in Southern Georgia (Samtskhe-Javakheti). These claims, together with mass deportations of ethnic Azerbaijanis from Armenia, led to anti-Armenian pogroms in Baku and Sumgait in 1989. The war between Armenians and Azerbaijanis continued after the collapse of the USSR and ended in May 1994, when a cease-fire agreement was signed between Baku and Yerevan. Due to the war, Azerbaijan lost control over Karabakh as well as over several surrounding provinces. The numerous Armenian communities of Baku, Sumgait and other Azerbaijani cities and the Azerbaijani population of Armenia became refugees and internally displaced persons. Many of them are still living in refugee camps in rural regions of both countries. France, the USA and Russia are members of the so-called Minsk Group which aims at a peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict. The co-chairs of the Minsk Group visit Armenia and Azerbaijan regularly, and they arrange meetings between the presidents of the two countries. The negotiation process has been going on in this fashion since 1994, but without any evident success thus far. Armenia claims an independent status for Karabakh by arguing in terms of the right of self-determination, while Azerbaijan insists on the principle of territorial integrity, which excludes any independent status, but offers broad autonomy for Karabakh.<sup>25</sup>

Without a doubt, the history of Karabakh and its political, economic and social development have been key topics of Azerbaijani historiography. This issue has been omnipresent since the beginning of the conflict over Karabakh in the 1980s. Prominent historians such as Ziya Bünyadov and Iqarar Əliyev as well as the historian-geographers Budaq Budaqov (1928–2012) and Gıyasəddin Geybullayev wrote about the Karabakh issue in the 1990s, although neither regional history nor contemporary history was their main field of specialization.

In the last decade, a new generation of Karabakh historians emerged in Azerbaijan. In 2004 Zemfira Hacıyeva (Gadzhieva) published her analysis of the

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<sup>25</sup> For more reading about the history of the Karabakh conflict, see De Waal 2003 and Leeuw 2000.

Tsarist description of the Karabakh province of 1823.<sup>26</sup> In 2005 the historian and ethnographer Arif Yunusov published a book on past and present Karabakh in English.<sup>27</sup> A year later, Mamedov and Musaev published a monograph on the history of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Karabakh in Tula.<sup>28</sup> In the context of Karabakh, Azerbaijani historians, such as the Iranist Solmaz Rüstəмова-Tohidi (Rustamova-Togidi), focused intensively on the ethnic clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis that took place in Baku in March 1918.<sup>29</sup> The main trend in writings on Karabakh is the ambition to demonstrate its historical bond with the Azerbaijani khanates and state, the Azerbaijani-speaking population as well as its significance for Azerbaijani culture with Shusha as its center.

*Local history:* Local history has gained importance in present-day Azerbaijan. Historians write about the provinces of Nakhichevan, Zangezur, Shusha and Yerevan, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had an ethnically mixed population (mostly Armenians, Muslim and Yezidi Kurds, and Azerbaijanis). Local history has also become an attractive topic. Baku is still the favorite subject of new studies, and the treatise on Baku in the Middle Ages by the historian Sara Aşurbəyli (1906–2001) remains the fundamental research work on the city's history.<sup>30</sup> More publications about the history of the villages around Baku, like the city of Maştağa, have recently emerged. Research on the local history of Nakhichevan has a clear political context, since the president's family is of Nakhichevani descent and this region was of paramount importance in Heydər Əliyev's political career after 1990–1991. Studies of other cities and cultural centers, e.g. Gandja and Shamakhy, are mostly a product of initiatives taken by younger historians.

*Russian and Soviet colonization:* Studies of Russian and Soviet colonization, settlement policy in Azerbaijan and repressions against Azerbaijani cultural elites in the 1930s constitute key trends in post-independence Azerbaijani

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<sup>26</sup> Gadzhieva 2004.

<sup>27</sup> Yunusov 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Mamedov & Musaev 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Rustamova-Togidi 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Aşurbəyli 1998.

historiography, particularly since the publication of the bibliography of sources on Azerbaijani history prepared by the historian Süleyman Əliyarov.<sup>31</sup> This publication includes documents on the colonial policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and reveals the strong feelings held in Azerbaijani society. In 1990, the same collection of documents was published in Russian translation. Three years later, in 1993, Ziya Bünyadov's book *Qırmızı terror* ('Red Terror') appeared in bookstores in Baku.<sup>32</sup> In 1998, the historian Məmməd Cəfərli (Mamed Dzhafarli) published his work on the "Political Terror and the Destiny of Azerbaijan's Germans".<sup>33</sup> More recently, fundamental works by contemporary historians Eldar İsmailov (1950–2014)<sup>34</sup> and Cəmil Həsənlı<sup>35</sup> on the Stalinist and post-Stalinist regime in Azerbaijan have emerged.

*Military history:* The examination of military history was one innovation in Azerbaijani historiography prior to 1991. During the Soviet occupation and shortly after 1991, Azerbaijani historians published some books, including Steklov's 1927 polemic volume on the Musavat Army<sup>36</sup> and Musa Qasımlı's work on World Wars I and II.<sup>37</sup> Once neglected, military history is now becoming more popular. Azerbaijani military traditions during the first period of independence are a particularly popular theme. The development of the army in 1918 and the biographies of Tsarist military leaders of Azerbaijani descent are favorite topics. In 1991, Pərvin (Parvin) Darabadi published his dissertation on the military aspects of Azerbaijani history at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> Other key works on the military are devoted to the first Republic, its military ministers and World War II. Nəsiman Yaqublu published the biography of Fətəlibəy-Düdənginskiy, the Azerbaijani officer who served both in the German and the Soviet armies during World War II, and remained in Europe after its end

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<sup>31</sup> Əliyarov [1989] 2007.

<sup>32</sup> Bünyadov 1993.

<sup>33</sup> Dzhafarli 1997.

<sup>34</sup> İsmailov 2003.

<sup>35</sup> Həsənlı 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Steklov 1927.

<sup>37</sup> The historian Musa Qasımlı (Baku State University) is the first scholar to write about World War I in Azerbaijani (Qasımlı 2000–2004). The author focuses not only on the policy of the regional powers in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan but also on the international process at that time.

<sup>38</sup> Darabadi 1991.

and was eliminated by the Soviet KGB in the 1950s.<sup>39</sup> In the same year, Yaqublu published a book on the liberation of Baku from the Bolsheviks by Ottoman and Azerbaijani troops in September 1918.<sup>40</sup> A writer and essayist, Qilman İlkin (1914–2009), wrote a book on the “Turkish troops in Baku” in 2003.<sup>41</sup> Şəmistan Nəzirli and Nailə Vəlixanlı are the most famous military historians of the republic. In 2004–2006 Nəzirli published two books on the officer Yadiqarov and on General Şixlinski and published a monograph on persecuted military figures.<sup>42</sup> Nəzirli has been writing short articles about military history in Baku-based newspapers, such as “Ayna” and “525ci qəzet”. Vəlixanlı edited the catalogue “Azerbaijani generals”, which was published by the Academy of Sciences in 2005.<sup>43</sup> These attempts on the part of Azerbaijani historians to focus on military history are, of course, also part of the post-communist search for identity, which was damaged by the defeats during the Armenian-Azerbaijani war over Karabakh.

## Populist History-Writing during the Əliyev Dynasty

Since the unstable democracy under Elçibəy transformed itself into stable authoritarianism under Əliyev senior (1993–2003) and junior (since 2003), Azerbaijani historiography assumed a new field, which can hardly be claimed to be objective. In the past decade alone, Azerbaijani historians have produced a huge number of pseudo-scientific publications on Əliyev. Dozens of Əliyev biographers have described the life of the “Ulu öndər” (‘Great Leader’) of Azerbaijan. Among them, one can find the publicist Elmira Axundova, who has been working on a six-volume biography of Heydər Əliyev and regularly publishes short articles about his career in a variety of periodicals.<sup>44</sup>

The head of the Bakıxanov Institute, Yaqub Mahmudov, stresses the role of Əliyev in Azerbaijani history in his publications, interviews and public lectures.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Yaqublu 2008a.

<sup>40</sup> Yaqublu 2008b.

<sup>41</sup> İlkin 2003.

<sup>42</sup> Nəzirli 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Vəlixanlı 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Axundova 2013.

<sup>45</sup> Mahmudlu 2005. The publication is quite polemic.



A huge photo of the former President adorns the homepage of the Department of History at Baku State University (BSU), and announcements of the school history textbooks published and edited by Mahmudov in the past decade can be found there.

As during the period since Perestroika, the theme of the first Republic (1918–1920) and its leader Rəsulzadə is still in fashion. At the same time, the Bakıxanov Institute,<sup>46</sup> the BSU History Department and other institutions try to concentrate on the history of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic while neglecting to give prominent attention to Rəsulzadə, who is a potential rival of Heydər Əliyev as an “Azerbaijani Atatürk”. Nevertheless, the historians close to the Müsavat and Popular Front parties (Yaqublu, Balayev) continue to publish actively on this theme. After the main works of Rəsulzadə written in Turkish, Azerbaijani and Russian from the time of his exile were reprinted in Baku at the beginning of the 1990s, historians began to analyze the different aspects of Rəsulzadə’s thinking, including religion, language, philosophical views and political orientations.

Azerbaijani historians during the Perestroika period devoted considerable attention to the topic of Turan, which had been taboo earlier. At the moment, it is still of interest but is no longer as popular as it once was. The basic works of Turanist authors, such as Ziya Gökalp,<sup>47</sup> Yusuf Akçuraoğlu,<sup>48</sup> and Əli Bey Hüseynzadə,<sup>49</sup> have been translated into Azerbaijani and were reprinted in Baku in 2006 and 2007.

A number of other topics attract considerable attention. “Ayrılıq” is the title of one of the most famous songs in Azerbaijan and means ‘partition’ and ‘separation’. Initially performed by the Ardabil-born female singer Rübabə Muradova (1933–1983), “Ayrılıq” remains in the repertoire of Flora Kərimova. It refers to the partition of the Azerbaijani territories between Russia and Persia in 1813–1828. Both during the Soviet occupation and in post-Soviet Azerbaijan, this topic remained a key part of Azerbaijani historiography. In 1990, the historian Şövkət Tağıyeva published a monograph on the Tabriz rebellion of

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<sup>46</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>47</sup> Göyalp 1991.

<sup>48</sup> Akçuraoğlu 2006.

<sup>49</sup> Hüseynzadə 2008.

1920.<sup>50</sup> The medievalist Kərim Şükürov published the chronology of the *Türk-məncay* treaty of 1828.<sup>51</sup> All of the history textbooks for secondary schools and universities have a map of the “United Azerbaijan”, which includes the modern Republic of Azerbaijan and the so-called “Southern Azerbaijan”, the territory of Iran inhabited by ethnic Azerbaijanis (including the cities of Tabriz, Ardabil, Urmıyya and Maraga).

Generally speaking, Azerbaijani historiography changed considerably after the emancipation period of Perestroika and the restitution of state sovereignty in 1991. These changes are clearly visible, not only in the themes of most dissertations and historical publications, but also in the way history is taught in schools and in the way history books are written. Even the language is different: while most historical articles and books before 1991 were written in Russian, the great majority of publications in modern Azerbaijan now appear in Azerbaijani.

## Concluding Remarks: Shortcomings in Modern Azerbaijani Historiography

Despite some positive changes, Azerbaijani historiography continues to suffer from a vast number of problems:

First, Azerbaijani historians, like their Russian and Central Asian colleagues, have to work in an authoritarian state, which severely limits the freedom of scientific expression. Contemporary Azerbaijani historians are not allowed to write objectively about the 1970s and 1980s and the period after 1993, since Heydər Əliyev was in office during those times (eventually followed by his son), which means that authors are obliged to depict these periods in positive terms. In reality, the 1970s and 1980s are characterized by total stagnation throughout the entire USSR, including Azerbaijan, and the 1990s are marked with immense losses for Azerbaijan in the war with Armenia and the crackdown on democracy.

Second, the knowledge of foreign languages among historians in Baku leaves much to be desired. An overwhelming majority of them are only able to read Russian and Turkish. That is one of the reasons why most Azerbaijani historians have rather poor contacts with other research institutions abroad. As a

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<sup>50</sup> Tağıyeva 1990.

<sup>51</sup> Şükürov 2006.

consequence, they do not have access to the international publications on Azerbaijani history that have recently emerged.

Third, the problem of corruption is pervasive, not only throughout the educational system at Azerbaijan's universities, but also in research institutes at the Academy of Sciences. Some students rely on bribes to complete their Ph. D. and post-doctoral programs.

*Appendix 1. Faculty of History, Baku State University*<sup>52</sup>

Departments	Foundation Year	At present headed by (name and year of birth)
Archaeology and ethnography	1947–1948	Qüdrət İsmayılzadə (1934)
Countries of Asia and Africa	1922, re-organized in 1965	Məhəd Sofiyev (1932)
History of Azerbaijan (for arts and humanities)	1941	Azad Rzayev (1952)
History of Azerbaijan (for exact sciences)	2001	Mehman Abdullayev (1958)
Study of Sources and Historiography of the History of Azerbaijan and Methodology	1980	Anar İsgəndərov (1958)
New and Modern History of the Countries of Europe and America	1919, 1979	Məmməd Fətəliyev (1938)
Ancient and Middle Ages History	1981	Yaqub Mahmudov (1939)
History of the Slavic Countries	1977 founded as a Chair of Soviet history; 1992 renamed to Eastern European History Department; 2001 renamed to History of Slavic countries	Tofiq Vəliyev (1934)
History of Turkish Peoples	1992 separated from the Chair of Soviet History; since 2012 established as a separate chair	Əsməd Muxtarova <sup>53</sup> (1944)
History of Caucasian Peoples	2012	İradə Hüseynova (1963)

<sup>52</sup> The data are from the official internet page <http://history.bsu.edu.az/> (15.11.2012).

<sup>53</sup> Muxtarova is an editor-in-chief of the academic journal on history, *Tarix və onun problemləri* [History and its Problems], which is published four times a year.

*Appendix 2. Bakıxanov Institute of History, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Azerbaijan*<sup>54</sup>

Departments	Foundation Year	At present headed by (name and year of birth)
Ancient History of Azerbaijan	1947; re-organized in 1957	Kamal Əliyev (1927)
Medieval History of Azerbaijan	1947; re-organized in 1957	Oqtay Əfədiyev (1926)
New History of Azerbaijan	1947	Hacı Həsənov (1952)
Modern History of Azerbaijan	1936 as Soviet History Section	Adil Məmmədov (1929)
History of Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan	1990	Nigar Maksvell (1954)
Heydər Əliyev Scientific Research Unit	2008	Ədalət Qasımov (1956)
Historical Geography of Azerbaijan	2002	Fəridə Məmmədova (1936)
History of Azerbaijan's foreign relations (since the 18 <sup>th</sup> century)	2002	Həsən Əlibəyli (1940)
History of the Caucasus (since the 18 <sup>th</sup> century)	2002	İradə Bağirova (1956)
Social History and Historical Demography	2011	Kərim Şükürov (1956)
History of Karabakh	2011	Qasım Hacıyev (1950)
History of Azerbaijani Diaspora	2002	Məryəm Seyidbəyli (1955)
Universal History (2 sections: History of Europe and Russia, American History Research)	2010	Tofiq Mustafazadə (1949)
Derbent History Research Group	2002 within the Department "History of the Caucasus"	Şahin Fərzəliyev (1940)
Borçalı History Research Group	2002 within the Department "History of the Caucasus"	Hacı Həsənov (1952)

<sup>54</sup> This institute was originally founded as the Association for Study and Exploration of Azerbaijan (*Azərbaycanı Tədqiq və Tətbib Cəmiyyəti*) in 1923. The data are from the official internet page <http://www.istoriya.az/index.php> (15.11.2012).

Appendix 3. A cover page (6/1989) of the popular journal *Azərbaycan. Ədəbi-bədii jurnal* [Azerbaijan. Journal of Literature and Arts], published by the Azerbaijani SSR Writers' Union.<sup>55</sup>



Росмн Һәсәнәгә МӘММӘДОВ.

<sup>55</sup> The painter Həsənəgə Məmmədov projected the "Great Azerbaijan" by including Derbent, Tabriz and Ardabil onto the map of an imaginary Azerbaijan. All three of the alphabets for Azerbaijani used at different points of time, are to be found on this cover: Arabic-Persian characters appear at the top of the illustration; the names of "Azerbaijani" cities as well as the name of a fictional state *Səfəvi Azərbaycan Dövləti* are written in Latin script; and the name of the painter is in Cyrillic beneath the drawing. All newspapers and journals were printed in "Russian letters" until the end of the 1990s.

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# Image and Influence

## The Politics of Nation-Branding in Uzbekistan

ANITA SENGUPTA

Interest in the concept and practice of nation-branding has proliferated in recent years as more and more governments around the world attempt to harness the power of commercial branding techniques in order to improve their country's image and reputation across a wide range of sectors.<sup>1</sup> History, of course, is replete with vignettes that are reminiscent of place branding. The French state has undergone regular re-branding exercises. Other examples include the remarkable transformation of the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's modern Turkey and of the USSR to the Russian Federation. While it is true that nations have always sought to promote their economic, diplomatic and military interests, it is only in the last decade that nations have turned to the explicit use of the techniques of branding. Terms such as 'brand image' and 'brand identity' are increasingly being used to describe the perceptions that are held of nations among their "stakeholders". This eruption of the vocabulary of branding into the international affairs of nations has not occurred without skepticism regarding the appropriateness and relevance of such overtly commercial practices.<sup>2</sup> However, almost every government in the world is now engaged in one way or another in nation-branding, most visibly through the commissioning of advertisements in international channels and less visibly through initiatives such as consistent portrayal of certain symbols and

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on 'image-building' covers a variety of state experiences. See e.g. Kemming and Sandikci 2007; Wang 2003; Dinnie 2008; Marshall 2011; Fullerton et al. 2007.

<sup>2</sup> "Brand States: Postmodern Power, Democratic Pluralism and Design" 2008.

images as constituting the essence of the state. A comprehensive nation-branding strategy would also encompass initiatives and programs to stimulate diaspora mobilization, enhance the coordination of the nation's key institutions and organizations and ensure a reasonable degree of consistency in the country's official communications.

