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**Hero-making as ontological security practice:
Tajikistan's identity politics and relations with Uzbekistan**

Shuhrat Baratov

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I declare that, except where due reference provided, the work presented in this thesis is my own original research.

Shuhrat Baratov

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To my mother and two sisters

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Abstract

Remembering national heroes is one of the most important aspects of the politics of national identity. Due to their exemplary lives and deeds, the national heroes get portrayed as the role models for the nation. How do states choose the heroes? What are the 'selection criteria'? What is the role of commemorating the heroes in defining the relations between the national 'self' and 'other'? Using the case of the 'Heroes of Tajikistan' and this nation's problematic relations with neighbouring Uzbekistan, this thesis attempts to find the answers to these questions. In doing so, it relies on the poststructuralist theories of IR. The study reveals that the discursive construction of the national 'self' and 'other' through commemorating the 'Heroes of Tajikistan' is a correlative of Uzbekistan's threatening behaviour in relations with Tajikistan. In other words, remembering the heroes in particular, and the identity politics in general, are not the simple matters of domestic affairs, but rather can be the crucial factors in studying international relations.

As this research revealed, the national identity discourses in Tajikistan honour the 'Heroes' for their leadership in achieving national independence from Uzbekistan in the 1920s (Makhsum and Shotemur), and defending the Tajik language and literary traditions from the discriminatory attitude of the Uzbek nationalists in the late 1920s (Aini), as well as writing the history of Tajiks throughout the Soviet period in a way that represents Tajiks as the indigenous people of Central Asia and Uzbeks as the occupants (Ghafurov). Uzbekistan's interference in the Tajik civil war (1992-1997) and its hostile position towards the construction of the Roghun hydroelectric power station in Tajikistan (since 2004) triggered the negative memories about the traditional Uzbek 'other.' At the same time due to the predominance of the narratives about the traditionally negative image of Uzbeks, the behaviour of Uzbekistan in the post-Soviet period appears as a self-fulfilling prophecy. In the light of ever-growing Tajik-Uzbek tension, literary, academic and journalistic discourses in Tajikistan portray the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, another officially recognised 'Hero of Tajikistan', as continuing the struggle of the past heroes against Uzbeks.

List of abbreviations

ASSR – Autonomous Soviet Socialistic Republic

CC - Central Committee

CEC - Central Executive Committee

CP – Communist Party

DPT - Democratic Party of Tajikistan

HPS - Hydroelectric power station

IR – International Relations

IRPT - Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan

NTD - national-territorial delimitation

PFT - Popular Front of Tajikistan

PSR – People’s Soviet Republic

RevCom - Revolutionary Committee

RusAl – Russian Aluminium Company

SSR – Soviet Socialistic Republic

TALCO - Tajik Aluminium Company

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Introduction

1. Overview

Tajikistan and Uzbekistan signed “An Agreement on Eternal Friendship” in 2000.¹ Ironically, relations between the two nations have rarely been friendly since. Towards the end of the 2000s, Uzbek-Tajik bilateral relations rather reached a state that one observer called a “cold war”.² This thesis examines this “cold war” in terms of self/other relations, with a particular focus on discourses dominant on the Tajik side of the conflict. Concentration on the discursive construction of the Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” in Tajikistan provides a historical context for the “cold war” and thus, “bring[s] to light an unfolding pattern that culminates in and clarifies the present.”³ Furthermore, analysing Tajik-Uzbek relations in terms of the self/other dichotomy makes it possible to identify the particular features associated with both “self” and “other” that animate the inter-national enmity. Considering that discursively constructed images of national heroes represent the exemplary features of the national “self”, this thesis is entirely devoted to an analysis of the Heroes of Tajikistan.⁴

The argument that this thesis makes is two-fold. Firstly, studying the heroes/anti-heroes of a nation is helpful in understanding the dominant moral attributes attached to the “self” and the “other”, which provides an informative lead-in to a close examination of the nation’s foreign relations. This argument is built throughout the thesis by proposing answers to sets of question in respective sections of the thesis: How do states choose the heroes? What are the ‘selection criteria’? What is the role of commemorating the heroes in defining the relations between the national ‘self’ and ‘other’? As it will be shown in literature review, so far there is no scholarly work that has attempted to answer these questions, which evidences the original contribution of this study to academia. Furthermore, as the second part of the next chapter clarifies, this argument is founded on an original theoretical framework, which is a contribution to the discipline of International Relations in its own right. Considering that the thematic focus of the thesis is on Tajikistan and some problematic aspects of its relations with Uzbekistan, the thesis makes a second argument; precisely, practices of national identity construction in Tajikistan are

¹ The Tajik side views this and previously signed similar document as an important milestone in the bilateral relations between the two nations. See Hamrokhon Zarifi, ed. *Siyosati Khorizhi Tozhikiston dar Masiri Istiqloliat* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2011), 27. See also *Emomali Rahmon - bunyonguzori siyosati khorizhi Tozhikistan*, ed. Hamrokhon Zarifi (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2012), 94.