Most of the literature on nation-branding focuses on one of the following three dominant research areas: the country of origin effects on export products, the branding of tourist destinations, and the acquisition of foreign investments. However, there is much more to a powerful nation-brand image than simply boosting branded exports around the world. It is now essential for countries to understand how they are seen by publics around the world; how their achievements and failures, their assets and liabilities, their people and products are reflected in their brand image. Reputation management and influencing public opinion in other countries have become important drivers of foreign politics, and public diplomacy now plays an important role in communicating a nation's policies and cultures to international audiences. The brand state's use of its history, geography and ethnic motifs to construct its own distinct image is a benign campaign that often lacks the deep rooted, often antagonistic sense of national identity and uniqueness that can accompany nationalism, yet it is no less significant in terms of identity politics. In fact, place-branding specialists emphasize that nation-branding encourages one to revisit the debate on nationalism and the role and nature of national identity.

Consequently, it is being argued that the very definition of identity politics is changing. In a section subtitled "Identity Politics" in his seminal article in *Foreign Affairs*, "The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation", Peter van Ham notes:

*The traditional diplomacy of yesteryear is disappearing. To do their jobs well in the future, politicians will have to train themselves in brand asset management. Their task will include finding a brand niche for their state, engaging in competitive marketing, assuring customer satisfaction, and most of all, creating brand loyalty. Brand states will compete not only among themselves but also with super brands such as EU, CNN, Microsoft, and the Roman Catholic Church. In this crowded arena, states that lack relevant brand equity will not survive.<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> Ham 2001.

The success of any brand is determined by its ability to convince people of the viability of the brand. In terms of the state, this would be interpreted as the ability of the state to convince an international audience of the viability of its foreign policy. But the state's image also needs to work for its economy and its citizens. Global economic forces make developing a good brand more important than ever. Similarly, branding now has a very important role in the politics of security. Like commercial brands, states are described as "friendly" (i.e. western oriented) "credible" (ally) or, in contrast, "unreliable" (rogue state). Therefore, countries could also be at the receiving end of a branding process. The clustering of states as the "axis of evil" is an example. Similarly, an "unbranded" state may have a difficult time in attracting economic and political attention. Assertive brand asset management may be viewed as central to keeping both a competitive economic and a political edge. States, regions and cities adopt proactive branding strategies in the knowledge that as a strong, attractive place brand they can expand their market and political share by creating a strong brand premium. By managing their location's brand equity, politicians do two things. Externally, they aim at attracting more clients and generating overall economic/political advantage. Internally, they aim at creating a sense of belonging. Branding, therefore, is not just about gaining attention; it is also about managing identity, loyalty and reputation. It fulfills an increasingly important internal function of identity formation. Although primordialists assume that every nation has deep roots, modern nations are in actuality based on invented traditions and the continuous mobilization and adaptation of history. Ham argues that with its flag, anthem and constitution, the modern state is nothing other than a brand with a logo and mission statement.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, it is not surprising that most states, cities, ministries and government agencies now boost their own logos and "mission statements" in order to reposition themselves in a fluid globalizing world. As Peter van Ham argues, this change implies more than merely window-dressing.<sup>5</sup> It implies a shift in political paradigms, a shift from the modern world of geopolitics and power to a post-modern world of images and influence. This article endeavors to examine this shift from an Uzbek perspective. It argues that in an increasingly globalized world, nation-state building is no longer an activity confined to the domestic arena.

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<sup>4</sup> Ham 2002:259.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.:252.

The situating of the state within the global space and its image in the international community becomes in many ways as crucial as the projection of homogeneity within the state. The relationship between politics and cultural symbols/images, therefore, acquires and represents multiple possibilities. This relationship became particularly relevant for states in Central Asia that emerged in the wake of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. These were essentially states that had not seen the development of an independent movement prior to the implosion at the center and states where an "externally imposed collapse led to internally invented signs of certainty".<sup>6</sup> Their emergence raised questions about the legitimacy of the state/nation, not just from within the state but also from the global arena. How the new states legitimized their existence as separate entities and redefined themselves in a new form, both internally and externally, assumes great importance. In the course of this redefinition, competing images were articulated and new discourses were generated. Nation-building and nationalist rhetoric, therefore, was intended as much for the international public as for the domestic audience, whether it was the projection of Kazakhstan as the "Heart of Eurasia" or Kyrgyzstan as the "Island of Democracy". Though not as well articulated, the image that the Uzbek state presented was that of an "ancient state at the crossroads of civilization". Here, the shaping of a post-Soviet future through the performative role played by the state in the arena of culture, historical memory, images and rhetoric assumes significance.

The article looks into the shaping of post-Soviet Uzbekistan, where the projection of aspects such as common ancestry and history play a significant part in creating the image of an ancient state with a homogeneous people. In this, the performative role of the state in the face of the reality of a multiplicity of histories and identities in the region is evident. In fact, in a number of cases it results in rhetoric or policy that takes note of this multifarious heritage and recognizes its significance in the wake of a homogenizing global tendency. However, imperatives of state-building within the global arena are also evident in the irony of a state that proclaims its existence as an ancient state and retrieves its Turkic identity yet speaks of its promises and potentialities in the language of the newly born. Thus, one finds in this phase of transition the juxtaposition of a cultural rediscovery of the past and a projection of the state as a developmental state. The article highlights the fact that while parts of the nationalist discourse were intended for a domestic audience, parts of it were directed at the international

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<sup>6</sup> Cummings 2010:1.

arena with the aim of capturing global attention. Public diplomacy and the creation and promotion of national images were attempts to raise the prestige of the country and primarily aimed at the international business community and the global political leadership. The images and rhetoric that accompany Independence Day celebrations in Uzbekistan, for instance, not only articulate the existence of a cohesive state for the domestic audience but also a prosperous one attractive for both international tourism and investment. Similarly, the rhetoric of “a nation under threat” is not just a projection for unity within the state but also a call for international recognition of the fact that Uzbekistan is both a victim and part of a global “fight against terrorism”. This article begins with the rhetoric that accompanied the process of defining the new Uzbek state for its own members as well as for a broader international audience. The emerging state projected itself, not as a brand new state but as a political player that sought to project itself more assertively than before. The article then goes on to examine how the rhetoric that accompanies this reassertion is both a celebration of the state and a statement for the international community. It underlines how the art of politics pursued through old style diplomacy has shifted to encompass the new art of brand-building and reputation management.<sup>7</sup> In conclusion it seeks to come to an understanding of the relevance of the phenomenon of “place-branding” in international politics.

## The making of ‘brand’ Uzbekistan

In *The Modern Uzbeks: A Cultural History from the Fourteenth Century to the Present*, Edward Allworth cites the following lines from the Uzbek poet Abdu Razzaq Abdurashidaw’s ballad “The Dear Soil”:

*Every nationality has its own desire,  
its own song, its own epic,  
It has its own place – its own garden  
so far, preserved thousands of years.<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>7</sup> Ham 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Allworth 1990:319.



This tradition, "preserved for thousands of years", has now become the focus of writings in Uzbekistan. It is a literature that looks beyond the recent past of Central Asia into a past that is glorified as the "nation of desire". In the Uzbek case, there is an attempt at equating Turan, Transoxiana and Turkestan with the ancient Uzbek civilizational past. This theme of an ancient past for the Uzbeks, which President Karimov himself emphasizes, is echoed in a large number of writings that have been published in post-Soviet Uzbekistan. These remain interesting in terms of examining how the story of the Uzbek past is now being told. One representative example of such writing notes:

*Encyclopedias written in almost all languages hold to the one sided idea that Uzbeks are descended from the Uzbek Khan of the Golden horde from 1313-42, and from the Shaybanids, who arrived in West Turkestan in the fifteenth century. (Uzbek Khan brought down the Timurid dynasty and established Uzbek rule in its place). True, tribal Turks called Uzbeks did arrive with the Shaybanids, but they dwelled in the territory of Turk Stan during the Timurid era, in that of the Khwarezmshahs before that, during the Karakhanids and during the reigns of all the Turk khans, because, they, after all, were the original Turkish people of Turkestan, right? Why is this not openly acknowledged?*<sup>9</sup>

The construction of political space in post-Soviet Uzbekistan has involved certain recurrent themes and elements that have made their presence felt time and again. One of the themes that emerged in a large corpus of literature is *ethnogenesis*. *Oz ozingni anglab yet*, or 'getting to know oneself', began in the last days of the Soviet Union through carefully worded writings that departed from the usual practice of writing historical pieces in the form of fiction.<sup>10</sup> This involved an objective confrontation with the past and was distinct from efforts that traced a mythical history of the origins of the Uzbeks. The current rediscovery of the past is also represented as a major change from the historiographical practices of the Soviet past, when the possibility of studying the past independently was curtailed.<sup>11</sup> These writings are also distinct in their attempt at equating the histories of the Turkish peoples living in the region with that of the Uzbeks. This equation is problematic. However, it remains interesting as a representative

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<sup>9</sup> Qahhar 1996:611.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Ali 1994.

<sup>11</sup> See e.g. Akhmedov 1996.

example of the way in which the state constructs borders by using spatial strategies that homogenize identity and space.

A brief historical journey through the reading of a text that traces the development of the Uzbek state is an interesting comment on how the Uzbek space is being constructed today. An article<sup>12</sup> was published on this theme in *Obshchestvennye nauki v Uzbekistane*, which is the journal of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan. The article points out that until very recently Uzbeks were mistakenly identified with the Shaybanids. There was no cognizance of the local Uzbek-speaking population in the region. In actuality, it is pointed out, the people of the region consist of both the Turkic-speaking people of the cities and villages of contemporary Uzbekistan bearing the name Sart as well as the descendants of the Shaybanid Uzbeks who had lived there for the past four centuries and assimilated with the ancient indigenous ethnic layer of the region and spoke in "one single old Uzbek language – the language of Ahmed Yassavi, Alisher Navoi and Babur". It has also been pointed out that:

*[t]he most ancient layer of the Uzbek people in the past consisted of the Sogdians, Bactrians and Khwarezmians as well as the cattle breeding tribes surrounding them – the Sakas – a part of which in the ancient time spoke in different dialects of the ancient Turkic language. To this were added new ethnic components from the oasis of Tashkent, the Khidalites, Afialites [...] With the advent of the Karakhanids, an ethnogenetic process began, and a single anthropological type typical of Uzbeks took place. Single territorial position started forming [...] Much later ethnic components are the Shaybanids [...] Usually the history of the people is more ancient than its name. Uzbeks inherited only their name from the Shaybanids. It was political to begin with and then became ethnic.<sup>13</sup>*

They would also point to the fact that while the Greek invasions were an important event in the history of Uzbekistan, subsequent centuries would witness the likes of the empire of Genghis Khan and the states formed by his sons, an empire which, in this view, was definitely Turkic and not Mongol in origin. The Timurid period is also being subjected to close scrutiny as the golden age when Uzbek culture, society and art developed. Amir Timur and his contributions are being examined in depth, and his legacy is now being appropriated by the state as exclusively Uzbek. Timur's contribution as having put an end to "tribal disunity"

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<sup>12</sup> Askarov 1997.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

in the region is lauded as a major achievement. The fact that he represented the feudal interests of the time is being interpreted as a minor failing of the ruling classes, to which Timur was no exception.

It is equally significant that having established the fact that the Uzbeks have an ancestry longer than that usually attributed to them, there is a tendency to equate the history of Uzbekistan with that of Turkestan, which in turn is equated with the much larger unit of Turan.<sup>14</sup> This is being attempted not only in terms of historical lineage, but also in terms of its literature. It is generally said that written Uzbek literature began with the Yassavids in the eleventh century. It is now being pointed out that Uzbek literature or Turkic literature of Turkestan, including Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uighur, Karakalpak and Turkmen, started as written literature in the seventh century before Christ. The basis for this claim is a poem written in 626 B.C. dedicated to the death of Alp Er Tonga, which is still comprehensible to a modern Uzbek. Rather ambitiously, the *Shahnama*, where Alp Er Tonga is referred to as Afrasiab, is being held up as proof that the ancient Turks, "the forefathers of today's Uzbeks, ruled over two-thirds of the known world seven centuries before Christ".<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to note that once again there is an attempt to equate the history of the Turks with that of the Uzbeks without addressing the question of whether the modern Uzbeks and the contemporary Uzbek language can be totally equated with a general Turkic history and Turkic language.

Language is the basis for most performative acts. Through the "making" of the language, the state acts as an agent of influence and control not just on performative traditions and their norms but also on the creation of a single linguistic community as the basis for the nation. Language intervention became particularly significant in the post-Soviet states. This became evident, particularly in the process of purification, but also to a certain extent in modernization, standardization and the development of lexicon. Topographical renaming occurred as a characteristic feature of de-sovietization. Language purism also involved changing the names of localities, streets and persons in order to conform better to the titular languages. President Karimov declared a few days before Uzbekistan proclaimed its independence in August 1991, "A people is its

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<sup>14</sup> Akhmedov 1996.

<sup>15</sup> Qahhar 1996:612.

language".<sup>16</sup> There were, therefore, attempts to consolidate the link between culture and state by ascribing official status to its language, directing literature, rewriting history so as to reinforce legends and inventing national symbols and myths.

Another interesting aspect is the contemporary stress on linkages with the Persian language, with an onus on a cultural heritage that is so interlinked with that of the Tajiks that one can hardly be distinguished from the other. While this can probably be explained as prompted by the so-called theorists of "Greater Uzbekistan", who called for a reunification of the now Tajik lands with Uzbekistan, the total eclipse of the Arabic linkages, as of the Arabic language, is more difficult to explain. This is reminiscent of the Soviet tradition of ignoring the Arabic heritage due to the obvious linkages of the latter with Islamic culture. However, while heroic traditions are being celebrated, there is also recognition among scholars that much of this is a construction. The book published on the occasion of the celebration of 2500 years of Bukhara, states clearly that there is no accurate data on the age of this ancient city. It is "... based on legends taken from Narsakhi's *History of Bukhara*" and "the people of Bukhara claim that the city has been around for three millennia".<sup>17</sup>

Speaking on the occasion of the 2500-year anniversary of Khiva, President Karimov stated:

*The Roman historian Pompey Trog who lived two thousand years ago wrote the following about the most ancient ancestors of the Turkic people: Bactrians, Sogds and Khorezmians may well compete with Egyptians by the age of their origins and genesis. They do not spare themselves both in labor and severe fight. They are extremely strong physically. They never give up a thing that belongs to them. They only go for victory.*

*It was in the Khorezm valley where the very first stones of the Uzbek statehood were laid 2700 years ago. In this regard the history of our national statehood can be considered along with such ancient states as Egypt, China, India, Greece and Iran. The history of Khorezm is the foundation of the Uzbek statehood, the confirmation of its antiquity and might.*<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Cited from Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001.

<sup>17</sup> Azizkhodjaev 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Karimov 1997:2-3.

A significant part of the official discourse is based on the image of a paternalistic state that stresses stability and development through what is identified as the "Uzbek Path". This emphasizes social protection and redistribution and is based on folk traditions and customs. It was clearly stated that the new social and economic policy would also promote the social program in the country. This policy would take note of the unique way of life of the various cultures and civilizations in Uzbekistan and would consist of a variety of forms and methods.<sup>19</sup> There is recognition of the necessity of developing one's own model of development, a model that would be based on market relations but that would also take into account the national historical heritage, foundations of life, traditions and mentality of the people. President Karimov points to this when he says:

*We have selected an approach of rejecting egalitarianism in the system of social protection of the population and finding our own path corresponding to moral values, way of life and frame of mind of the nation which took shape throughout millennia in the East.*<sup>20</sup>

There is also clear recognition of the fact that there can be no universal model of economic development that can merely be followed. The Uzbek model would have to take note of concrete historical, socio-economic, national-psychological and demographic aspects. This is being interpreted to entail an emphasis on stabilization.

This would mean that while there would be an effort to move away from the administered economic structures of the Soviet system, this would not be done without taking into account the requirements of society. This, in turn, would entail the continuation of certain policies, such as consumer subsidies on imported goods. It is interesting that G. Karimova speaks of the disappearance of the Berlin wall between "orthodox definitions of capitalism and socialism".<sup>21</sup> This is a possible indication of movement towards a mixed economic pattern as a model of development. What is interesting is that in the course of this transition, it is clearly recognized that while the primary task is ensuring the macroeconomic stabilization of society for market oriented reforms in order to ensure economic

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<sup>19</sup> Karimova 1995.

<sup>20</sup> Karimov 1995:115f.

<sup>21</sup> Karimova 1995.

growth, this is also crucial for ensuring the welfare of the society.<sup>22</sup> There is also emphasis on the fact that social assistance reaches those for whom it is intended. In addition, projected development is based on the gains of the last seven decades, which has transformed Uzbekistan into a "developed" society in terms of social indicators. The emphasis here is on transformation without shock therapy.<sup>23</sup>

This is particularly evident in the case of monetary policy, where quick transformation was postponed in favor of "stabilization with parity". In fact, in all of these respects, what is evident is a gradualist policy that makes place for the old within the new structures. The Uzbek model of development then goes on to point out that "privatization is not the ultimate goal". It is the means of ensuring competition for economic motivation. And more importantly, each man must "improve his own position without hampering the position of others".<sup>24</sup> The *Decrees and Resolutions* of the Republic of Uzbekistan further stress that the "social orientation (of the policies) should be reflected in every act under consideration". The problems of protection of families with children during the reorganization are addressed.<sup>25</sup> President Karimov identifies the final objective of the economic policy as the construction of a strong democratic law-governed state and secular society with a stable socially oriented market economy and open foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> This is also reflected in the fact that it is still the state that has primary responsibility for the implementation of programs relating to land reclamation, irrigation, improvements in soil fertility, etc. Since the Uzbek economy is primarily dependent on the cultivation of cotton, it is important that the state has a clear agricultural policy.<sup>27</sup> There is, therefore, emphasis on the fact that:

*We have made a simple choice – to consistently advance towards market economy stage-by-stage – evolutionary, not by great leaps or by revolutionary destruction [...] Popular saying has it, never destroy the old house before you build a new one. It is unforgivable to neglect*

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<sup>22</sup> Respublika Uzbekistan 1994.

<sup>23</sup> Karimova 1995.

<sup>24</sup> Karimova 1995:22.

<sup>25</sup> Karimova 1995.

<sup>26</sup> See e.g. Karimov 1995 and 1994.

<sup>27</sup> See Karimov 1995:52–66.

*what could be used in the interest of economic reform during transition to market relations and make this process more efficient and less painful.*<sup>28</sup>

## Celebrations and performance

Once identities and developmental structures are constructed, states seek to institutionalize these identities both at the domestic level and at the international level. The creation of new narratives of the Uzbek state was not just an attempt at homogenization. It was also an attempt at international projection and advertisement of the potential of the country. In Uzbekistan, for instance, there has been a consistent effort at promoting the image of a “cultural gem”. The image that is portrayed is that of a culturally rich state at the “Crossroads of Civilization”. In the 1990s a number of UNESCO sponsored events celebrated the ancient cities of Bukhara, Khiva and Samarkand at the crossroads of the ancient Silk Route. Uzbekistan has sought to accentuate its ancient traditions and modern cultures by organizing celebrations of its major public holidays and staging fashion shows of traditional clothing at embassies. Frequent cultural events at Uzbek embassies keep Uzbekistan’s cultural brand on public display.

It has been generally argued that the Uzbek government essentially promotes two different national images, one for domestic consumption and another for the international community.<sup>29</sup> Holiday celebrations like *Navruz* and Independence Day are conducted differently inside Uzbekistan and at Uzbek embassies. Events organized for the international community emphasize traditional artifacts and modern paintings depicting Uzbek culture. These events promote national ceramics and *suzani* (‘embroidery’) accompanied by traditional cuisine. Images of the blue domes of Samarkand’s historical sites, of the Ark in Bukhara and of the Fort at Khiva decorate all official leaflets, books and websites about Uzbekistan. There is also a focus on promoting tourist attractions and other historical places at Uzbek embassies and their publications. Erica Marat argues that Uzbekistan’s external emphasis is on its cultural richness built around the history of its ancient cities. It largely omits the Amir Timur heritage that is central to Uzbekistan’s national identity and essentially supports President Karimov’s state power.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*:11f.

<sup>29</sup> See e.g. Marat 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Marat 2010:42.

Navruz was reinvented as part of creating a new national identity and included within Uzbekistan's official national holidays, which are not religious in nature. On these secular holidays the national and local governments sponsor activities that engage all of the citizens of Uzbekistan, creating the basis for a civic rather than an ethnic national identity. Laura Adams notes that while much of the content of the celebrations is related to Uzbek or Central Asian culture and heritage, the way the holidays are celebrated is inclusive of a broader civic community. She writes:

*Of all the national holidays of Uzbekistan, Navroz and Independence Day are celebrated on the largest scale in terms of state spending (more than a million dollars per holiday in Tashkent alone) and have the greatest significance for the public representation of national identity.<sup>31</sup>*

Large scale spectacles are organized on Uzbek Independence Day and *Navruz*. Independence Day celebrations feature a wide variety of cultural elements that characterize the country as a civic nation, while *Navruz* focuses exclusively on an ethnic definition of the nation.<sup>32</sup> A typical *Navruz* address by the President would stress the "ancient" nature of the holiday and the importance of customs "pertaining to our people". The people are called upon to carefully preserve the "priceless traditions and values in tune with the spirit and philosophy of *Navruz* across centuries and pass them on to the current generations".<sup>33</sup> These are generally orchestrated by the state through carefully selected symbols of the nation. These spectacles feature historical or mythical figures, fireworks, youths in national costumes performing group dances, musical dance performances by folk groups from ethnic minorities and large scale depictions of national symbols. The performance by ethnic minorities serves to highlight Uzbekistan's ethnic diversity for the international audience and is also a declaration of civic nationalism for the domestic audience. These spectacles, however, are basically intended for a domestic audience, and the dialogue and lyrics as well as President Karimov's speech are always only in Uzbek.

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<sup>31</sup> Adams 2007:200.

<sup>32</sup> Adams and Rustemova 2010:172.

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. Karimov 2011.



Uzbekistan's holiday celebrations are elaborate explorations of heritage with focus on medieval history and ethnic heritage that aim at strengthening the population's identification with the territory. The particular symbols featured have varied with cultural policy. State-building during the early to mid-nineties focused on the symbol of the empire builder Amir Timur. Concerns with religious extremism are being addressed through a focus on the founder of the Naqshbandi Sufi order, Bahaouddin Naqshbandh. These celebrations are planned at the highest level, with the Prime Minister at the head of the organizing committee. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Uzbekistan was organized in accordance with a resolution signed by the President, who approved the program of the organization, practical, cultural, educational and awareness raising activities related to the celebration as well as the structure of the creative group to prepare the holiday program in Tashkent. The slogan for the year was "You are great and sacred, independent Motherland". The desire of the government to showcase the achievements of Uzbekistan over the past two decades has meant that neighborhoods in central Tashkent have been flattened and several large markets, such as Farkhad Bazaar, and small shopping centers have been demolished for reconstruction efforts. The official news agency distributed a statement to the effect that the "architectural outlook of the capital ahead of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Uzbekistan has not only preserved its historical attractiveness but is acquiring new humanistic and aesthetic content".<sup>34</sup>

While in certain cases there is a gap between what is projected for the domestic audience and for the external one, in other cases, such as the projection of a "nation under threat", the domestic and international intentions have converged. The image of a scared Motherland, and particularly a scared Motherland under threat, is increasingly evident in political rhetoric. On the one hand, the rhetoric seeks to rally popular feelings of patriotism and, on the other hand, seeks international legitimacy for state violence. Since the late 1990s, there has been a shift in President Karimov's sense of the geopolitical identity of Uzbekistan from a self-confident polity at peace with itself and its neighbors to a besieged island of civilization in a sea of anarchy that threatens to submerge it. Nick Megoran notes that the portrayal of "a nation under threat" is reflected in presidential writings, in media reports and even in popular culture.<sup>35</sup> One

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<sup>34</sup> Cited from Eurasianet 2011.

<sup>35</sup> Megoran 2005:564.

representative example is a part of the speech delivered by President Karimov on the occasion of the First Session of Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan:

*Today our region is attracting attention of different extremist forces and centers that strive to undertake the expansion of religious extremism and international terrorism, to divert the states of the region from the democratic and secular path of development with a due rule of law. The drugs and arms trafficking represent a credible threat not only on the region, but also on the entire world. The current developments in the region and in the world urge us to create a system of security that would be able to guarantee in real terms the non-violability of our borders, territorial integrity of the country, stability and sustainable development of Uzbekistan. It is important that people comprehend the inseparable link between ensuring the public order, their personal safety and increasing their own watchfulness and an active participation in what is happening around them. It is necessary to promote the involvement of the population in eliminating extremism in all its manifestations, securing peace and stability in our common home.<sup>36</sup>*

It is evident that this rhetoric is aimed both at the domestic audience, which is urged to maintain public order in order to allow the state to move along a path ruled by democracy and at the international audience, which is informed that the inability of the state to do so would be due to the threat faced by the state as a result of external extremist forces. The first channel that inculcated a sense of danger was presidential writings themselves. The same geopolitical visions were conveyed through the national news media, which presented opposing images of a happy and prosperous Uzbekistan in contrast to consistent images of neighboring states as spaces of chaos. There is also the suggestion that the chaos in the neighborhood is threatening to engulf Uzbekistan.<sup>37</sup> Megoran defines how the image of a "nation under threat" is also reflected in popular music, which is often an important site in struggles to control, utilize and define space.

The Andijan incident proved to be somewhat of a watershed. In the aftermath of the incident, there was a need to justify state action to the people as well as to

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<sup>36</sup> Address by H.E. Mr. Islam Karimov at the First Session of Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

<sup>37</sup> Megoran et al. 2005:726–730 argue that the interpretation of danger, whether from terrorists or trade flows, is always subjective. The portrayal of Uzbekistan as a threatened state is evident in presidential speeches, the media and even the cultural sphere, such as pop music, and has been an important discursive strategy in the articulation of the politicized version of Uzbek national identity by the current regime.

an increasingly critical international audience. A booklet was published in Tashkent that summarized the statements and responses of President Karimov to the local and international press about the Andijan events of 12–13 May 2005. Entitled *The Uzbek People Will Never Depend on Others*, the booklet seeks to provide an explanation of the Government's actions during the incident and to show that this incident had nothing in common with the "revolutions" that had led to changes in governments in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Examining President Karimov's account of the events of May 2005, Megoran argues that four key themes have been deployed in the narrative to delegitimize the government's opponents: terrorism and criminality, inauthentic Uzbekness and deviant masculinity/religiosity, constitutional illegitimacy, and the subversion of the scientific laws of the state.<sup>38</sup> The events were portrayed as having been orchestrated by a trained (and foreignly aided) group of terrorist/criminal elements that were attempting to destabilize the state.

*During the first years of our independence we thought we were free and we had something different: we became members of the UN so now we would move towards democracy and everything ahead would be perfect. We freed ourselves from the Soviet communist ideology. But what filled the vacuum left behind? Different radical religious groups, some not always peaceful, started to make their presence felt in the region. Everywhere they proposed building mosques and they did so until we started opening our eyes. Something similar has been happening to our neighbors; for instance Kazakhstan has at the moment 1500 mosques of which 500 are not officially registered. Sometimes these groups offered loans or sometimes they showed their readiness to build these mosques for free. I want to reiterate again, using the ideological vacuum left after the collapse of communism, Hizb-ut-Tahrir put down its deep roots in the countries of Central Asia and in Uzbekistan, in particular in the Ferghana Valley. In the city of Tashkent you can find evidence of this sect.<sup>39</sup>*

President Karimov's reactions following the events in Osh in April–May 2010 have been described as "dispassionate and reasonable", even by Kyrgyz state officials. Karimov argued that the tragedy was not the fault of either the Kyrgyz or the Uzbeks but was organized by "third parties" with the key objective of drawing Uzbekistan into the conflict. President Karimov's reactions elicited keen interest among the international audience. It demonstrated the maturity of state

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<sup>38</sup> Megoran 2008:15.

<sup>39</sup> Karimov 2007:18.

reaction in the face of provocation and reiterated the image of "threat". As far as the domestic audience was concerned, there was little coverage of the events in Kyrgyzstan and practically no information about the events that led to a change of government.

This reiteration of the perception of "threat" has been bolstered by the recent lifting of the US ban on military assistance to Uzbekistan to enhance the ability of the Uzbeks to counteract trans-national terrorism. It was officially stated that the waiver would provide Uzbekistan with defensive equipment to enhance its ability to protect the borders over which cargo destined for US forces in Afghanistan flows. This is seen as an endeavor to enlist Uzbekistan's support in the post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan following the US withdrawal. Uzbekistan is part of an overland supply route to Afghanistan known as the Northern Distribution Network (NDN). The NDN is a network of road, rail and air routes that traverses the Central Asian states. The NDN was a diplomatic boon to US-Uzbek relations, which had received a blow in 2005 when, following the criticism of the Uzbek government post Andijan, US access to the Karshi-Khanabad base, located not far from the Afghan border, was closed to the Americans. In fact, in November 2011 Uzbek government officials reported a terrorist attack on a rail bridge that was responsible for severing a southern rail connection with Tajikistan.

## Conclusions

Prior to the formation of nation-states, the state was never seen as crucial for the determination of the identity of communities. It was seen at best as a guarantor of an arrangement under which all communities existed. This was transformed in an era of "nations and nationalism", when it was asserted that identities were to be largely defined by the nation-state. In fact, in a number of cases the state not only defined the boundary within which identity was to be circumscribed but also the basis for the definition. The rationality on which this was determined defined the principal characteristic of groups and subsequently assumed a significance of its own. As nations were constructed within the boundaries of the state, the projection of a numerical majority defined in terms of rationally delimited criteria became crucial. In this projection the state came to play an increasingly significant part, not just in defining the nation-state, but also in legitimizing it within the international arena. It is this performative role of the Uzbek state that has been the focus of this article. The article has underlined that

the performance of the state was aimed at the creation of 'brand Uzbekistan' – a stable, prosperous state with a vibrant ancient culture.

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# Linguistic and Social Contradictions within Uzbek National Identity

RANO TURAEVA-HOEHNE

This paper sheds some light into the existing ambiguities regarding the classification of Uzbek dialects and its internal contradictions. The paper is based on ethnographic research conducted among Khorezmians in Tashkent in 2005–2006 in addition to the review of linguistic and historical literature on Uzbek language and Turkic languages in general.<sup>1</sup> I argue that internal contradictions and ambiguities regarding the classification of Uzbek dialects stem from diverse linguistic intermixing, and later nationality policies conducted by Soviets in the region. In this paper, I will present a current linguistic situation regarding the Uzbek language and its dialects and the status of these dialects in relation to literary Uzbek.

The Uzbek language together with other Central Asian languages has been studied primarily within the framework of historical analysis of Turkic languages.<sup>2</sup> A considerable amount of attention has been given to the study of the

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<sup>2</sup> Wurm 1954; Johanson 1998, 2002, 2005, 2008; Baldauf 1993.



language and ancient culture of Khorezm (alternative spellings are e.g. Khwarezm, Choresm, and Chwaresm).<sup>3</sup> These works have made use of various sources in addition to local and Russian ones, including Chinese, Persian and Greek. Literary Uzbek and its dialects have been studied primarily from a comparative perspective by Russian and other local scientists.<sup>4</sup> There is, though, a paucity of literature on the topic.

Moreover, the authors do not agree on the classification of Uzbek dialects. The complexity of the current situation can be explained, at least in part, by the fact that Uzbek did not have one single protolanguage but was rather the product of a conglomeration of three genetically different groups of languages.<sup>5</sup> This accounts for the linguistic distance between some of the Uzbek dialects. Against this historical background, I will – while discussing the linguistic classification of Uzbek dialects – display the linguistic distance between the dialects and literary Uzbek.

Linguistic barriers and miscomprehension create certain linguistic attitudes and a certain linguistic behavior. This provides space for engaging in practices of exclusion and inclusion. Elsewhere I have outlined the main distinctions based on the use of language and rhetorical strategies in the identification process.<sup>6</sup> I also showed how choice of language (i.e. choice of a language variety) and the way linguistic tools are employed, which served as a background against which I analyzed linguistic attitudes and communicative strategies.<sup>7</sup>

The question arises as to how the Uzbek language evolved and which factors contribute to the cultural differentiation among regional groups in Uzbekistan. Answers to these questions are offered in the following analysis of linguistic distinctions.

The paper begins with a brief *de tour* of the history of Uzbek language formation. Following the linguistic classification of Uzbek dialects, I touch upon the status and role of literary Uzbek and its dialects in order to reveal hierarchies between state language and dialects, on the one hand, and hierarchies between

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<sup>3</sup> Menges 1933; Eckmann, 1966, 1996; Boeschoeten, 1993; Henning 1956, 1965, 1971.

<sup>4</sup> Samoylovich 1910, 1922, 1928; Abdullaev 1960; Palivanov 1933; Gozi Olim 1936; Kononov 1960; Radjabov 1996; Shoabdurahmanov 1962; Yudahin 1939; Batmanov 1934.

<sup>5</sup> Palivanov 1933:4.

<sup>6</sup> Turaeva 2010, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Turaeva 2013.

dialects, including the official literary variety of Uzbek, on the other. Furthermore the paper will briefly outline the status of the second important language, namely Russian which has penetrated spoken Uzbek where Russian words make about 15% of the Uzbek spoken vocabulary.

## The Formation of Uzbek in an Historical Perspective

While studying the history of Turkic peoples, the history of their migration and the languages used on the territory of Central Asia, one cannot but ask why there are so many different opinions on the origins of modern literary Uzbek, and why the classification of this language, as well as of other Turkic languages, is full of obscurities and ambiguities.<sup>8</sup>

Languages, as they are at a particular point in time, are products of complex historical changes. In the course of this process, they typically become more and more divergent, thus leading to dialectal and other varieties. These varieties often become "languages" in their own right, when speakers spread out over disparate territories and there is not frequent and close communication between them. In such cases, the languages concerned are normally considered to have an identifiable ancestor, a protolanguage. In the case of Uzbek, there is apparently no single protolanguage; the language is rather the result of the merging of different languages. This has to do with the "melting-pot situation" in Central Asia.

Researchers agree that present-day Central Asia was once occupied by a considerable number of nomadic and sedentary populations. The languages they spoke were of heterogeneous origin. The territories were governed by ruling dynasties of both Turkic and Mongol origin. There was a clear distinction between written and spoken languages. There were surely influences between spoken and written languages. However, due to low levels of literacy among ordinary people, these mutual influences might have been very small. Consequently, literary languages were better preserved, in the form of literary works.

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<sup>8</sup> Given a geographical interpretation of the region, Central Asia is a bigger territory than the region referred to in this paper in which Central Asia is only intended to include the territory that was part of the former Soviet Union, namely the five states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

According to some historical sources, the “predecessor” of Uzbek was the Chaghatay literary language. The designation “Chaghatay” comes from the name of the second son of Genghis Khan. Reshetov (1964) argues that the use of the term “Chaghatay” is misleading, since it was not the only group that influenced the foundation of the Uzbek language. Rather, three related subgroups of this language group, namely Karluk-Chighil-Uighur, in addition to other groups mentioned by Palivanov (1933), have also played a role to some extent. According to Reshetov (1964), the literature of the Karakhanid era in the ninth and tenth centuries influenced the formation and development of the old Uzbek written language. The Karakhanids were, according to the same author, a conglomeration of Turkic tribes consisting of Karluk, Chighil, Uighur and others. It is for this reason that he refers to the group of Turkic languages of the southeast not as Chaghatay but as Karluk-Chighil-Uighur. Chaghatay was used alongside Arabic and New Persian as a prestigious literary language in Central Asia.<sup>9</sup>

During the national delimitation program following the Russian revolution, Uzbek was developed on the basis of literary Chaghatay. Creating a literary written language that could incorporate all of the spoken varieties was a great challenge. The complexity of this task was due to the fact that there were two different spheres of language use on the territory of present Central Asia. The spoken languages hardly influenced the written languages of the elites who were mostly “educated” and learned people.<sup>10</sup>

There was only limited contact between these two spheres of language use. Prior to the Bolsheviks initiating their *Likbez* campaign after their invasion of the region, the literacy rate among ordinary people was estimated to be around 3 percent.<sup>11</sup> Turkic languages were used as literary languages and languages in administration, while Arabic was a language of instruction in *madrasas* and was taught by *mullas* (religious teachers).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Eckmann 1959:152; Eckmann 1966, 1996; Samoylovich 1928; Wurm 1954; Borovkov 1952:183–184; Johanson 2005.