² See Saltanat Berdikееva, "A Cold War Over Resources in Central Asia," *National Geographic Energy Blog*, 30 May 2012; Shairbek Juraev, "Central Asia's Cold War? Water and politics in Uzbek-Tajik relations," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo*, no. 217, September 2012.

³ Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 160.

⁴ Throughout this thesis, the word “Hero” (with a capital letter) is used to refer to the Heroes of Tajikistan (*Qahramoni Tojikiston*), while “hero” (with a lower case initial letter) is used for the general meaning of this word.

remarkably immersed in demonization of the Uzbek “other”, as a result of which the current Tajik moral space,⁵ it has become impossible to have a sustainable discourse about the Tajik “self” without implicitly or explicitly referencing the Uzbek “other”. In other words, given that “othering” is an inevitable part of constructing the “self”, the negative image of Uzbeks/Uzbekistan is vital for the ongoing discursive construction of Tajik “self”. Linking it to Central Asian studies, and perhaps provoking new debates, this argument enables to assume that a “cold war” with Uzbekistan is vital to Tajikistan to ensure its ontological security.⁶

2. Literature review

There are plenty of IR publications with a specific focus on the links between the politics of national identity and international relations. Some of these publications view national identity as stable national feature that informs foreign policy practices.⁷ The approaches of these works are not applicable to this study for the methodological reasons explained in the next section, as well as for the theoretical reasons covered in the next chapter. Other publications have treated the interaction of identity and cross-border relations as mutually constitutive. These works focus on the role of the various discourses at work and, according to them, identity requires the existence of the “other”.⁸ A review of some of these publications and related literature is provided in the sections of the thesis that deal with methodology and theoretical frameworks. This thesis, while relying on the methodological and theoretical assumptions offered by these works, makes a unique contribution to the existing literature in terms of its thematic focus and argumentation. While a significant number of publications are devoted to studying of the politics of identity in Tajikistan, no scholarly work has been conducted on the theme of the Heroes of Tajikistan with the aim of revealing the “moral compass” of the Tajik “self”. Furthermore, even though there is no shortage of academic research in covering the importance of the images of heroes/anti-heroes in shaping the national “self”, so far no attempt has been made to use these findings in an analysis of inter-state relations with the aim to propose an all-encompassing IR theory. This

⁵ The definition of the term is provided in chapter 1 in a broader context of an analytical framework of the thesis.

⁶ A section of Chapter 1 is devoted to the definition of the concepts of ontological security.

⁷ See, for instance, Douglas Woodwell, *Nationalism in International Relations: Norms, Foreign Policy, and Enmity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Amelia Hadfield-Amkhan, *British Foreign Policy, National Identity, and Neoclassical Realism* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010)

⁸ Roxanne Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," *International Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1993); Jennifer Milliken, "Metaphors of Prestige and Reputation in American Foreign Policy and American Realism," in *Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations*, ed. Francis Beer and Robert Hariman (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996); Alexander Bukh, *Japan's National Identity and Foreign Policy: Russia as Japan's 'Other'* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011); Alanna Krolkowski, "State Personhood in Ontological Security Theories of International Relations and Chinese Nationalism: A Skeptical View," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 1 (2008); Xavier Guillaume, "Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations," *Millenium - Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002); David Campbell, "Global Inscription: How Foreign Policy Constitutes the United States," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 15, no. 3 (1990)

section of the thesis is devoted to a review of literature on two relevant themes – relations between Tajik “self” and Uzbek “other”, and roles of hero-making for identity construction.

2.1. Literature on Tajikistan’s national identity politics and bilateral relations with Uzbekistan

A wide range of literature on Tajikistan’s political history, domestic policy, and specific identity construction practices is available.⁹ Most of these sources are used and critically analyzed in the relevant chapters. However, some of them need to be reviewed here to establish the position of this thesis in terms of a knowledge creation practice. To begin with, a growing number of scholarly works on identity and the “other” in Tajikistan are employing discourse analysis methods. One such analysis, which inspired this thesis at its earliest stage, is Blakkisrud and Nozimova’s analysis of Tajikistan’s historical textbooks.¹⁰ By comparatively analysing history textbooks published in Tajikistan during the 1990s and early 2000s, these scholars revealed a dominant narrative in which, not only is a glorious, past Tajik “self” created, but also the image of “others” such as a threatening Uzbek “the new old enemy,” “lingering influence of the Russian/Soviet heritage” as well as “Islam as a potential disruptive power”.¹¹ However, as this thesis shows, Blakkisrud and Nozimova were inaccurate in their findings when they concluded that “[n]ever before and never after has Tajik “self” been presented in opposition to the Uzbek “other” to such an extent. The Uzbeks are being accused of attempting to deprive Tajiks of both their nationality and their statehood”.¹² Furthermore, there can be no doubt that textbook analysis is a useful means of understanding dominant and officially promoted discourses about the “self” and the “other”. However, it ought to be viewed as one of many locales of identity