<sup>10</sup> Johanson 1998:87.

<sup>11</sup> *Likbez* is an abbreviation from the Russian *likvidatsiya bezgramotnosti* (“liquidation of illiteracy”). The campaign was led by the Bolsheviks in order to fight illiteracy on the expanded territories of the former Soviet Union.

<sup>12</sup> *Madrasa* is a religious school, which was the only educational institution before Russians came to the region.

To sum up, whereas the details about the origin of modern Uzbek are a matter of dispute, there is general agreement that the formation of Uzbek was the result of a merger between three different language families: the Chaghatay/Karluks, Oghuz and Kipchak families of Turkic languages.<sup>13</sup>

## Classification of Uzbek Dialects

While research on the different varieties of Uzbek during the last seventy years displays various types of classification by Russian and local scientists,<sup>14</sup> none of these proposals can be considered to be right or wrong, since they are based on different linguistic principles and historical conceptions. For my own working classification of Uzbek dialects, I make use of all of the classifications of the authors mentioned above in order to be able to outline the main differences and major groupings without going into depth about differences among Uzbek dialects. In this context, I am essentially concerned with the role that dialectal differences play in the process of comprehension or miscomprehension by speakers, of one or the other dialect. I do not intend to undermine other linguistic differences existing in Uzbek dialects in comparison to literary Uzbek, exposed in the studies of Uzbek dialects by both Russian and local scientists. Instead, an intention is to use a working classification in analyzing the ethnographical material and to draw some general conclusions focusing on Khorezmian speakers.

The three historical strata on which Uzbek is based are the main sources of its present-day dialectal variation. The first is the South East or "Chaghatay" group of Turkic languages (Reshetov's Karluks-Chighil-Uighur group), which includes the subdialects spoken in Namangan, Tashkent, Andijan, Marghelan and Kokand as well as an Iranized group of dialects spoken in Samarkand and

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<sup>13</sup> I will use Chaghatay and Karluks interchangeably, since there are uncertainties with regard to the degree of influence of these languages on Turkic (Karluks) and Mongol (Chaghatay) tribes in the formation of the Uzbek language and its nation. It is difficult to define who had more influence and who had less, as hundreds of different tribes were mixed and interdependent on each other as a consequence of great population movements among mainly nomadic tribes as well as of invasions of the region by different dynasties.

<sup>14</sup> Abdullaev 1960; Kononov 1960; Palivanov 1933; Radjabov 1996; Reshetov 1978; Gozi Olim 1936; Yudahin 1939; Zarubin 1925.

Bukhara. Palivanov (1933) divides this group into three subgroups: the Samarkand-Bukhara type of *govor* ('spoken language'), the Tashkent type of *govor* and the Fergana type of *govor*. *Govor* is a Russian linguistic term for a spoken variety of a language. Uzbek authors writing on Uzbek dialects do not specifically emphasize the distinction between written and spoken language. They differentiate between "group of dialects" (*lahja*), "dialects" (*dialekt*) and "subdialects" (*sheva*).

The second group, the South West or Oghuz group, includes dialects spoken in the Khiva, Khonqa, Shovot, Khazarasp, azzavot and Urgench districts of the Khorezm region. Speakers of this group of dialects are also found in Tashauz (in Turkmenistan) and Turtkul (in Karakalpakistan).<sup>15</sup> The third group is the North-West or Kipchak group of dialects, which includes the dialects of Ohangaron, Mirzachel, Samarkand, Zarafshon, the surroundings of Bukhara, Kashkadarya and Surhondarya. Speakers of this group can also be found in the northwestern part of the Khorezm region, Andijan, Fergana, Namangan and Kokand.<sup>16</sup> Modern official written Uzbek is mostly based on the dialects of the Tashkent and Namangan regions (Kokand), which belong to the Chaghatay/KarluK family of languages.

As was already pointed out in the preceding section, spoken and written Uzbek were clearly separate before Uzbek was made the official literary language of Uzbekistan. It is still the case that spoken dialects or languages are more or less far from written Uzbek and that differences between them can partly be explained as a result of influence and interference from surrounding languages. In order to see the distance or closeness of the group of dialects in relation to literary Uzbek, the following grouping can be considered. Reshetov (1978) presents the following chart, where the three groups of Uzbek dialects are shown in relation to their nearest contact languages.

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<sup>15</sup> Reshetov 1978:30; Radjabov 1996:77.

<sup>16</sup> Radjabov 1996:31.

	<b>Tajik</b>		
	The Karluk–Chighil group of dialects (Chaghatay)		
<b>Kazak, Karakalpak and Kyrgyz</b>	The Kipchak group of dialects	The Oghuz group of dialects	<b>Turkmen</b>

Table 1. (Adopted from Reshetov 1978:37).

The two groups of Kipchak and Karluk–Chighil (Chaghatay) are closer to each other than to the Oghuz group of dialects. Representatives of the Kipchak group (Fergana dialects) and Chaghatay (the Tashkent group of dialects) are considered to constitute the basis of literary Uzbek.

## Official and Non-official Hierarchies of Uzbek Dialects and the Uzbek Literary Language

Below I will engage with the existing formal and informal statuses of official literary Uzbek in comparison to its dialects. Firstly, it is necessary to note about the existing formal definitions between language and dialect as well as local definitions between them. It is well known that these terms can be, and often are, defined and used in different ways. On the one hand, there are linguistic and scientific definitions of 'language' and 'dialect'. On the other, there are definitions based on political reasoning. This is nicely reflected in the old linguistic saying: "A language is a dialect with an army and a navy".<sup>17</sup> Political and linguistic definitions rarely coincide. Political definitions are closely connected with national ideologies and the formation of national identities. They may differ significantly from the existing linguistic definitions that are related to the field of historical linguistics.<sup>18</sup> Thus, I will avoid entering the realm of this debate over the definition of language as opposed to dialect by using the official

<sup>17</sup> The author of this saying is unknown. It is most often ascribed either to Otto Jespersen or to Max Weinreich.

<sup>18</sup> Fishman et al. 1968; Woolard 1998; Haugen 1966; Gumperz 2005; Schlee 2001:8286.

national version of the distinction between these two phenomena. Rather, I will consider the status of each variety of Uzbek in both official use and its everyday use on the ground.

Alongside nation-building processes, new independent states had to reconsider the status of their national languages. In post-Soviet Uzbekistan, this meant that literary Uzbek became the official language used in media, publications and in all official texts and publications.

Schlyter (2004) points to major sociolinguistic changes in ex-Soviet Central Asia that led to the increase of national language consciousness and the legal-official establishment of a state language. She presents a detailed study of the influence of the Russian language on Uzbek during the Soviet era and post-Soviet developments of "language-based politics and language policy combined".<sup>19</sup> At present, literary Uzbek is used for all written texts and official speeches as well as in the mass media and TV broadcasts. The spoken form of literary (*adabiycha*) Uzbek is used in every day speech by different groups of Uzbeks as a kind of *lingua franca* in Tashkent today. Everyday interactions in Tashkent city take place in such environments as bazaars and other trade facilities, *choyhanas* (teahouses), cafes and restaurants, private homes and neighborhood facilities, streets, parks and other public places such as schools and universities and other state institutions. Tashkent city is the largest city in Uzbekistan and has the highest concentration of individuals with different ethnic and regional/cultural backgrounds. Tashkent is a center in which all existing dialects of Uzbek come into contact with each other. Hierarchies at the level of everyday communication are different from those at the level of state language policy.

Analytically, it is necessary to distinguish between different aspects of language status depending on whether it is viewed from above or from below. In transactions or interactions in the state domain and in the domain of official publicity, literary Uzbek has high status as the official state language. In every day interactions, colloquial Uzbek or any Uzbek dialect can be important for the speakers themselves. The status of a local dialect is valued by its speakers as the language of their ancestors. This is particularly the case with Khorezmians. There are symbolic and even pragmatic values attached to the dialect. In this regard, abstract 'high' – 'low' definitions of language or dialect statuses do not make

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<sup>19</sup> Schlyter 2004:180; cf. Schlyter 1998, 2013.

sense.<sup>20</sup> Language status in terms of both written and spoken language can be assessed and defined only within the boundaries of its actual usage, and the definitions are limited to those boundaries.

Depending on the situation and the context, different issues are at stake and various forms of capital are employed.<sup>21</sup> First, the hierarchies of power and social status are important in defining the linguistic attitude of speakers. To give an example, if a Khorezmian has found him- or herself surrounded by predominantly Tashkentis, the hierarchy is different from hierarchies in a mixed group setting or in a setting in which a group consists mostly of Khorezmians. When Tashkentis are in the majority, the Tashkent dialect will usually be spoken. Non-Tashkenti members will try their best to speak it as well, if they master it well enough. In this situation, the top of the hierarchy of dialects will be reserved for the Tashkent dialect. In a mixed group, everybody will speak his or her own dialect, except for Khorezmians, who will try to speak *adabiycha* in order to make themselves comprehensible to the others, as the other dialects are not as different from literary Uzbek as the Khorezmian variety is. Even if Tashkentis are present in such a mixed group, their dialect will not be opted for. In a group dominated by Khorezmians, Khorezmian will be spoken. Usually, it is not easily learned by non-Khorezmians. This means that members of non-Khorezmian groups, including Tashkentis, will be marginalized due to the fact that Khorezmian is not easily comprehensible. In this context, the hierarchies change, and different forms of linguistic and symbolic capital are employed by the interlocutors. Social status plays an important role in defining the power and agency of an interlocutor. If a person is a Khorezmian and is talking to another Khorezmian, then social status in the Khorezmian community will be important to take into account as well as the speaker's economic situation. If a Khorezmian is talking to a non-Khorezmian, then hierarchy and status are defined differently, mainly in terms of the intention of the communication held between the two persons. The values and hierarchies as well as the subjects of what is at stake will be different when communication takes place inside or outside of the Khorezmian community in Tashkent. This difference implies that during conversations amongst themselves, Khorezmians are guided by other kinds of values than when communicating with others.

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<sup>20</sup> Labov 1966.

<sup>21</sup> Bourdieu 1999.



The degree of linguistic difference is important for the 'we' and 'they' distinction. When these differences are so great that speakers have difficulties in comprehending each other, the differences are more salient. The linguistic attitudes of speakers play a tremendous role in exclusionary and inclusionary practices.<sup>22</sup>

The above-mentioned strategies – when employed to varying degrees for emphasis on linguistic differences, such as code-switching when addressing a member or a non-member – and the use of special terms when describing people and groups can be defined in terms of we-code and they-code.<sup>23</sup> Gumperz argued that:

*Outsiders who enter the urban scene may learn a new language or dialect well at the level of sentence grammar, and this knowledge may be sufficient for the instrumental contacts that fill up much of the working day. But the situations of persuasion, where speakers are evaluated on their ability to explain, or to provide adequate descriptions, which do not assume shared knowledge, or to produce complex narratives, are often difficult to manage. Here breakdowns lead to stereotyping and pejorative evaluations and may perpetuate social divisions.<sup>24</sup>*

The "breakdowns" pointed to by Gumperz, as crucial moments and causes for social divisions, can explain certain instances of social behavior among various regional groups in Tashkent. They can also explain the cases where certain groups do not intermix or do not assimilate into majority groups or speech communities. The use of we-code and they-code is the linguistic means for communicating collective and social identities in a multiethnic context like Tashkent. Schlee (2008) draws attention to the importance of linguistic variation in speech acts in a "plurilingual and culturally heterogeneous setting".<sup>25</sup> He refers to what he calls an "ecology of languages", which includes a variety of variables that have to be taken into account when studying inter-ethnic contexts, such as the:

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<sup>22</sup> Gumperz 1977, 1982, 1997. See also Gumperz and Hymes (eds) 1964 and Hymes 1964.

<sup>23</sup> Gumperz 1964.

<sup>24</sup> Gumperz 1999:210.

<sup>25</sup> Schlee 2008:102.

*[...] status of a language and institutions in which it is used, [...] communicational mobility and degree of multilingualism of speakers, specialization of the functions of speech varieties in diglossic and polyglossic settings, and routines of interactions between ethnic groups/speech communities; [...] predominant/exclusive uses of language in the public/private sphere, and the linguistic distance between languages in contact.*<sup>26</sup>

The we-codes and they-codes used by Khorezmians in Tashkent are not observed in a “home” context, where the population is more or less “homogeneous” (as would be the case in the Khorezmian region).

## Other Linguistic Aspects: The Russian Language

The Russian language started to lose its prestige after the independence of former Soviet Republics and its hegemony in Central Asian countries (with some exceptions in Kyrgyzstan, see Elebayeva et al. 2000). This is characterized by the following developments in the region: a) reduction of the number of Russian schools, b) reduction of the number of places for students at higher educational institutions, c) decline of teaching hours in secondary schools and institutions of higher education, replaced with foreign languages such as English, German and French.

The bilingual generation in Uzbekistan can be estimated to be those above 30, given the number of years since independence. The use of Russian vocabulary in spoken Uzbek is still tremendous. This is independent of the fact that bilingualism declined after independence. The linguistic hegemony of Russian in Central Asia was skillfully compared to the situation in North Africa, where an “arabisation” process took place after independence from France (Thomas 1999).

The existence of Russian lexical units in Uzbek and its spoken dialects does not create any constraints on learning the language or a particular dialect due to the fact that the pronunciation of those units is well integrated into Uzbek. Russian loan words were constantly entering Uzbek during the seventy years of Soviet rule. These words were assimilated into both written and spoken literary Uzbek, including its dialects. The number of Russian words in Uzbek dialects varies from dialect to dialect. Below I will provide more examples of those loans in Uzbek, particularly in the Khorezmian dialect. There are two principle ways in

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

which Russian is used by Uzbeks: bilingualism and code switching. The latter is the more frequent phenomenon, which can be observed in everyday communication among Uzbeks. Speaking Russian in order not to be recognized as a non-Tashkenti is still practiced, mainly by younger people who know Russian well enough. After independence in 1991, attitudes towards the Russian language also changed to the negative. Some Uzbeks still speak Russian in order to disguise their identity, despite negative attitudes towards this language today. Even if “it looks ugly (*hunuk*) when you observe Uzbeks speaking Russian” it is considered to be “better” [*luhe* from Russian *luchshe*] or more “convenient” [*udobno* from Russian] to speak Russian than to be identified as *qishloqi* (in Uzbek ‘from the village’), as one of my informants told me.<sup>27</sup>

Code switching, on the other hand, is not unusual in the everyday speech of Uzbeks. Uzbeks use Russian words or phrases in Uzbek sentences, often without realizing that they are not Uzbek words by origin. The pronunciation of these loans is well integrated into the Uzbek phonological system. The examples for Russian borrowings in everyday forms of spoken Uzbek (almost all dialects have Russian borrowings) are the following words: *vashel voshem* (correct Russian form is *voobshe* meaning ‘very much’) is used as an adjective to emphasize degree and can be translated as ‘at all’, *savsem* (the correct Russian form is *sovsem*, ‘completely’) means the same as in Russian, *astanobka* (correct Russian form is *ostanovka*, ‘bus stop’), *svej* (from *svejijy*, ‘fresh’), *takitak* (from *tak i tak*, ‘in any case’), *krishasi getgan* ‘crazy’ (from Russian *krysha* translated as ‘roof’), *kak polojena* (from Russian *kak polojeno*, ‘taken for granted’), *Tashkentskiy*, ‘from Tashkent’, *oblastnoy* ‘from a region’. In the statistics, the percentage of Russian words in the Uzbek lexicon was estimated to have grown from 2 to 15% during 1923–1940 (Rywkin 1963:86 cited in Dickens 1988:13). This speaks for itself with regard to the rapid process of penetration of Russian terms and basic words used in every day speech into national languages and spoken dialects of not only Uzbek, but also other languages in the former Soviet Republics. The “derussification of the national Uzbek language” policies were implemented after independence. Yet, it was limited to written literary Uzbek. The spoken languages/dialects have continued to contain varying numbers of Russian loan words.

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<sup>27</sup> Interview with Lazziza 15.08.2006.

## Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I hope to have shed some light on the origins of the Uzbek language and its connection to other Turkic languages. I argued that diversity of past tribal composition in this region have retained their traces in both local spoken dialects of Uzbek as well as its written forms. I have shown connections of some Uzbek dialects to other language families as well as spatial and social proximities among the dialects and other languages.

Parallely, I engaged with local language policies concerning the national language and their implications for the local dialects in general. In this context, I argued that low and high status of languages and dialects depends on the context of communication and makes sense to its speakers on different levels. Hierarchies differ between the state level use of languages and its dialects, and the ground level of everyday communication of collective identities.

In light of different statuses among dialects in relation to official Uzbek, I showed that these differences play out in the identity politics of the regional groups of Uzbeks in Tashkent, where all of these language varieties come into contact. I argued that language differentiations and linguistic strategies played an important role in identification of Uzbeks among themselves in Uzbekistan. For understanding those differences I also noted that “we-codes” and “they-codes” have been used to define collective identity and to signify differences in identity politics among Uzbeks in Uzbekistan.

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# The Status of Uzbek as “National Language”

BIRGIT N. SCHLYTER

The notion of national language is frequently referred to as a significant, if not decisive, factor by both linguists and politicians. Nevertheless, all too often it has been left without any comprehensive definition or guidance as to what it is meant to signify. Being as elusive a notion as “nation” is, “national language” appears to be at one and the same time both complex and vague – not least from a linguistic point of view.

In contrast to “state language” or “official language”, a national language need not be declared as such by law. Consequently, it may become subject to interpretation and opinions to a greater extent than the other two notions. On the other hand, the more emphasis that is put on the nation-state in modern politics, the stronger the tendency to view a national language as representing in some sense the inhabitants of a well delimited territory stipulated to be a unique state. The following example from the current language situation in Uzbekistan, which will be the focus of attention in the present article, offers a good illustration of this phenomenon.

The Arabic adjective *milliy*, ‘confessional/religious/denominational’ (cp. *millat* ‘congregation’), is an old loan word in Uzbek and in a great number of other Turkic languages. What is interesting about this word in the post-independence context of the former Soviet Uzbek Republic is the focal shift from a meaning relating first and foremost to ethnic (and not as strongly religious) differentiation to a meaning associated with the notion of nation-state. For example, the *milliy tillar* of Uzbekistan during the Soviet era were the indigenous languages of the Republic, such as Uzbek, Tajik, Karakalpak, etc. The expression *milliy tillar*

meant 'nationality languages' rather than 'national languages'. After Uzbek was proclaimed the state language of Uzbekistan in 1989, it soon became a language also referred to as the "national" language of the newly independent country from 1991 onwards. This language played a significant role in symbolizing and consolidating the new Uzbek state. Non-governmental political movements, e.g. *Birlik* ('Unity'), and the Uzbek regime behaved in a similar manner by placing the language issue at the top of their agendas, and *milliy til* in the singular became an epithet pertaining to the state of Uzbekistan as a whole. In the very active and lively Uzbek language debate during the first few years of independence after 1991, there appeared, in addition to *milliy til*, 'national language', such expressions as *milliy alifbo*, 'national alphabet', and *milliy talaffuz*, 'national pronunciation', suggesting the existence of a unique Uzbek alphabet and the assimilation of foreign (mostly Russian) names and words into Uzbek.<sup>1</sup>

In the same fashion, the term *Uzbek* is increasingly associated with the nation-state rather than with ethnicity. Consequently, "Uzbek language policy" could be interpreted as language policy concerning not only the state language of Uzbekistan but also, more generally, the language situation in Uzbekistan.

After a brief comment on the post-independent promotion and consolidation of Uzbek as a symbol of national identity, this language will be investigated along three dimensions – here called "parameters" – which in my opinion are crucial for an evaluation of the status of national language: *distribution*, *corpus* and *manifestation*. All three can be – and will be – thought of in concrete terms, such as people, territory, physical books containing vocabulary, grammatical rules, literature, etc. Other more abstract aspects interrelated in one way or another with these dimensions are the relationship of the language in question to other languages used for communication in the same geographical area and the legitimacy of the language or – from another perspective – the emotional bonds between the speaker and his language. These aspects would bring us still closer to the intangible facets of the notion of national language. With regard both to the state of research and to the space allotted to this presentation, we will have to be content with the abovementioned "visible" expressions of the subject. It is my hope, though, that the following account will be useful for further discussions

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Schlyter 1998:171. The present article originates from a manuscript written after workshops in Stockholm, Sweden, and Mysore, India, on Central Asian historiography and on language loyalty in South and Central Asia, respectively. An article in Swedish on the same subject was published in 2010; see Schlyter 2010.

about the capacity of a language to function as a symbol of unity in a given political discourse. For further details on the language situation in Uzbekistan, the reader is referred to previous publications by the present author. Some of the ensuing paragraphs are reproduced from Schlyter 2007, where the notion of national language was commented on in relation to sociopolitical conditions, however, not discussed with regard to linguistic criteria.

## Language Reform and National Identity in Independent Uzbekistan

At the time of the break-up of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the Uzbeks were a well-educated people with a literacy rate close to 99–100 percent. The primary aim of language reform was not concerned with improvements in the fields of education and mass communication – as had been the case, for example, in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Soviet Union or Turkey – for the purpose of establishing a modern society with a majority of the population taking part or being included in the sociopolitical discourse of the state. In contrast, the current Uzbek language reform is part of a transition process from one sociopolitical discourse to another, where the subjects of the state are not first-time “trainees” but ready-trained people urged to reevaluate their old patterns of language behavior for the sake of modifying them and adopting other patterns. Given this situation, language reform is not tied to the basic needs of modernization but is more obviously a tool for political reorientation.

Two years before the final dissolution of the USSR, in October 1989, Uzbek was declared the state language of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan, the UzSSR. The main target of the State Language Law, which focused primarily on status issues, and the ensuing Uzbek language reform, which in addition to language function also included measures for the corpus of the language, was the status relationship between the state language and Russian, the previous prestige language and *de facto* official language in the entire Central Asian region.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For a broader survey of the language situation and language policies in all of the ex-Soviet Central Asian states, see Landau and Kellner-Heinkele 2001, where Azerbaijan is also included; cf. Schlyter 2003, 2004, 2013.

Both the decision on a change-over from Cyrillic to Latin script in the former part of the 1990s<sup>3</sup> and the attempts at a revision of Uzbek vocabulary were early measures taken for the purpose of loosening the linguistic bond between Uzbek and Russian, thus turning the former into a more self-contained and autonomous linguistic symbol for the new Uzbek state.<sup>4</sup> These measures, together with the relaxation of demands on proficiency in Russian among the inhabitants of Uzbekistan, have put an end to the previously unrivalled dominance of Russian in public and official life in Uzbekistan.

Even though the implementation of language reform has met with serious obstacles and been inhibited in many respects, Uzbek has maintained its position as a state-wide language throughout the post-Soviet independence period. The share of ethnic Uzbeks in the country's total population has increased and is now close to 80 percent. Nearly 80 percent of Uzbek public schools are exclusively Uzbek-medium institutions. In contrast, the Slavic minority – at present ca 1 million constituting around 4 percent of the Republic's total population – has been reduced by more than one third since independence and is not likely to grow in the future. The integration of remaining native Russian speakers into Uzbek society through intermarriages and socialization with ethnic Uzbeks shows a downward trend during the post-Soviet period.<sup>5</sup>

Having noted the status relationship between Uzbek and other languages, primarily Russian, it should immediately be pointed out that a still greater change brought about by the new language situation in independent Uzbekistan is the fact that the adoption of Uzbek as a state-wide, "super-ethnic" official language is a measure of national re-identification that affects non-Uzbek nationals as much as, and in one important sense even more than, it does ethnic Uzbeks, since they are now expected to become Uzbeks with regard to both state loyalty and national (= "nation-state") identity. For non-Uzbeks in Uzbekistan, many of whom are acquainted with an Uzbek language variety of their own home community, the new situation may not only lead to sensitive shifts of

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary laws on the new Uzbek Latin alphabet were passed in 1993 and, with a revised version of the former law, in 1995.

<sup>4</sup> All of the language laws issued by the Uzbek Supreme Soviet/Parliament from 1989 up until April 2004 have been collected and published in a booklet entitled *Ona Tili – Davlat Tili* (2004), 'Mother Tongue – State Language', under the general heading of *Davlat va Millat Ramzlari*, 'Symbols of State and Nation'.

<sup>5</sup> Arutyunyan 2003; cf. Ilkhamov 2002.

balance in the relationship between various ethnicities, but it may also cause a conflict, or "diglossic" division (see below), between their own dialect of Uzbek and standard, literary Uzbek, which they will now have to master as their state, or even "national", language.<sup>6</sup>

## For an Evaluation of Uzbek as a National Language

What are the chances for Uzbek to be consolidated not only as a state language but also as a language of Uzbekistani national identity? Given the dominant structure of modern polities, Uzbek would easily qualify as the national language of the Uzbek state, merely by virtue of being the majority indigenous language as well as the titular language of the Republic. However, with regard to the multi-ethnicity and multilingualism of Uzbekistan and the Central Asian region in general, it very soon becomes evident that other factors may strongly affect how a language is able to compete for the status of national language. In order to elaborate on this issue further, let us turn to the three parameters mentioned in the introductory part of this article. The parameters will be employed in the following sense:

<b>Distribution in space and time</b>	including such aspects as the proportion of speakers in the society to which they belong, the history of the language, etc.
<b>Corpus</b>	comprising the status and current development of the vocabulary and grammar of the language, including official reform work as well as public trends concerning alphabet and orthography, lexicon, etc.
<b>Manifestation</b>	in terms of political agendas and literary traditions as well as everyday language in both private life and public intercourse, having the effect of communicating sociocultural messages and serving as a means of identity formation <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Schlyter 1998, 2004, 2007, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> In Schlyter 2010, such textual phenomena were characterized as the "narrative capacity" (*narrativ kapacitet*) of language.

In what follows an attempt will be made to identify not only conditions empowering Uzbek to qualify as a state-wide national language but also conditions that challenge its position as a language of such status.

### *Distribution in space and time*

Uzbek managed to remain a well consolidated literary language throughout the Soviet period. Though very small in comparison to Russian and despite being merely a local idiom with no wide distribution at the state level, Uzbek was in fact the largest non-Slavic language in the Soviet Union. Its share of the Soviet all-union speech community was a little less than 4 percent. Already before the creation of the Central Asian republics, Uzbek had been given the status of native language in the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Turkestan, on equal terms with three other languages: Kazakh, Turkmen and Russian. Together with a still greater number of languages, it was promoted by the nativization (*korenizatsiya*) policy of the 1920s, which aimed at combating illiteracy and training local cadres in their native languages for service in the Soviet bureaucracy. After the establishment of the UzSSR in 1924, Uzbek was the native language of far above 70 percent of the Republic's population. As mentioned above, in present-day independent Uzbekistan, the share of ethnic Uzbeks who presumably have Uzbek as their native language is approaching 80 percent of a population of around 25 million. This number (besides a few million additional Uzbek-speaking persons in neighboring countries<sup>8</sup>) makes Uzbek the second largest Turkic language, next to Turkey Turkish.

On account of its size and the distribution of speakers across the territory of Uzbekistan, Uzbek can thus be regarded as a strong majority language in the country. When history and traditions are taken into account, even higher status is attributed to the language by virtue of the fact that the development of literary Uzbek fades into the cultural legacy of Chaghatay, a Middle Turkic language used for centuries as one of two "court" languages (the other language being Persian) in the Turkestanian region. The Chaghatay language, which had been confined to a very small learned elite of Turkestanis, was a dying language already at the time when local reformists (*Jadids*; *jadidlar*), prior to the October Revolution, started to operate in the region promoting such issues as how to

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<sup>8</sup> On Uzbek diaspora in present-day ex-Soviet Central Asia, see Fierman 2012.

establish a literary tradition where the subject matter to be portrayed as well as the language in which this was to be expressed would be closer to the linguistic behavior of ordinary people. Chaghatay belonged to the south-eastern, "Karluk", branch of Turkic languages, from among whose dialects modern literary languages such as Uzbek and Uighur were to develop during the following decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Given this relationship, the now extinct Chaghatay language is mostly considered to be an older stage, or the "mother" language, of its younger cognates and the rich Chaghatay literature thus becomes part of a language heritage claimed by the speakers of contemporary language varieties from the Karluk branch.

As will be explained in the following two paragraphs, the genealogical bond between Uzbek and Chaghatay may, however, also turn out to be a partially negative factor working against present-day standard Uzbek becoming – in a state-wide sense of the word – the "people's" language, and eventually the "national" language of Uzbekistan.

During the Soviet era, standard Uzbek was occasionally described in the linguistic literature as a non-vernacular "high language" contrasting with the spoken dialects of this language. In other words, there would be a "diglossic" split between the standard language and dialects through functional as well as lexical and phonetic differences. The standard Soviet variety of Uzbek was a language acquired not with the development of the child's language-processing capacity but by later training at school or through formal communication, which is a basic feature of what is meant by "high language".<sup>9</sup> As regards vocabulary and pronunciation, Soviet standard Uzbek was a Russified language to a much greater degree than any of its dialects.

The non-colloquial nature of standard Uzbek was not only caused by a greater degree of russification but was also the result of a development of the standard language under the strong influence of Chaghatay, which was still in use as a formal and not casually spoken literary language at the end of the pre-Soviet period. The language of the earliest "Uzbek" novels, plays, and non-fiction texts published by the Turkestanian Jadids around the turn of the previous century was more or less Chaghatay sentence structures with an increased share of indigenous Turkic words instead of the usual Arabic-Persian words of Classical

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<sup>9</sup> Lewis 1972:171, has a brief comment on "the co-existence of a general standard (written) and a more regional standard [Uzbek] ...". For the original definition of diglossia, cf. Ferguson 1959.



Chaghatay. With the subsequent Soviet language reform, Uzbek was successively differentiated from Chaghatay – and also from its dialects – through the simplification and unification of grammatical forms and through an exceedingly high degree of russification.

### *Corpus*

The Uzbek State Language Law of 1989 did not contain any definite provisions concerning the language corpus, let alone any changes in either the script or the vocabulary of the State Language. In Uzbekistan, for example, language corpus issues were subject to ardent debates long before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The alphabet laws, on the other hand, did not appear until several years later (see e.g. footnote 3). Guiding principles concerning the vocabulary appeared even later than that.

The change-over to Latin script was no doubt an action of great symbolic import and significant for the status of Uzbek as an autonomous language representing independent Uzbekistan. The Russian bond would have become considerably weaker, had the new alphabet not been modeled on its old Soviet-style Cyrillic predecessor. The 1993 Uzbek Latin alphabet as well as its revised 1995 version simply involved a transliteration of letters from the former alphabet. Detailed plans for the implementation of the revised Latin alphabet in Uzbek schools and institutions of higher education were issued in connection with the law in 1995. In other parts of Uzbek society, the latinization process has so far been slow. Adult literature, including newspapers and periodicals, is still being printed almost exclusively in Cyrillic, and older generations can be heard complaining about difficulties in reading latinized Uzbek.<sup>10</sup>

As regards lexical issues, Russian is evidently – though slowly – losing ground to the Central Asian state languages, as the vocabularies of the latter languages are expanding in fields once reserved for the former. For example, in November 2005, an Uzbek newspaper wrote: “Linux speaks Uzbek” (*Linuks ũzbekcha gapiradi*), reporting that work was being done for the translation of the Linux operating system into Uzbek and, moreover, for the production of Uzbek-

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<sup>10</sup> Two other Central Asian official languages for which new Latin alphabets have been introduced are Turkmen and Karakalpak (Schlyter 2004, 2005). For these languages as well, implementation seems to be very slow.

language computer manuals, which could then replace the manuals in Russian that had been used up to then.<sup>11</sup>

Very importantly, Russian is no longer a source language in Uzbek word formation. Russian morphemes are not employed for the derivation of new Uzbek words, as they were during the Soviet era. Likewise, the number of new Russian loan words in Uzbek will most certainly be kept at a much more moderate level than before.

Given a society where the standard of education is high and most people are in full command of one or more specific linguistic codes, it may be wise to proceed slowly in a reform process of this size with considerable effects on practically all spheres of the country's public life. Nonetheless, once the reform work was initiated, one might have expected greater determination on the part of language planners to opt for a development independent from old patterns and to make sure that the changes are carried out.

A new five-volume edition of the Uzbek-Uzbek *O'zbek tilining izohli lug'ati* ('An Explanatory Dictionary of the Uzbek Language') with a corpus of about 100 000 words has been edited for publication. Universities in different parts of the country have been engaged in collecting dialect material, and Uzbek fiction published throughout the Soviet era has been processed for the excerption of words and phrases.<sup>12</sup> Something that has been stressed throughout the current language reform process is that scientific and technical terms should be maintained in an international shape or, for new coinages, given such a shape, since – the argument goes – all science is international and does not belong to any particular nation.

Generally speaking, as far as vocabulary issues are concerned, the current Uzbek language situation is characterized by caution and moderateness on the part of responsible language planners, perhaps with a certain amount of tolerance towards lexical creativeness among the general public. This state of affairs could, however, be interpreted as indecisiveness as regards the choice between, on the one hand, traditional, or archaic vocabulary, at times completed with new Turkic-language derivations, and, on the other hand, *status-quo* russified and

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<sup>11</sup> *Adolat* ('Justice'), 11 November 2005:2.

<sup>12</sup> Personal communication with Prof. Ne'mat Maxqamov, one of the linguists in charge of this project at the Institute of Language and Literature, Tashkent, December 2005. The previous 1981 edition of the dictionary consists of ca 60 000 entries.

internationalizing vocabulary. In the absence of any definite norm, great variation may be found in public texts – scientific as well as other types of non-fiction texts. Russian loan words of a permitted international pattern may be used side-by-side with newly coined synonymous or nearly synonymous derivations from Turkic roots (e.g. *provintzializm* / *chekkalilik* < *chekka*, 'border, edge', + *-li* (adj.) + *-lik* (nominal), i.e. 'marginality'; *unitar* < Ru. *unitarnyy* / *bo'linmas* < *bo'lin-*, 'be divided', + *-mas* (neg.ptcl), i.e. 'indivisible') or archaic Chaghatay lexemes (for example, *kommunikatsiya* / *aloqa* < Arabic 'connection'; *global* < Ru. *globalnyy* / *umumjahon* = *umum+jahon* < Arabic 'all' + Persian 'world').

From the comments provided above on the current development of literary Uzbek, it is evident that this language is still in a transitional period, where the lack of homogeneity in language forms may cause uncertainty, or ambivalence, affecting the bond between the language and its user, and give rise to doubts about its efficacy as a symbol of national identity.

### *Manifestation*

The domestic political agenda of the Uzbek government allows for a reinforcement of the status of Uzbek as a national symbol. In his speeches and writings, President Islam Karimov has launched an 'ideology of national independence' – *milliy mustaqillik g'oyasi* – where once again *milliy* means 'national' for something pertaining to the nation-state. The enterprise of formulating a new ideology seems to be deemed necessary not only for a complete liberation from old dogmas but also for the sake of filling the ideological vacuum resulting from this liberation in order to acquire some kind of "ideological immunity" against infringement by alien ideas. According to a statement by Karimov in 1993, this ideology is to be based on "the centuries-old traditions, customs, language, and spirit of our people".<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Abdullaev 2005:274f., from I. A. Karimov, *Pravovaya garantiya nashogo velikogo budushchego* [Legal Guarantees for Our Great Future], Tashkent 1993:13. For further comments, see Schlyter 1998:169–172, on "Uzbek Language Policy and Nationhood". In (Bakhtiyor) Karimov 2003, written by an Uzbek scholar actively participating in the Uzbek language debate for many years, sociopolitical and intellectual-spiritual development is being discussed against a background of "nation, man, and language", where national language turns into a more or less inalienable component of the nation-state and becomes synonymous with "state language".