⁹ See, for instance, Kirill Nourzhanov and Christian Bleuer, *Tajikistan: A Political and Social History*, Asian Studies Series Monograph 5 (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2013). Paul Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2007). John Heathershaw and Edmund Herzig, "Introduction: the sources of statehood in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 30, no. 1 (2011). Sergei Abashin, "The Transformation of Ethnic Identity in Central Asia: A Case Study of the Uzbeks and Tajiks," *Russian Regional Perspectives* 1, no. 2 (2010). Kirill Nourzhanov, "The Politics of History in Tajikistan: Reinventing the Samanids," *Harvard Asia Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (2001). Marlene Laruelle, "The Return of the Aryan Myth: Tajikistan in Search of a Secularized National Ideology," *Nationalities Papers* 35, no. 1 (2007). Helge Blakkisrud and Shahnoza Nozimova, "History writing and nation building in post-independence Tajikistan," *Nationalities Papers* 38, no. 2 (2010). Slavomír Horák, "In Search of the History of Tajikistan: What Are Tajik and Uzbek Historians Arguing About?," *Russian Politics and Law* 48, no. 5 (2010): 73-74. Reuel Hanks, "Identity Theft? Ethnosymbolism, Autochthonism, and Aryanism in Uzbek and Tajik National Narratives," in *Nationalism and Identity Construction in Central Asia: Dimensions, Dynamics, and Directions*, ed. Mariya Omelicheva (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2015). Mohira Suyarkulova, "Statehood as Dialogue: Conflicting Historical Narratives of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan," in *The Transformation of Tajikistan: The Sources of Statehood*, ed. John Heathershaw and Edmund Herzig (New York: Routledge, 2013). "Between national idea and international conflict: the Roghun HPP as an anti-colonial endeavor, body of the nation, and national wealth," *Water History* 6, no. 4 (2014). Filippo Menga, "Building a nation through a dam: the case of Rogun in Tajikistan," *Nationalities Papers* 43, no. 3 (2015). Eva Kleingeld, "The Rogun Dam in Tajik-Uzbek Official Discourse" (Leiden University, 2016). Shahram Akbarzadeh, "Why did nationalism fail in Tajikistan?," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 7 (1996): 1109.

¹⁰ Blakkisrud and Nozimova, "History writing and nation building in post-independence Tajikistan."

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 180.

construction and power relations. Nevertheless, Blakkisrud and Nozimova's article has introduced an innovative approach to the study of Tajik national identity and remains the most comprehensive publication that focuses on the analysis of Tajik history textbooks.

An article by Horák demonstrates that there is a wider context to self/other construction in Tajik history textbooks. Horák clearly depicts how, in the post-Soviet period, Tajik and Uzbek historians got involved in a disagreement over their conflicting versions of the nations' national historiography. Horák's work is important not only in understanding the growing role of Tajik historiography in shaping the Tajik "self" in opposition to the Uzbek "other", but also in attempting to show the direction in which the "dominant intellectual paradigm" in Tajikistan¹³ was headed. In particular, Horák correctly notes that "[v]arious approaches to the perception of history have not only given rise to scholarly debate but also become a factor in interstate relations"¹⁴ because both Tajik and Uzbek historians are dependent on the state and its dominant ideology.¹⁵ Horák wrote that "[t]he Soviet school of historiography [...] supported the search for the historical roots of this or that nation exclusively in a particular Soviet Socialist republic - not on the territory of other, neighbouring republics."¹⁶ This statement is weak, however. As it will be shown elsewhere in this thesis, a Soviet approach to historiography has not prevented Soviet Tajik and Uzbek historians from creating conflicting and mutually exclusive versions of the history of Central Asia. In particular, Tajik scholars have never agreed to limit their focus within the state borders.