Although this is a new non-socialist agenda for the resurrection of pre-Soviet life patterns, President Karimov's formula for an ideology of national independence is similar in character to early Soviet views on nationhood and the role of traditional life, language and people's mentality in the definition of this concept.<sup>14</sup> After only a little more than 20 years of independence, it is small wonder that Soviet-style paradigms continue to operate in the minds of Uzbek language planners, the great majority of whom are still Soviet-bred linguists and politicians. The former Soviet view on language as an ideological tool can be noticed not only in the official rhetoric but also – and more importantly – in the very comprehension of what language is in relation to the state and its people. For President Karimov, with his training as a Soviet politician, it may seem difficult – and perhaps not even desirable – to define the state as simply an administrative body regulated by laws and detached from ideology. In his ideology of national independence, the Uzbek language becomes the pillar upon which the history and culture of the Uzbek nation-state can, and should, rest.

The strengthening of Uzbek as a symbol of national identity will be very much dependent on the development of contemporary literature and the integration of the literary past of Uzbek into the cultural legacy of the Uzbek state. Literature in relation to both of these aspects is an important tool for national representation. As for the content and genres of post-Soviet Uzbek literature, either in Latin script or in the still more frequent Uzbek Cyrillic script, researchers will need more time before they can make assessments of new thematic trends and literary styles. A weak point in the case of literary traditions and previous literature is constituted by the many script changes that have occurred in modern Uzbek. The Latin alphabet from 1993–1995 is the fourth major alphabet employed for Uzbek since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the previous ones being Arabic, Latin (different from the current one), and Cyrillic. This makes it difficult for present-day and future generations of Uzbekistani citizens to have access to older literature, including that of their near Soviet past.

There have been attempts at encouraging school children and students to learn the Arabic alphabet and Arabic-Persian vocabulary from Islamic Chaghatay literature. During the first few years after independence, for instance, the Uzbek

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. a statement by Stalin concerning the definition of 'nation' and 'nationality', quoted in English translation by Fierman 1991:70: "[a] historically evolved stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up ...". For comprehensive surveys of Soviet language policy, see e.g. Smith 1998 and Grenoble 2003.

State Television broadcast programs where small boys and girls competed in reading and interpreting words written in the Arabic script. The first generation of school children to learn reading and writing in the new alphabet without previous training in the Cyrillic one were those starting school in the fall of 1996. These children are now young adults. Among them are persons who have not learned either Russian, which is no longer compulsory, or the Uzbek Cyrillic alphabet. As a result, they are cut off from the legacy of Soviet Uzbek literature. Projects on transliterating Soviet Uzbek fiction to the new script have been started,<sup>15</sup> at the same time as there are courses in Cyrillic script separate from Russian language teaching for primary and secondary school.

As can be inferred from the comments on corpus planning in the previous section, the everyday standard Uzbek of either private or public discourse is currently far from being a uniform linguistic code – a condition which might impede or counteract people's loyalty towards the language. As long as this state of affairs prevails, it will be difficult for the State Language to appear as a full-fledged alternative to Russian for those who grew up with the latter as their literary and professional idiom. After all, the Soviet-Russian past lies close at hand, not just as a recently terminated but also as a still influential political program holding administrative personnel in its grip. More generally, it is a cultural pattern which most adults – officials as well as common people at large – are familiar with through personal experience. The mentality and means of expression induced by their former life pattern may appear as a secure paradigm for them to take refuge in at times of uncertainty and political or economic hardships. This holds true as much for linguistic behavior as it does for other spheres of Uzbek society.

The Andijan events in 2005 provide an example of how changes in the post-Soviet foreign policy of Uzbekistan may affect people's linguistic behavior and attitudes towards language planning and language reform at the domestic level. Uzbekistan's strained relations with the US government, after suspicion and accusations from both sides due to the inaccessibility of information and uncertainty about who and what instigated the demonstrations and military

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<sup>15</sup> For example, the Sharq ('East') Publishing House in Tashkent has introduced a series of Classics (*Asr oshgan asarlar*), where so far a small number of novels have appeared in the new Uzbek Latin alphabet, such as *Kecha va kunduz* ('Night and Day'; 2004) by Cho'lpon, from 1936, originally printed in the Uzbek Latin alphabet of the 1930s and later in Cyrillic, and *Yulduzli tunlar: Bobur* ('Starry Nights: Babur'; 2004) by Pirimqul Qodirov from 1978.

actions in Andijan, led to a more or less complete break with the West and a strong rapprochement with Russia. One palpable effect of this is revived interest in the Russian language and culture.

Even though language planners comment that the latinization of Uzbek is an irrevocable process and that Russian now has to compete with English as the most appealing world language for younger generations, both common people and officials show more varied attitudes towards the status of Uzbek as state language and the Uzbek language reform today than – say – 15 years ago. The change in language attitudes may, at least in the foreseeable future, have an impact on the language situation and language usage in the country – a development that shows the sensitivity of the issue.

## Concluding Remarks

With the general shift in research on language policies away from corpus-related investigations and descriptive accounts to theories involving the functions and accessibility of languages,<sup>16</sup> studies on language planning have typically focused on non-linguistic criteria, such as power relations in a language community and other sociopolitical factors. In contrast to this trend, an attempt was made in the present article to call upon linguistic features, not only for descriptive explorations, but for an estimation of the capacity of Uzbek to acquire and maintain the image and role of a national language. Language history and literary traditions together with the reform work that is being carried out on the current language corpus of Uzbek were the main linguistic topics referred to for this purpose.

Being part of an all-embracing and radical societal transformation, the development of Uzbek will be monitored in a very direct way by the new political conditions under which Uzbekistan is maturing as a state. An impediment to the effectiveness of Uzbek language planning is the discrepancy between, on the one hand, the determination to achieve status planning goals

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<sup>16</sup> Dua 2008:191 writes: "The theoretical and historical perspectives in the evolution of language policy and language planning, and policy analysis and its evaluation in different sociolinguistic contexts have clearly brought out that language policy and planning are intricately involved with relations of power." Cf. articles in Ricento 2006. For language management by individuals in different domains (family, school, church, workplace, government, etc.), see Spolsky 2009.

and, on the other hand, the confused approach to corpus planning and its implementation. In the present situation, the latinization of Uzbek lingers on in a non-energetic manner and appears not to have vigor enough to assert itself within the time frame set for its completion. The hesitant vocabulary reform makes it all the more evident that the language is at best in a process of proving its legitimacy, the success of which will depend on the recognition of the reformed language as a standard variety by the language community to which it belongs.

If language planning measures were better coordinated, stabilizing the post-Soviet Uzbek vocabulary and orthography and promoting literary trends and innovations in the field of literature, then standard Uzbek would most probably be in a stronger position to develop as an official language and eventually also as a language representing the post-Soviet nation-state of Uzbekistan.

One important factor in the development of Uzbek as a more autonomous language is the fact that it is gradually becoming more independent of Russian, not only with regard to envisioned orthographic changes but also because Russian is no longer an important source language in Uzbek word formation. Nor does Russian dominate as a mediator of international terminology. Despite the prevailing bewilderment and uncertainty in the official Uzbek language policy, the post-Soviet renewal of Uzbek and the language situation in Uzbekistan at large may very well turn into an accelerating and more intensive process, especially when the youth of today and thus the future post-Soviet Uzbek generations are old enough to take the initiative in the country's language development.

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# Language and the State in Late Qing Xinjiang

ERIC T. SCHLUESSEL

In light of growing interest in ethnic conflict in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China, it is valuable to examine the historical processes by which the contemporary sociolinguistic configuration obtaining in Xinjiang and, thus, grievances concerning that configuration have been established. One oft-cited problem facing the people of Xinjiang and the Chinese authorities charged with the development of that region and its population is conflict over language and its fields of use. Uyghurs, belonging to the titular nationality and the non-Chinese majority of Xinjiang, in particular seem to resent the increasing marginalization of their language. The Uyghur language, despite its status as an official language of the region and constitutional protections of its use and independent evolution, as well as its expanded use in broadcast media, is rapidly losing ground in the educational system. The formerly bilingual school system of Xinjiang, which previously offered considerable latitude of choice in terms of the linguistic medium of education, where such freedom was practicable, is rapidly becoming monolingual, with potentially serious social and political consequences.<sup>1</sup>

Language attitudes in Xinjiang, however, are by no means homogeneous. Dedication to the maintenance and promotion of a national "mother tongue" is

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<sup>1</sup> There is now an extensive literature on contemporary language and education policy in Xinjiang in English. See Dwyer 2005, Hann 2013, and Schluessel 2007, 2009, among others.

generally tied to identification with that linguistic variety's associated ethno-national group, especially where the connection between language and ethnicity receives special official recognition. Despite the efforts of both Chinese administrations and native activists over the past century, the principles of linguistic nationalism, particularly the mutual association of language and ethno-national identity as articulated by Soviet and Chinese Communist power, are not yet discursively dominant among the people of Xinjiang. That is to say that language concerns are not universally near the forefront of Xinjiangese minds. The conflict and synergy of various social and political movements over the course of the past two centuries has produced multiple conceptions of the nation and its institutions. Therefore, it is useful to examine national identity and language attitudes as part of an ongoing process of negotiation between state and other actors promoting competing language regimes and linguistic institutions.

Regard for history is especially important because the modern subjects of this process, particularly those who are personally invested in linguistic institutions, are aware of and draw on historical precedent. The development of Uyghur nationalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century demonstrates what Duara (1995) has called the bifurcation of history, the political dialogue between historical actors and their own understandings of past and present.<sup>2</sup> Because of this, it is absolutely vital for scholarship on contemporary Xinjiang to approach the region's history critically. Yet, the historiography of Xinjiang in the late Qing dynasty (1636–1911), precisely when the institutional roots of the modern state began to appear, has relied overmuch on polemical texts from the 1930s and beyond that emphasize the imposition of Chinese language and culture on the Turkic Muslim majority. These artifacts of the self-conscious construction of national identity present an objection to Qing and Chinese power on mainly linguistic and cultural grounds, reflecting the intellectual biases of their authors and the realities of a diaspora nationalist community unable to act with force on behalf of their coethnics in China.<sup>3</sup> While many Turkic Muslims certainly objected to the Qing, this particular attitude is not attested in the Turkic texts written during the Qing itself. Rather, Qing language policy, although chiefly assimilatory, received

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<sup>2</sup> Duara 1995:51–82.

<sup>3</sup> Turkestani diaspora thinkers, including those from Eastern Turkestan, are heavily influenced by various strains of idealism. Like contemporary Uyghur thinkers, they historically adopted these ideas in part out of opposition to Communist materialism or in an effort to carve out a separate intellectual space (Schluessel 2013:323–335).

various responses, not all of which were negative. It is therefore necessary, prior to any further exploration of language and the state in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Xinjiang, to address the linguistic institutions of the late Qing anew.

In order to address this period, I will explore changes in official language planning and policy (LPP) in Xinjiang in the later period of Qing rule, from 1876 through 1912, with reference to Qing administration in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This period provides an apt opportunity for testing the relationship between linguistic culture and language regimes; distinct sets of values and ideas about language inform and reflect official configurations of relations between linguistic varieties and the people who speak them. I will demonstrate that the late Qing language regime in Xinjiang immediately following its reconquest was different from that under earlier Qing rule. This shift related to a broader change in official and intellectual concepts of language as an institution capable of channeling state power during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. I will also show that the statewide programs of sociopolitical reform implemented at the very end of the Qing brought another change to official LPP in Xinjiang. I will demonstrate the shifting relationship between LPP and ethnography of language in the early Qing universal empire, the late Qing colonial empire, and the emerging nation-state.

For reasons of space, my perspective in this chapter is overly statist and assumes that popular language attitudes are primarily reactive. This is a historically appropriate stance; it is evident that the Qing administration was overly concerned with the institutions of language, while there is nothing to suggest a similar preexisting Turkic Muslim preoccupation. Nevertheless, where appropriate, I will discuss the reactions to policy expressed in contemporary Turkic works, as these accounts undermine the pervasive emphasis in contemporary and historical work on Xinjiang on the state's power to shape attitudes and identities.

## Language and Power in Early Qing Xinjiang

The Qing completed the conquest of Xinjiang with the destruction of the Zunghar Mongol state and the establishment of a dual administration on the model of Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. In the north, a military administration under the Ili General took an active role in defense and taxation, as well as resettlement and construction efforts following the extermination of the Zunghars. In the south, including the oases of Qumul and Turpan, the local

settled Turkic Muslim (Turki) aristocracy was integrated into the Manchu administration through the Court of Colonial Affairs (Chin. *Lifan yuan*). The Qing thus ruled the Turki population indirectly, as it ruled other outlying peoples, and established only a partial civilian bureaucracy.<sup>4</sup>

In terms of LPP, little changed. Although language education through compulsory schooling later became the primary means of enacting LPP in Xinjiang, for now, Islamic education through *maktāps* and *madrasas* continued unabated. Otherwise, the Grand Minister Superintendent of Qinghai, as the nearest civilian authority, memorialized the court in 1767 to establish schools in Xinjiang for the sons of soldiers in the Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese military garrisons, as well as for the public.<sup>5</sup> Although the Minister intended for the schools to teach Chinese writing and literary style and to develop students' "moral character" through immersion in the Classics in line with proposals for a national curriculum, the schools focused on the Manchu martial arts, and perhaps all but one graduate received a "military", rather than "literary", education.

The official documentation of language in the early Qing was intended to demonstrate the Empire's legitimate authority over the cultures and peoples of Inner Asia by demonstrating their linguistic equality and the universality and equivalence of the concepts their vocabularies express.<sup>6</sup> Multilingualism, as embodied by the *Imperially-Commissioned Glossary of the Western Regions*, was a mark of Qing universal authority, but functional access to certain languages also defined the limits of one's power. In the 26<sup>th</sup> year of the Qianlong Emperor's reign (1761–1762), the private stamps that *hakim begs*, officials in charge of cities, had long used to approve documents were replaced with seals in Manchu, Mongolian, and Turki scripts, though not Chinese or Tibetan.<sup>7</sup> This served to combat counterfeiting of these seals, in part by introducing languages that Turki generally could not read but that Qing officials would easily recognize as genuine or not. The Qing government also encouraged Chinese officials in Xinjiang, including the many scholars who found themselves in exile there, to learn Turki.

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<sup>4</sup> Newby 1996:69f.

<sup>5</sup> He-ying 1968 [1805]:214–219.

<sup>6</sup> Millward and Newby 2006:127f.; Fu-heng et al. 1984 [1763]: i-iv.

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous 1957 [1772]:174f.

For the most part, the encouragement did not take, and Chinese in Xinjiang remained ignorant of native languages and literatures.

Newby (1999) discusses the preoccupation of early Qing writers on Xinjiang with the natural and historical landscape and their tendency to reproduce established ideas about human activity.<sup>8</sup> Where language is concerned, these writers sometimes describe spoken Turki or Chaghatay, a widely-used Turkic literary language, but only in terms of the *bui* "Muslim" writing system and in a religious context. In referring to "Muslim" texts, these Chinese writers conflate Arabic, Persian, and Turkic religious and secular works, reflecting both their unawareness of variation in writing systems and received knowledge of Islam from China Proper.<sup>9</sup> These descriptions are always accompanied by a lamentation of the limited literacy of *akhunds* and other religious leaders. He-ying, one of the more charitable authors, asserts that "Muslim children can write," but otherwise offers the stock description: "The Muslim writing is like bird tracks, like tadpoles. It is read horizontally and is joined-up. It is especially difficult to handle. There are 29 basic characters, and those who know them never have an incorrect character [as one might when writing in Chinese]."

The primary object of lexicography was not everyday vocabulary, but toponyms. Such work was undertaken in the hopes of locating the present geography of the region in the Han and Tang past, then "rectifying" the ancient toponyms, either by correcting the names themselves or reapplying old labels to the contemporary.<sup>10</sup> One interesting example was produced by Wang Qisun (1755–1817), whose "Pastoral Songs of the Western Corner" records what appear, at first, to be 60 herders' songs from Northern Xinjiang translated into poetic literary Chinese.<sup>11</sup> Wang presents these as "snippets of information" appended with copious footnotes in the tradition of evidential scholarship, linking the lyrics with both Han and Tang dynasty works on the "Western Regions" and with the events of the recent conquest.<sup>12</sup> In fact, Wang, a calligrapher of some renown, never left home. His poems are intended, as he readily

<sup>8</sup> Newby 1999:455, 457, 459f.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. He-ying 1966 [c. 1802–1804]:411f.

<sup>10</sup> Newby 1996:68.

<sup>11</sup> Newby 1999:457; Wang Qisun 1968 [1805]:270–281.

<sup>12</sup> Newby 1999:454f.

states, as a reflection on the earlier *Imperial Gazetteer of the Western Regions (Xiyu Tuzhi)*.

Linguistic change among Turkic Muslims was not, therefore, primarily a result of LPP itself, but rather of practice. Brophy (2013) has recently argued that, among the Turki aristocracy and bureaucracy, there emerged a special Turkic variety he calls “*yamen Uyghur*” – that is, Turkic as spoken and written in Qing offices. Yet, this particular variety had less to do with the introduction of Manchu or Chinese to the linguistic environment. Instead, it had emerged under Zunghar rule, incorporating Mongol terminology into a Turkic grammar. As the Qing continued to use Mongol as a medium of communication with Turki aristocrats until late in the Qing, this official patois changed rather little. At the same time, Chinese settlement and mercantile expansion and the presence of Chinese Green Standard garrison soldiers introduced Chinese language to a broader segment of Turki society. Several individuals from this early period are known to have been sufficiently bilingual in Turkic and Chinese, to have composed macaronic poetry or understood performances of Chinese drama.<sup>13</sup> Among them were the many translators employed by Qing offices. Nevertheless, none of this was planned in a central or systematic way, and the concern with language arose out of necessity and accident.

## Zuo Zongtang’s Language Regime for a Colonial Xinjiang

Effectively nothing is known about language and power under the Muslim uprisings and regime of Ya’qūb Beg in the 1860s and 1870s. Between 1876, when Zuo Zongtang’s armies had mostly completed the reconquest of Xinjiang, and 1912, when the Xinhai Revolution ran its course in the region and Republican authority was nominally established, several different language regimes informed as many competing language planning projects.

One of the most influential language regimes originated with native Turkic Muslim activists. Beginning in 1882, local reformists began to found schools under the influence of the New Method educational program of Islamic

<sup>13</sup> For an example of Turki-Chinese macaronic verse, see Ross and Wingate 1934: xi-xii. Radloff (1886:92ff.) records one account of a Chinese (or possibly Manchu) drama performed in Ili.

modernist Jadids, mostly from Kazan in Tatarstan, and of Pan-Turkists from the Ottoman Empire. The Jadids and others like them advocated for the teaching of Arabic and of Turkic using very effective phonic methods, rather than rote memorization.<sup>14</sup> These local activists adopted more clearly nationalistic language policies in regard to their local communities. Their activism on behalf of the institution of “native language” encouraged positive identification with an Uyghur or broader Turkic ethno-national group. Some of them became increasingly influential under the nominal rule of the Republic of China in the 1930s, during which the Soviet-backed provincial government institutionalized language and ethnicity in an unprecedentedly broad and more comprehensive way.

Here, however, I am concerned with the institutions of rule that encouraged people to position themselves negatively *against* cultural Chineseness and the Chinese language. To present a now oft-cited example: educational programs meant to reshape the linguistic culture of elite Xinjiang society and reorient it to the Chinese center interfered with a preexisting social order of which traditional education was an important part. As Zuo’s armies took territory in Xinjiang, his Reconstruction Agencies established Chinese-style schools for the mandatory education of young aristocratic Turki men in Chinese, not Manchu, language and culture. As a result, many well-placed Turki families fled Xinjiang for Central Asia, hired peasant boys to attend in their sons’ place at risk of imprisonment, and generally developed a resentment of the Qing state and its cultural impositions through the personage of Zuo Zongtang and his successors. I will describe this program in greater detail below.

I contend that we can understand the new relationship between language, power, and administration in Xinjiang in this period in terms of a distinct state-wide language regime: in the early Qing, the official institutions of language were primarily employed in establishing and maintaining the legitimacy of the Manchu-led universal empire. By the time of the reconquest in the 1870s, however, the social changes of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, brought about both by large-scale social disruptions within the borders of the Qing and by defeats at the hands of foreign powers, had brought with them new attitudes towards language and new ways of dealing with linguistic difference. At this point, many leading

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Gasprinski 1898.



intellectuals saw Chinese as the natural language of the empire and of its majority population; similarly, other languages belonged to the populations of other states.

Languages gave access to groups' and states' cultural and political lives, access that the foreign imperial powers demanded of China and that the Qing began to desire, as well. The Opium Wars (1839–1842, 1856–1860) alerted the Empire to the strength of Western naval powers, and Treaty of Tianjin (1858) effectively gave the Qing court three years to develop a corps of translators and interpreters.<sup>15</sup> One result was the establishment of Translators' Colleges for the teaching of foreign languages in major cities of coastal China.<sup>16</sup> At first, these schools, as the few other language schools before them, were open to enrollment only by young Manchu bannermen already proficient in their mother tongue, which was rapidly falling out of use. Manchu, which had been one of the chief signs of official Manchu identity and symbols of banner cohesion since the reign of Hong Taiji (r. 1626–1643), remained an important marker of loyalty to the Qing and, thus, trustworthiness in the handling of foreign languages and ideas. Over time, however, it was thought that Han Chinese students, particularly at the College in the treaty port of Shanghai, where there had been no Manchu garrison, were learning more quickly, so such requirements were effectively dropped. It is in light of this reconsideration of the role of language in the establishment of state power, particularly in the international system, that we should consider development in LPP at the other end of the Empire.

It is common to analyze matters of cultural contact and appropriation in the late Qing as questions of "essence" *ti* and "function" *yong*, the dichotomous view of technology advanced by Zhang Zhidong (1837–1909) in support of employing foreign and modern means for native and traditionalist end.<sup>17</sup> Reformist statesmen separated artifacts and even the processes of their manufacture and use from their cultural and institutional contexts. Zuo's naval shipyard in Fujian may be seen in this light: to be trained in French and English language and seamanship was not to become foreign.<sup>18</sup> Nor, indeed, was it to become "modern". Even in Gansu Province, which Zuo also retook for the Qing, Zuo's schools taught modern industrial and agricultural skills to a Sinophone

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<sup>15</sup> Kuo 1915:64.

<sup>16</sup> Biggerstaff 1961:15ff., 31; Rhoads 1998:1018–1026; Wright 1957:239–242.

<sup>17</sup> Levenson 1958:60.

<sup>18</sup> Chen 1961:50–80.

population. This included the manufacture of armaments, improved methods for cotton farming, and the excavation and management of mines, the last of which was taught by engineers that Zuo brought from Germany and Greece.

In Xinjiang, however, material and cultural conditions necessitated a different tactic and one difficult to understand in terms of the *ti-yong* dichotomy. A high proportion of Xinjiang arable land had been abandoned during the decades of war. Thus, Zuo's administration mostly focused on land reclamation and on provisioning the Qing armies. Technological development remained a very low priority under both the old military government in Ili and the new civilian administration in the new provincial capital of Dihua (modern Ürümchi) until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the Ili General embarked on a program of military modernization and both governments supported the building of factories.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, Zuo found the linguistic situation in the mostly non-Chinese region to be a major impediment to government:

*The officials and the people do not understand each other's languages. They do not understand writing. Everything relies on communication through intermediaries and is upside-down and confused and time-consuming. [Because of t]his lack of closeness between the officials and the people, [we must] get rid of the obstruction, broadly establish yishu, first teaching Chinese [hanwen], so that they may begin to learn characters.<sup>20</sup>*

*Yishu* refers, in its classic usage, to charitable schools in the Neo-Confucian sense, institutions of elementary learning meant to bring about or revive an age of universal sagehood. In Xinjiang, however, Zuo's Reconstruction Agencies established *yishu* institutions of compulsory education for the male children of local Turkic Muslim nobles. A later memorial reiterates this position: "If we wish to change their peculiar customs and assimilate them to our *huafeng* [Chinese ways], we must establish *yishu* and make the Muslim children read [Chinese] books, recognize characters, and understand spoken language".<sup>21</sup> *Yishu* in Xinjiang were primarily instruments of language planning.

<sup>19</sup> Wei Changhong 1981:6–12, 20ff. The most up-to-date history of state development in late-Qing and modern Xinjiang is Kinzley, who addresses this period extensively (Kinzley 2012:33–87).

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Han Da 1998:228f.

<sup>21</sup> Memorial, "On managing the reconstruction of Xinjiang", GX 6.4.17 [= 25 May 1880] in Zuo Zongtang 1986:2254–2257. Translation from Millward and Tursun 2004:66.

Zuo's program of both cultural and linguistic training reflects his intellectual roots and those of his reformist colleagues in the Qing government in the Song School of Neo-Confucianism. His program for Xinjiang reflects other Song School social experiments and, more importantly, the fundamental principles of this philosophy.

Song School Neo-Confucians had long dreamed of, and sometimes implemented, broad-reaching programs of social reform intended, at least in their legitimizing discourse, to bring about the revival of a mythical era of universal classical education and sagehood. They believed that, in the idealized past of the Zhou dynasty (1045–256 BCE), various egalitarian sociopolitical conditions had held that produced universal literacy in the Classics and, thus, social harmony and strong government. Education took a key role in this revival from the very beginning, when Hu Yuan (993–1059 CE), the chief philosophical progenitor of the Song School, presided over one of the private academies that would come to replace official schools as centers of intellectual activity.<sup>22</sup> Under the recommendations of Fan Zhongyan (989–1052), who cited the classical precedent set by Zhou kings, Hu's school became the standard for a national school system. More egalitarian reformers later established charitable *yishu* modeled on these early academies but intended for the classical education of the broader populace.<sup>23</sup> While these early Neo-Confucians influenced state policy, they generally failed to implement their radical ideals more completely. Opportunities arose only when one was given authority over a larger administrative area, as in the case of the Qing official Chen Hongmou (1696–1771) during his tenure in Yunnan.<sup>24</sup> Chen established hundreds of Neo-Confucian schools all over the primarily non-Chinese province, both to revive this idealized period in a virgin land and to spread Chinese language and customs to a frontier people. Zuo probably held similar sentiments towards Xinjiang as early as 1830, when he first produced a poem on the establishment of Xinjiang as a province under the influence of Gong Zizhen (1792–1841), a statesman who expressed romantic notions of Xinjiang's transformation.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Bary 1953:89, 93f.

<sup>23</sup> Bol 1989:151–156; Bary 1989:188, 195; Woodside 1983:18f.

<sup>24</sup> Rowe 2001:148ff.

<sup>25</sup> Chou 1976:125; Wright 1994.

The essential philosophical principle of this school of Confucian revivalism, however, was the unity of three concepts: Principle, Practice, and Literary Expression.<sup>26</sup> This is to say that practical reform could only be carried out in conjunction with the mastery of literature and the improvement of writing, which served to communicate, reinforce, and reflect classical learning and values. It was through learning and reproducing a certain discourse in a certain linguistic variety, in this case literary Chinese, that officials could perfect their administration. In order to further integrate Xinjiang into the Chinese whole, Zuo would need to reform linguistic practice through an expanded class of colonial bilingual intermediaries. Although these officials were to be culturally “bilingual”, in terms of linguistic practice, the schools put less emphasis on teaching spoken Mandarin, which was also a concern in contemporary China Proper, than on the mastery of writing.<sup>27</sup> Zuo’s concept of language and of the necessity and methods of its planning were, thus, part and parcel with the understanding and implementation of classical ideals and precedents.

The explicit use of Chinese, rather than Manchu, as the target language and language of instruction itself demonstrates a growing understanding of the Qing empire not as a universal empire, but as a Chinese state. Zuo Zongtang himself had failed the imperial exams and retreated for some years into local intellectual activities in his home province of Hunan before emerging to work for the safety and territorial integrity of China Proper, raising a modern army against the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1850–1864). Among his Hunan army were also many members of the anti-Manchu Brothers and Elders Society later involved in the Xinhai Revolution (1911–1912).<sup>28</sup> This probably affected the planning and implementation of the education program, especially following Zuo’s departure and up to the fall of the Qing, as the Hunan veterans often remained in positions of power for many years. Some old Hunanese ran their Confucian schools for Turki boys as pet projects into the last days of the Qing.<sup>29</sup>

Although Zuo’s program for education was thoroughly in the Neo-Confucian mode, it also reflected the practical problems of language and power that the Qing began to grapple with, following the Opium Wars. Zuo Zongtang, trained

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<sup>26</sup> Bary 1953:90.

<sup>27</sup> Millward 2007:144.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*:164.

<sup>29</sup> Mannerheim 2008:76.

in the home of the Song School in Changsha, Hunan, when faced with the concrete problem of linguistic difference and administration, in a region at last under his control, implemented a by then-classic Neo-Confucian solution. At this point, however, the schools, although “charitable schools” in name, had been divorced from the ideal of classical revival. Rather, they were remade to serve the pragmatism of late-Qing statecraft thinkers.

If one takes a strictly statist perspective, Zuo’s linguistic transformation of the Turki elite seems to have been implemented according to plan. Uyghur nationalist leader Isa Alptekin, who has provided the only frequently-cited Turkic-language source on education in this period, presents an anecdote from his father, Yūsuf Alptekin.<sup>30</sup> The older Alptekin recalled his mother’s humiliation over seeing her son being forced to dress in Chinese clothes. This second-hand account neatly personalizes the colonial experience and projects the concerns of diaspora nationalists into the past.

However, even the earliest records of *yishu* construction and operation indicate that they were complex institutions that served a variety of purposes. Enrolment at the *yishu* in Turpan, for example, included both Chinese and Muslim students, but most of the Muslims were actually identified by officials as Hui, not Turki. Chinese sometimes attended *yishu* for basic or further education.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, *yishu* were nominally funded by the court, but administered locally, and even the provincial government made little effort to, or else was unable to, enforce a single curriculum.

This information, gleaned from local documents, suggests that the experience of *yishu* recounted by Yūsuf Alptekin was hardly typical. Nevertheless, it is interesting that policy and its framers’ explicit intention to transform local elites significantly influenced an emergent nationalism that was itself elite and heavily statist over the following decades. During later policy debates, which I will briefly recount in the following section, the major criticism leveled at this policy was

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<sup>30</sup> This narrative first appears in a Turki- and Chinese-language newspaper Alptekin edited in Nanjing in 1934, *Çini Türkistan Awāzi* (Chin. *Bianduo yuekan*) and later again in his memoirs. A “Mr. Ai-sa from Xinjiang”, resident in Nanjing, very likely to be Alptekin under his Chinese name, was the source for Zeng Wenwu and Shen Yunlong’s (1936:408ff.) assertion that Chinese education in late-Qing Xinjiang brought about strife and alienation. Zeng’s argument has since been cited by several scholars, along with Alptekin’s memoirs.

<sup>31</sup> For example, one Ma Shaoyuan, a Hui from Kucha, went to the *yishu* in Kashgar to study in 1887 (*Gongzhong dang Guangxu chao zouzhe* 1973–1975, Vol. 5: 664f.).

that it induced elite Turki to flee Xinjiang for Russian Central Asia.<sup>32</sup> While there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that this happened, I argue once again that we must be cautious in reading our sources; most such anecdotes seem to come from either the *Xinjiang Gazetteer* (Chin. *Xinjiang tuzhī*), a tertiary source produced during and after the last years of the Qing,<sup>33</sup> and from Isa Alptekin himself. In both cases, the source is more polemical than empirical.

I have only found this period of language policy reflected in one non-nationalist source, a history and chronicle written by another elite, Ghulām Muḥammad Khān of Yarkand, in the 1920s.<sup>34</sup> Ghulām attributes the fall of the Qing in part to the implementation of Chinese-language education in Xinjiang by a pretender to the imperial throne. The pretender, he tells us, intended that “when the mothers and fathers of the children studying in the schools came to see their children, a child should speak to his father in the speech of Beijing; and that fathers and sons should speak together through a translator. The goal was that, when the old people died, all of the youth would have become Chinese”.<sup>35</sup> This statement speaks to the linkage of ethnic and linguistic identity in the matrix of Qing policy and the subsequent anxiety it induced in elites subject to it. Importantly, Ghulām is writing at this point in his history on the theme of the legitimacy of imperial rule, which he intends to demonstrate is dependent on the emperor’s maintenance of the integrity of the Islamic community. His explanation of the Chinese-education policy is not institutional or political, but rather cosmological, as it is linked to the disruption of the natural imperial succession ordained by God and enshrined in sacred history. His narrativization of communal identity in relation to the sovereign and the subsequent collapse of imperial sacred authority resembles, from a certain theoretical perspective, an incipient nationalism. Overall, elite identities certainly came to reflect, if not completely, the ramifications of state-imposed identification.

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. Yuan Dahua et al. 1923, j. 106:6a-7a.

<sup>33</sup> Yuan Dahua et al. 1923.

<sup>34</sup> Lund University Library, Jarring Prov. 163.

<sup>35</sup> Lund University Library, Jarring Prov. 163, 125a:11ff.

## Chinese Nationalist LPP and a New Understanding of Language

The final years of the Qing dynasty saw an abrupt change in the state discourse of language. Language was conceived of not just as a system of varieties marking kinds of people, but as an instrument of reform and an institution of power. Furthermore, the exams that had directed students' language learning, encouraging a focus on the unity of composition, philosophy, and practical action, had been abolished in 1905. Intellectuals turned, then, to the development of spoken Chinese as a national language and to the promotion of literacy among the broader population.

Literacy was part of a program of comprehensive and modern public education. In Xinjiang, educational modernization was carried out by a new generation of civilian and military officials. These officials included both members of revolutionary secret societies and pro-imperial bureaucrats.

An important process of educational modernization took place through the military academies under the Ili General. Beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Qing undertook a program of modernization of the armed forces through the standardization of military curricula on a Japanese model, study abroad at a special school in Japan for Qing officers, and the institution of a hierarchy of regional military schools. The military administration in Ili had thus far been slow to reform and continued to send not modern soldiers from a popular army, but the traditionally-educated sons of Mongol, Kazakh, and other hereditary military families to Japan.

This ended in 1904, when the Ili General Chang-geng established the Ili Accelerated Military Academy (Chin. *Yili Sucheng Wubei Xuetang*) in Huiyuan in order to improve the defenses of the sparsely-garrisoned border region and support the formation of a New Ili Model Army.<sup>36</sup> The chief instructors were Japanese officers under the supervision of mostly Manchu administrators. Despite the official use of Chinese as the medium of instruction and of composition, one of the Japanese teachers, who had studied Chinese and worked in central China for some time, relied on an interpreter to translate his instructions into "the Qing language", Manchu. At first, the Ili Academy trained members of the established garrisons, especially Manchus. In 1907, however,

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<sup>36</sup> Zhang Wenya 2008:54ff.

several divisions of mostly Han Chinese soldiers from the Northern Army (*Beiyang Lujun*) and Hubei came to form the New Ili Model Army, bringing with them underground leaders of the Brothers and Elders and the young Revolutionary Alliance.

While the Ili military school trained soldiers from the old Qing military, Chinese civilian officials in Xinjiang set about providing education for the general public. From 1905 through 1911, civilian officials founded over six hundred elementary, middle, and other schools and renovated many *yishu* into modern institutions.<sup>37</sup> The changes began in earnest in 1907 with the appointment of Du Tong (1864–1929), an education specialist who had briefly toured Japan as the provincial education commissioner.<sup>38</sup> In theory, these schools were meant to familiarize the general Xinjiang population, both Han and non-Han, with spoken and written Mandarin. Turki were to be taught through the medium of spoken Turki, the immediate ancestor of modern Uyghur. Implementation, however, was difficult and actually suffered from many of the same problems as does present-day Mandarin-language education in Xinjiang: teachers were poorly-trained, unmotivated, and lacking in the resources necessary for their task. Turki-medium education at the elementary level often became Chinese-medium, depending on the needs of the teacher. Meanwhile, these schools were only lightly attended by Turki even after the Xinhai Revolution, although Manchus, Mongols, and Kazakhs seem to have accepted them much more readily.<sup>39</sup> Successful Turki students merited special mention in local gazetteers.<sup>40</sup>

As the Chinese language became national and education became modern, so too did the new officials' understanding of native Xinjiang languages. By this time, the Turkic and Chinese Muslims of Xinjiang are more clearly differentiated in their writing; while Chinese Muslims continue to be *hui* "Muslims", the Turkic Muslims are referred to by the rather pejorative term *chantou*, 'wrapped-headed', or simply *chan*. Gazetteers written in the last decade of the Qing further differentiate religious writings (*jingwen*) from the spoken language (*yuyan*) and

<sup>37</sup> Yuan Dahua et al. 1923.