Horak's theme has been further developed by other scholars.¹⁷ A chapter authored by Mohira Suyarkulova offers an interesting social constructivist analysis of conflicting historical narratives in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.¹⁸ The author convincingly argues that the "historiography wars" between Tajik and Uzbek scholars have been instrumental in the construction of "positive self-identity and negative other-identity" in both states.¹⁹ Suyarkulova particularly focuses on how the debates between Tajik and Uzbek historians on Aryan ancestry and the history of national statehood (i.e., the focus on the Samanid Empire in Tajikistan and the Timurid Empire in Uzbekistan) ensured the dialogical construction of self/other relations in both countries.²⁰ She also provides a brief overview of historiographical debates that took place between Tajikistan

¹³ Horák, "In Search of the History of Tajikistan: What Are Tajik and Uzbek Historians Arguing About?," 73-74.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ See Suyarkulova, "Statehood as Dialogue: Conflicting Historical Narratives of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan." Hanks, "Identity Theft? Ethnosymbolism, Autochthonism, and Aryanism in Uzbek and Tajik National Narratives."

¹⁸ Suyarkulova, "Statehood as Dialogue: Conflicting Historical Narratives of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan."

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 162.

²⁰ See *ibid.*, 166-73.

and Uzbekistan during the Soviet period.²¹ Similarly, a publication by Reuel Hanks provides an interesting study of “duelling identities” in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Hanks relies on an analysis of the concepts of the *longue duree*, mythometeur, and a “golden age” in order to reveal how “each state is “othering” its rival as it attempts to develop the symbolic capital required to construct a national ideology based on an ethno-symbolic framework.”²² It should be noted, though, that Suyarkulova and Hanks focus on what Wendt would call the “social identity” of a state. “Social identity” is shaped by inter-state relations or, to use Suyarkulova’s words, “dialogue”. However, as it will be shown in the next chapter of this thesis, neither scholar was interested in focusing on the discursive construction of identity. Without revealing the general practices of discursive construction and the moral foundations of self/other polarity, a “dialogical” or “duelling” approach remains inadequate. It fails to explain, for instance, how and why, the Russian state and the Islamic religion occasionally surface as “others” in Tajikistan’s discourses on national identity. Hanks’ focus on the “golden age” and myth-making demonstrates that his research is not only about Wendtian “social identity”, but also covers “corporate identity” issues. Nevertheless, a further theoretical elaboration on the links between these two levels of identity would be helpful.²³

Closely related to this thesis’s focus are recently published scholarly works about how official Tajik official discourses on the Roghun hydroelectric power station have been shaping both Tajik national identity and the image of the Uzbek “other”.²⁴ In her article, Suyarkulova offers an analysis of “the elite discourse” on the Roghun project in Tajikistan using the *predicate* and *metaphor analysis* methods. She implies that the self/other dichotomy prevalent in those discourses and self/other polarity in historical discourses are connected.²⁵ This important point in her article would benefit from elaboration. This article can be viewed as one of the first attempts to “problematize the metaphors, tropes, and narratives utilized by both sides of the controversy” in Tajik-Uzbek self/other discourses.²⁶ However, it is overwhelmingly reliant on Russian language news reports as primary sources for conducting discourse analysis; to have a complete scope of “the elite discourse” it would be appropriate to incorporate some official statements and public speeches, including Tajik language primary sources.²⁷ Another limitation,

²¹ Ibid., 163-66.

²² Hanks, "Identity Theft? Ethnosymbolism, Autochthonism, and Aryanism in Uzbek and Tajik National Narratives," 122.

²³ As shown in the next chapter, Alexander Wendt theorizes “social identity” as more related to international relations, thus does not consider “corporate identity” as a matter of inter-state relations.

²⁴ Suyarkulova, "Between national idea and international conflict: the Roghun HHP as an anti-colonial endeavor, body of the nation, and national wealth." Menga, "Building a nation through a dam: the case of Rogun in Tajikistan." Kleingeld, "The Rogun Dam in Tajik-Uzbek Official Discourse."

²⁵ See Suyarkulova, "Between national idea and international conflict: the Roghun HHP as an anti-colonial endeavor, body of the nation, and national wealth," 373-74.

²⁶ Ibid., 381.

²⁷ Suyarkulova admits this limitation in the beginning of the article. See *ibid.*, 368.

which is perhaps due to the limited space in an academic article, no comprehensive definitions of predicate analysis and metaphor analysis are provided. Nevertheless, the article is outstanding for the methods of analysis chosen.

Thematically and methodologically similar to Suyarkulova's article, Filippo Menga's article provides an interesting analysis of the Tajik government's "rhetorical legitimation strategies" and their impact on establishing an image of Roghun as a national project. Menga's analysis focuses on "how the construction of a national identity can overlap with the construction of a large dam, to the extent that the dam itself becomes a national image."²⁸ The scope and variety of the primary sources used in the article is impressive. Menga convincingly argues that Uzbekistan's position on Roghun "convince[ed] the Tajik government that the dam could be held up as a symbol of self-determination and success, one that could rally the Tajik people around a national idea and against a common antagonist."²⁹ Building on Menga's findings, this thesis attempts to show that the Roghun project has been utilized by Tajik government to build President Rahmon's heroic image in the face of the "traditional" Uzbek threat.