<sup>38</sup> Millward 2007:143–146; Yuan Dahua et al. 1923:1391f.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Mannerheim 2008:83–91; Xie Xiaozhong 1922:151.

<sup>40</sup> Ma Dazheng 1988:656.



written language (*wenzi*) of the Turkic Muslims, despite their superficial similarity to Islamic religious texts.

A remarkable example of this new understanding is presented in the *Lop Nur County Local Gazetteer* (*Luopu Xian Xiangtu Zhi*) written by Yang Zhengzhuo in 1908. In this gazetteer, the author begins, according to the standard gazetteer format, with a classical reference to the *Han Shu* and locates Lop Nur as part of the ancient kingdom of Yutian. That is the end of his concern with the ancient past, however, and one that he says cannot be supported with any textual evidence. Indeed, Yang presents local place names and social institutions separately from the central narrative of Chinese dynastic succession, couching them instead in present-day realities.

Yang Zhengzhuo's presentation of the Arabo-Persian-based writing system of Chaghatay, the common written language of Central Asia at that time, attempts to analyze the phonetics of the language and its script systematically and in part according to the tools of traditional Chinese linguistics (*yuwenxue*). He explains that the letters are entirely phonetic: "One forms speech from sounds, and one writes according to speech." Yang equates the addition of diacritics to basic letters with the *fanqie* system invented to transliterate Sanskrit Buddhist terminology into Chinese. 28 of the 36 basic letters, he explains, represent single, unique sounds, which can be classified, according to *yuwenxue* consonantal categories, as laryngeals, velars, labials, and dentals. Of the four *bu*, or vowel categories, of *yuwenxue*, he divides Chaghatay vowels into open and closed varieties. Yang illustrates every character with its name transliterated from Turkic into Chinese and every syllable with its pronunciation in Chinese, provided that there is an equivalent. Yang marks letters with no Chinese equivalent with an "o".

Apart from this traditional, albeit systematic, treatment of Turkic sounds and letters, Yang also shows innovation in his understanding of the language's phonetics. He remarks on the considerable variation in linguistic varieties, in this case by the pronunciation of the letters, between cities. More importantly, in describing the vowel diacritics, Yang describes their qualities carefully, then classifies them into front and back varieties according to the rules of vowel harmony.

More generally, what local gazetteers produced during this period reflect a more nuanced and detailing understanding of cultural difference in Xinjiang. Officials wrote about ethnicity and Islam less according to old received knowledge and more according to new understandings of local conditions and

world history. For example, it is around this time that “Taranchi” (Ch. *talanqī*) appears commonly as an ethnonym in the Chinese literature to distinguish the Turkic Muslims of the Ili Valley, who identified as such, from others in Xinjiang.<sup>41</sup>

Most importantly for this discussion, language found a new place in local gazetteers. The gazetteer, as a genre of writing, had long been employed as a way of glorifying local history in China proper and making it comprehensible and accessible. In Xinjiang at the end of the Qing, where gazetteers were written for places such as Khotan and Tarbaghatai, many of the formal sections of the gazetteer remained empty, with no scholarly achievements or monuments to report.

One section, however, was always full: “Religion”. It is in the last few traditional Xinjiang gazetteers that local language moved from “Religion” and depictions of written language and illiteracy in the religious context to “People”, “Commercial Enterprise”, “Customs”, “Geography”, and other such categories and distinctions between various groups on the basis of their separate languages and literatures.<sup>42</sup> Sections of “Geography” also gave more attention to the etymologies of native place names.<sup>43</sup>

Of course, language is not the only basis of distinction, as racial type begins to play a role: Uyghurs belong to the “Arab Muslim race”<sup>44</sup> or the “*musiman zu* (*musulman* or Muslim race/clan)”.<sup>45</sup> “Religion”, at this point, rarely mentions language, though it, too, shows a global awareness in its inclusion of varieties of Christianity even where there are no missionaries to report. It is worth noting that almost all of the examples of attempts to discuss native languages in these gazetteers come from Southern Xinjiang, which the writers consider to be the native home of the *chantou* or settled Turkic Muslims and populated more completely with them.

Whereas the earlier period of LPP made a strong impression on elites, this later period was at least contemporaneous with a growing popular awareness of Chinese language. While the pre-Ya’qūb Beg period saw the persistence of a

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Ma Dazheng 1988:356f.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*:426, 574f., 559, 608, 619, 691, 697, 729–732.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*:567.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*:443.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*:541, 600.

Turko-Mongol mixed speech as the language of Turki officialdom, the post-reconquest language regime and the varieties that arose from increased contact with Chinese are qualitatively very different. Oral accounts from as early as the 1890s attest to the range of Chinese loan words in Turki, most of which relate to the popular experience of the judicial system. The names of torture implements to be found in the county office, for example, as well as terms for crimes and punishments predominate. Interestingly, when one looks at popular texts, both those directed at the Chinese-speaking authorities and to Turki audiences, one of the most common terms for self-identification as a Turkic Muslim is the Chinese pejorative *chantou*, rendered as *čanto*.<sup>46</sup>

I propose that this acceptance of a degree of Chinese vocabulary relates directly to the popular Turki experience of the state, which took place at an institutional and epistemic distance from policy and elite experience. It is well-attested that the imperial Chinese state operated indirectly in local society through the person of the magistrate; this was even more the case following the shifts in state-society relations of the late Qing and in an environment in which the imperial representative was essentially unable to communicate with his linguistically and culturally very different subjects.<sup>47</sup> In these circumstances, local government needed to operate bilingually and so produced documents in Turki as well as Chinese.<sup>48</sup> Yet, even where a warrant, petition, or deposition is given in Turki, it appears to have been increasingly understood that Chinese terms were legally necessary in order to specify infractions and legitimize epistolary forms.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Poskami 2004:149 and Menges 1976:48ff. Poskami's work is a book of observational and sometimes autobiographical poetry dating from the late Qing and early Republic, while Menges has reproduced a number of oral interviews recorded in Turpan and Qumul by the Russian orientalist Katanov in the early 1890s.

<sup>47</sup> The establishment of Xinjiang as a new province in 1884 brought about great confusion among its civilian bureaucrats. Newly-appointed magistrates were at a loss as to how to communicate with or rule Turkic Muslims. Many of the *begs*, having been dismissed from office, were consequently rehired as translators (Zeng and Shen 1936:363).

<sup>48</sup> Many such warrants, petitions, contracts, and other bilingual or translated texts have recently been reproduced in *Qingdai Xinjiang dang'an xuanji*, a collection of late-Qing local documents from Turpan.

<sup>49</sup> One simple example is a warrant, issued by the Turpan magistrate in Turki and executed by one Turki and one Chinese petty official. In it, several terms are left in Chinese, although written in Arabo-Persian script, among them *shang*, 'to wound' < Chin. *shang* and *čān*, 'warrant' < Chin. *qian*.

None of this is treated in LPP, yet it had a perceptible effect on linguistic practice.

## Conclusion

Elite concepts of language and difference formed at the national level in response to internal and external crises guided state policy towards language and education in Xinjiang in the late Qing. This response was informed first by established native political and moral philosophies that took language, in the form of formal composition, as a key part of learning and enacting those philosophies. In this sense, the late Qing language regime was qualitatively different from that of the early Qing, during which the institution of language served to legitimate a universal, rather than colonial, empire. As intellectuals' consciousness turned to an incipient belief in national progress, education in Xinjiang sought to create a new kind of imperial subject with a subjectively more "modern" linguistic repertoire and understanding, similar to that held by the new generation of provincial administrators.

Qing LPP in Xinjiang shaped local attitudes in unpredictable ways. It is clear that many Turki elites resented the early policies, and it is these voices that have dominated international discourse on the region's modern history. At the same time, Qing policy succeeded, both directly through education and indirectly through administrative necessity, in producing and maintaining a bilingual translator class whose members collaborated with the state. The existence even before the Ya'qūb Beg period of Turki-Chinese bilingualism and cultural interest, sufficient even to translate literature, all points to a group of intermediaries who took little issue with the use of Chinese in public life.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, ordinary Turki learned Chinese through routine interaction with the Chinese administration to navigate its terminology. However, because their voices mostly appear in refraction through official documents, their opinions about language are more difficult to decipher – just as the attitudes of today's Uyghur majority remain largely beyond the reach of social scientific research.

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<sup>50</sup> Brophy (2013:254) notes a "*jamen* Uyghur" translation of a Chinese novel produced in Khotan in 1859.

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# The Authors

## Timur Dadabaev

Dr. Timur Dadabaev is an Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tsukuba and concurrently Adjunct Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, University of Tokyo. An English-language monograph of his is *Towards Post-Soviet Central Asian Regional Integration: A Scheme for Transitional States* (2004). Together with Hisao Komatsu, Şahin Karasar and Guljanat Kurmangalieva Ercilasun, Prof. Dadabaev has co-authored and co-edited a volume titled *Central Eurasian Studies: Past, Present and Future* (2011). His Japanese-language monographic books include *Remembering the Soviet Past: Everyday Life in Soviet Central Asia*, (2010), *Uzbekistan in the Post-Socialist Era* (2008), *Realities of Mahalla: Changing Cultures and Societies of Central Asia* (2006).

## Büşra Ersanlı

Dr. Büşra Ersanlı is Professor of politics since 1990 at Marmara University, Istanbul. Her primary research area is nationalistic historiography and history textbooks on which she has authored one book and over 20 articles in Turkish and English. In her second area of interest (Eurasian studies, the Caucasus and Central Asia), she has edited four books and published many articles on modern history, ex-Soviet politics and history education (Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan - comparative). Since 2007, she is also conducting research on the Kurdish problem focusing mainly on mother tongue education, bilingual education and political participation. In addition to her academic work Professor Ersanlı teaches at a women's school for politics sponsored by KADER (association empowering women's participation in politics) since 2004, and has co-authored a book for this purpose.

## Zaur Gasimov

Dr. Zaur Gasimov was Research Fellow at the Leibniz-Institute of European History (Mainz, Germany) in 2009–2013. Since September 2013 he is Fellow at the Orient Institut Istanbul (Max Weber Foundation). His most recent publications are “Oswald Spengler als europäisches Phänomen” (with Carl A. Lemke Duque, Göttingen 2013) and “Kampf um Wort und Schrift. Russifizierung in Osteuropa im 19.–20. Jahrhundert” (Göttingen 2012). His fields of research cover contemporary history of Russia, Poland, the Caucasus, and the Turkish-Russian relations.

## Y. Emre Gürbüz

Dr. Y. Emre Gürbüz is working at the Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University, Department of History, and is co-chairman of Research Center for Turkic Civilization. His major field of research is focused on historiography and political developments in post-Soviet Turkic republics with a multidisciplinary perspective based mainly on history, sociology and political science. His recent works are on the nation-state formation in Kyrgyzstan, such as “Kyrgyzstan: in Search for Stability”, published in *Insight Turkey* (Fall 2013), and issues of national identity and historiography in Turkic republics, such as “One Migration Two Different Historiographies: The Migration of the Uzbeks and Kazakhs in the 15<sup>th</sup> century”, published in *Turkish Studies* (Spring 2013), and “Manas as a Savior in Times of Crisis”, published in *The State in Eurasia, Local and Global Arenas* (2013).

## Eric Schluessel

Eric T. Schluessel is a Ph. D. Candidate in History and East Asian Languages at Harvard University, where he is preparing “The Muslim Emperor of China”, a dissertation on translation and transculturation in Xinjiang in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He holds MA degrees in Linguistics from SOAS and in Central Eurasian Studies from Indiana University. He has published several pieces on contemporary and historical Xinjiang in journals and in edited volumes. Most recently, he has completed an edition of an Eastern Turki text under the title *The World As Seen from Yarkand: Ghulām Muḥammad Khān’s*

*1920s Chronicle* Mā Tītayniḡ wāqī'asi to be published in the TIAS Central Eurasian Research Series.

## Birgit N. Schlyter

Dr. Birgit N. Schlyter is Professor of Central Asian Studies at Stockholm University and Director of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII). She is the founder and head of *Stockholm International Program for Central Asian Studies*. Two conference volumes from the SIPCAS program initiated and co-edited by Dr. Schlyter are *Prospects for Democracy in Central Asia* (2005) and *The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Eurasian Geopolitics* (2013). Her own major field of research is sociolinguistics, where her most recent publication is "Multilingualism and Language Renewal in Ex-Soviet Central Asia", in *The Handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism* (2013). As Director of the SRII, Professor Schlyter is heading a multidisciplinary forum located in Istanbul, Turkey, for scholarly meetings and research in a Eurasian perspective.

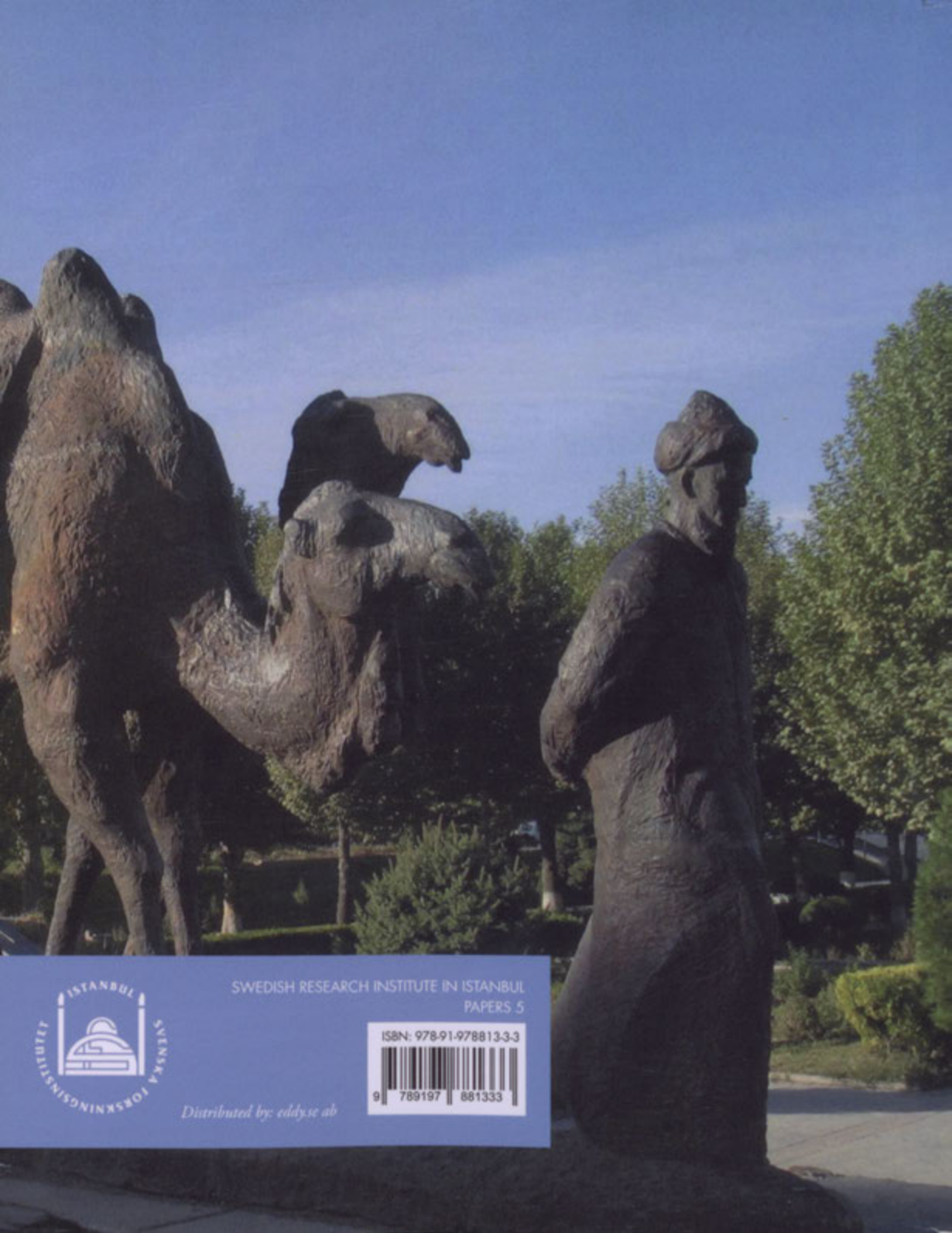
## Anita Sengupta

Dr. Anita Sengupta is Fellow at the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata. She is an area studies specialist and her work at the Institute has been focused on the Eurasian region with Uzbekistan being her area of special interest. Dr. Sengupta has also worked extensively on Turkish politics. She is the author of *The Myth and Rhetoric of the Turkish Model* (2014), *Heartlands of Eurasia: The Geopolitics of Political Space* (2009), *Russia, China and Multilateralism in Central Asia* (2005), *The Formation of the Uzbek Nation-State: A Study in Transition* (2003), and *Frontiers into Borders: The Transformation of Identities in Central Asia* (2002). She has also edited a number of volumes on Eurasian politics.

## Rano Turaeva-Hoehne

Dr. Rano Turaeva-Hoehne is affiliated with Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. Currently she is also a lecturer at Martin Luther University in Halle teaching anthropology of the state, politics and power

to both undergraduate and graduate level students. For her Ph. D. dissertation at the aforementioned Max Planck Institute she explored the dynamics of interethnic relations among sub-ethnic Uzbek groups in Tashkent. In her thesis titled *Identification, Discrimination and Communication: Khorezmian Migrants in Tashkent*, the theoretical focus is on the communication aspects of collective identifications among the groups in question. Dr. Turaeva-Hoehne has published articles in such journals as *Inner Asia*, *Central Asian Survey*, *Post-Communist studies*, *Anthropology of Middle East*, and *Anthropos*. Her work touches upon such topics as language and identity, citizenship, ethnic relations, state and society relations among others. Her current research focuses on the principles of regulation of informal economic activities among Central Asian migrants in Russia.



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