The relevant literature on identity issues in Tajikistan and the role of Uzbek "other" in the construction of Tajik "self" is not limited to the publications reviewed above. However, so far no scholarly work has been conducted exploring how commemoration of the Heroes of Tajikistan shaped the self/other dichotomy. This thesis is going to explore a new area in this regard. The role of the Heroes in the identity politics in Tajikistan is not of lesser importance than, for instance, the role played by the commemoration of Ismoil Somoni, a notorious Samanid ruler of the medieval period and Aryan heritage.³⁰ Kirill Nourzhanov has shown that the politics of commemorating the Samanid Empire as the "golden age" of Tajik national statehood touch upon the image of the Uzbek "other".³¹ In her turn, Marlene Laruelle's inquiry into the Tajik government's attempts to validate the idea of the Tajik nation's Aryan roots shows the importance of autochthonous-ness in the regional rivalry.³² This thesis demonstrates that along with the Samanid Empire and Aryanism, the Heroes of Tajikistan should be viewed as the third pillar of national identity politics in Tajikistan.

²⁸ Menga, "Building a nation through a dam: the case of Rogun in Tajikistan," 480.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 487.

³⁰ For a comprehensive analysis of the role of remembering the Samanid Empire in the formation of the ideological foundations of the Tajik statehood, see Nourzhanov, "The Politics of History in Tajikistan: Reinventing the Samanids." For an analysis of how the idea of Aryan ancestry is being utilized in shaping the national identity in Tajikistan, see Laruelle, "The Return of the Aryan Myth: Tajikistan in Search of a Secularized National Ideology."

³¹ Nourzhanov, "The Politics of History in Tajikistan: Reinventing the Samanids."

³² Laruelle, "The Return of the Aryan Myth: Tajikistan in Search of a Secularized National Ideology."

2.2. Literature on national heroes and anti-heroes

Scholarly interest in the patterns of discursive construction relating to the personalities of those specifically selected to be heroes of their nations is relatively new.³³ As the growing number of studies show, discursive construction of heroes is one of the central aspects of the politics of identity in many countries around the world. It can be seen in the examples of France,³⁴ Israel,³⁵ the Philippines,³⁶ the US,³⁷ Bulgaria,³⁸ Barbados,³⁹ Indonesia,⁴⁰ Ukraine,⁴¹ Nigeria,⁴² China,⁴³ Serbia,⁴⁴ Chechen Republic,⁴⁵ etc. There is an “unquestioned consensus among scholars about the role that national heroes play in modern societies.”⁴⁶ Various schools of nationalism studies agree on the importance of heroes. In Eriksonas’ words, “different ways of thinking about the nation are in unison when it comes to the concept of the national hero, a notion which lends the idea of nationalism a human face.”⁴⁷ For instance, a leading representative of the ethno-

³³ Maria Todorova, *Bones of Contention: The Living Archive of Vasil Levski and the Making of Bulgaria's National Hero* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2009), 479.

³⁴ See Venita Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siecle France: Gender, Politics, and National Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011)., Susan Rubin Suleiman, "History, Heroism, and Narrative Desire: The "Aubrac Affair" and National Memory of the French Resistance," *South Central Review* 21, no. 1 (2004).

³⁵ See Tali Tadmor Shimony, "The Pantheon of National Hero Prototypes in Educational Texts: Understanding Curriculum as a Narrative of National Heroism," *Jewish History* 17, no. 3 (2003)., Judith Tydor Baumel, "The Heroism of Hannah Senesz: An Exercise in Creating Collective National Memory in the State of Israel," *Journal of Contemporary History* 31, no. 3 (1996).

³⁶ See Ruth Roland, "The "Rizalista Cult" in Philippine Nationalism: A Case History of the "Uses" of a National Hero" (PhD Dissertation, New York University, 1969).

³⁷ See Barry Schwartz, *George Washington: The Making of an American Symbol* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1987)., "Social Change and Collective Memory: The Democratization of George Washington," *American Sociological Review* 56, no. 2 (1991)., Elizabeth Goren, "Society's Use of the Hero Following a National Trauma," *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, no. 67 (2002).

³⁸ See Todorova, *Bones of Contention: The Living Archive of Vasil Levski and the Making of Bulgaria's National Hero*.

³⁹ See David Lambert, "Part of the Blood and Dream': Surrogation, Memory and the National Hero in the Postcolonial Caribbean," *Patterns of Prejudice* 41, no. 3-4 (2007).

⁴⁰ See Janet Hoskins, "The Headhunter as Hero: Local Traditions and Their Reinterpretation in National History," *American Ethnologist* 14, no. 4 (1987).

⁴¹ See David Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2007).

⁴² See Wale Adebani, "Death, national memory and the social construction of heroism," *The Journal of African History* 49, no. 3 (2008).

⁴³ See Wang Yiyan, "The Emperor and the Assassin: China's National Hero and Myth of State Origin," *Media Asia* 34, no. 1 (2007)., Yingjie Guo, "National Unification Overrides All: The Heroism of Hero," *Media Asia* 34, no. 1 (2007)., Yusheng Yao, "The Making of a National Hero: Tao Xingzhi's Legacies in the People's Republic of China," *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies* 24, no. 3 (2002)., Marc Andre Matten, "The Worship of General Yue Fei and His Problematic Creation as a National Hero in Twentieth Century China," *Frontiers History of China* 6, no. 1 (2011).

⁴⁴ See Tea Sindbæk, "The Fall and Rise of a National Hero: Interpretations of Draža Mihailović and the Chetniks in Yugoslavia and Serbia since 1945," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 17, no. 1 (2009).

⁴⁵ See Zübeyde Güne-Yadcy, "A Chechen national hero of the Caucasus in the 18th century: Sheikh Mansur," *Central Asian Survey* 22, no. 1 (2003).

⁴⁶ Linas Eriksonas, *National Heroes and National Identities: Scotland, Norway and Lithuania* (Brussels: P.I.E-Peter Lang, 2004), 15.

⁴⁷ "The National Hero: A Scottish Contribution," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 30, no. 1-2 (2003): 83., *National Heroes and National Identities: Scotland, Norway and Lithuania*, 15.

symbolism school, Anthony Smith, notes that “every nationalism requires a touchstone of virtue and heroism, to guide and give meaning to the tasks of regeneration.”⁴⁸ He further argues that:

Heroes provide models of virtuous conduct, their deeds of valour inspire faith and courage in their oppressed and decadent descendants. The epoch in which they flourished is the great age of liberation from the foreign yoke, which released the energies of the people for cultural innovation and original political experiment.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, most studies in this regard are authored by modernist historians. For instance, Maria Todorova argues that “[national heroes] are first and foremost social symbols whose main function is the example they set within the group.”⁵⁰ Hutchins, in her turn, states that “the existence of heroes (particularly those who have dedicated themselves to or sacrificed their lives for the nation) stands as a monument to the national idea.”⁵¹ She further notes that “[t]he ultimate commitment to the national(ist) cause of individuals of admirable ability and character validates and legitimates that cause.”⁵² Likewise, Datta notes that “the cult of heroes was a way to cement national solidarity as well as to establish its legitimacy and roots in the past.”⁵³ Similarly, Cubitt states that “heroic reputations are products of the imaginative labor through which societies and groups define and articulate their values and assumptions [...]”⁵⁴ These and similar arguments are summarized in the following passage from Lambert:

This cultural function of heroes may take on particular importance in the context of nations-in-the-making, like those in which rising elites are seeking to establish their legitimate authority during or after periods of transition, such as decolonization. In these cases, important or exemplary figures from the nation’s past or present, often associated with moments of political achievement or social transformation, may be invested with heroic status. They are intended by elites and their supporters to embody the ideals that best represent ‘the nation’ and around which a sense of nationhood might cohere. In this sense, the creation of national heroes is part of the ongoing project of what a nation ‘means’.⁵⁵

Heroic figures are selected and celebrated through formalized procedures and practices, including honors systems, funerals and canonization rituals, which provide a clear example of the ‘invention of tradition’.⁵⁶ In Todorova’s view, states follow the “vicissitudes” of hero-making such as “heroicization, glorification, consecutive appropriations by different, often opposing

⁴⁸ Anthony Smith, *Myth and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 65.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Todorova, *Bones of Contention: The Living Archive of Vasil Levski and the Making of Bulgaria's National Hero*, 478.

⁵¹ Rachel Hutchins, "Heroes and the renegotiation of national identity in American history textbooks: representations of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, 1982-2003," *Nations and Nationalism* 17, no. 3 (2011): 650.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siecle France: Gender, Politics, and National Identity*, 11.

⁵⁴ Geoffrey Cubitt, "Introduction," in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives*, ed. Geoffrey Cubitt and Allen Warren (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 3.

⁵⁵ Lambert, "Part of the Blood and Dream': Surrogation, Memory and the National Hero in the Postcolonial Caribbean," 353.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

political forces, reinterpretation, commemoration and, finally, canonization.”⁵⁷ The politics of identity relies on education policy, cultural policy, mass media, and even monetary policy, to create images of heroes and anti-heroes. State-sponsored films might be used to cultivate the heroism.⁵⁸ Theatre and press also can play a significant role in cultivating national heroism⁵⁹ and ideas of heroism can also be “pedagogically instilled.”⁶⁰ Images of heroes can serve as “role models” in teaching various subjects in schools ranging from history to literature, to music⁶¹ because the curriculum has a significant role in “translating” the “ideological value-system” of a state into educational messages for the young generation.⁶² Due to guaranteed penetration into the everyday lives of the people, usually, Central Banks of states also print images of heroes on money, banknotes and coins. Moreover, particular heroes can change over time⁶³ due to shifts in the moral and knowledge space of the state. Lastly, the hero-making processes, methods, and their intensity might vary from one case to another.⁶⁴

Methods of commemorating anti-heroes might be different from methods of commemorating heroes.⁶⁵ Theoretical speculations on anti-heroes are not, however, as abundant. The reason for such misbalance is that anti-heroes are associated with negative values. Therefore, unlike heroes, antiheroes are destined to be forgotten rather than remembered. However, the images of anti-heroes are as important as those of heroes. As Ducharme and Fine find out, “[c]ommunities solidify the reputations of their villains in collective memory through dramatic public reactions to activities that offend shared values.”⁶⁶ Because “[b]y warning against deviant acts, creating folk devils, and drawing boundaries, society reaffirms normative behaviour and communal integration.”⁶⁷ So, it is no wonder that “during the years immediately preceding the First World War, the French people, both weary of internal conflict and anxious about an ever-present threat from Germany, increasingly sought consensus around heroes as well as anti-heroes.”⁶⁸ It can be argued that both national heroes and anti-heroes play an equally important role in the formation of the national “self” and “other.” While images of heroes are associated with the best possible values, and are rendered to serve as an example to the masses, images of

⁵⁷ Todorova, *Bones of Contention: The Living Archive of Vasil Levski and the Making of Bulgaria's National Hero*, xiv.

⁵⁸ See Yiyan, "The Emperor and the Assassin: China's National Hero and Myth of State Origin.", Guo, "National Unification Overrides All: The Heroism of Hero."

⁵⁹ See Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siecle France: Gender, Politics, and National Identity*.

⁶⁰ Shimony, "The Pantheon of National Hero Prototypes in Educational Texts: Understanding Curriculum as a Narrative of National Heroism," 311.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 316.

⁶² See *ibid.*

⁶³ See Kathryn Cramer, "'We need another hero': The construction of Josep Moragues as a symbol of independence for Catalonia," *National Identities* 13, no. 1 (2011).

⁶⁴ Hoskins, "The Headhunter as Hero: Local Traditions and Their Reinterpretation in National History," 606.

⁶⁵ L.J. Ducharme and G.A. Fine, "The Construction of Nonpersonhood and Demonization: Commemorating the Traitorous Reputation of Benedict Arnold," *Social Force* 73, no. 4 (1995): 1311.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 1310.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siecle France: Gender, Politics, and National Identity*, 178.

anti-heroes encompass “morally unacceptable” value. Anti-heroes are remembered so that they may be hated or forgotten as a public punishment.

Studying the practices of remembering national heroes and/or forgetting the anti-heroes is limited to the disciplines such as history, nationalism and memory studies. This thesis shows that the implications of these practices go beyond domestic politics and have direct relations to the cross-border relations. Linking this aspect of identity politics to international relations requires a careful “trespassing” to the territory of International Relations theory. Chapter 1 starts dealing with this task of finding out which IR theory can be best to incorporate identity politics, which is then finalized in Chapter 2, by showing how an aspect of identity politics, i.e., hero-making, is relevant to cross-border relations. In this regard, this study belongs to the discipline of IR. So, it is practical to begin with clarifying the IR research methodology and the methods of analysis this thesis uses.

3. Research methodology and methods of analysis

Methodology is concerned “with the logical structure and procedure of scientific inquiry.”⁶⁹ Every “scientific inquiry” in IR relies on a particular research methodology, regardless of whether or not the methodology in question is clearly elaborated on by researchers. As Karin Fierke puts it, “[m]ethodology refers to those basic assumptions about the world we study, which are prior to the specific techniques adopted by the scholar undertaking research.”⁷⁰ This thesis analyses the *links* between state’s practices of hero-making and the discursive construction of self/other differences in international relations. This indicates that certain concepts (e.g., identity construction, self/other dichotomy) and methods (e.g., discourse analysis) are key for this study. However, providing a mere definition of these “basic assumptions”, or a review of the methods of analysis (or, data gathering) is not enough to explain the methodology of a research.⁷¹ A research methodology reveals essential information about the ontological⁷² and epistemological⁷³ stances that a study takes; for “the question whether [ontology and

⁶⁹ Giovanni Sartori, “Concept misformation in comparative politics,” *American political science review* 64, no. 04 (1970): 1033.

⁷⁰ Karin Fierke, “World or Worlds? The analysis of content and discourse,” *Qualitative Methods: Newsletter of the APSA* 2, no. 1 (2004): 36.

⁷¹ Some IR scholars tend to use “methodology” as a synonymous to “methods”, which is a serious confusion. For instance, Maoz states that “[c]ase study is arguably the most common methodology in international studies.” See Zeev Maoz, “Case Study Methodology in International Relations,” in *Evaluating Methodologies in International Relations*, ed. Frank Harvey and Michael Brecher (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 161.

⁷² Ontology “refer[s] to a catalog of objects, processes, and factors that a given line of scientific research expects to exist or has evidence for the existence of.” See Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 28.

⁷³ Epistemology “deals with how it is that we might know something about the world.” See Steve Smith, “Positivism and Beyond,” in *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, ed. Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 31.

epistemology] can be separated is at the heart of the methodological difference.”⁷⁴ This thesis uses *reflexivity* as its research methodology – a choice that is prone to criticism from a positivist point of view. As a pre-emptive reply to a possible criticism, positivism and its distortion of IR as a science should be reviewed first.

3.1. The tyranny of positivist methodology in IR

The methodological differences caused by conflicting ontological and epistemological assumptions have resulted in the waves of “Great Debates” in IR.⁷⁵ For the most part, due to the mutually exclusive positions regarding these issues, the inter-theory debates in IR have devolved into “derisive caricatures of one another’s work as ‘storytelling,’ ‘mindless number-crunching,’ or ‘philosophical mumbo-jumbo,’ and the accompanying characterization of those approaches as ‘unscientific’ and hence not worthy of intellectual engagement.”⁷⁶ Referring to the debate between (neo)positivist and poststructuralist scholars, also known as the Third Debate, Jackson rightly notes that it has been “largely a dialogue of the deaf, with most of the social and philosophical theory on the side of the dissidents while most of the empirical propositions were on the side of the fairly unreflective neopositivists.”⁷⁷

In the 1950s-60s “positivism became synonymous with the term science in the [IR] discipline.”⁷⁸ Even though “[t]he post-positivist turn began in the mid-1980s,”⁷⁹ in the mid-1990s, Smith lamented that “the vast majority of international relations research over the last 30 years has rested *implicitly* on positivist assumptions.”⁸⁰ Positivism is still perceived as a “gold standard” against which all approaches are evaluated.”⁸¹ Even nowadays, doing research using post-positivist methodologies risks being labeled an unscientific endeavour. As Jackson rightly notes:

a decision to conduct research using a non-neopositivist methodology places a particular burden on a researcher: to be clear not only about her or his research

⁷⁴ Fierke, "World or Worlds? The analysis of content and discourse," 36.

⁷⁵ For the overview of "four great debates" in IR, see Milja Kurki and Colin Wight, "International Relations and Social Science," in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, ed. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 16-24. See also David A Lake, "Theory is dead, long live theory: The end of the Great Debates and the rise of eclecticism in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 569-71, 77-80. For a critical review of the "Great Debates" in IR, see Brian Schmidt, "On the history and historiography of International Relations," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (London: Sage, 2013), 15-21.

⁷⁶ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁷⁸ Colin Wight, "Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth Simmons (London: Sage, 2013), 34. "Positivism is a methodological position reliant on an empiricist epistemology which grounds our knowledge of the world in justification by (ultimately brute) experience and thereby licensing methodology and ontology in so far as they are empirically warranted." See Smith, "Positivism and Beyond," 17.

⁷⁹ Wight, "Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations," 39.

⁸⁰ Smith, "Positivism and Beyond," 32.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

methodology, but about where that methodology differs from the still-dominant neopositivist way of doing research. It is not enough to reject hypothesis-testing or cross-case generalizations; the researcher engaging in alternative modes of scientific research has to spell out the warrants for her or his claims in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for neopositivist procedures, and to locate her or his work among the existing bodies of work that utilize a methodology more suitable to the knowledge-production practices that she or he is actually using.⁸²

Therefore, the non-positivist methodology that the post-structuralist theory of this thesis relies on is prone to criticism from the positivist standpoint. However, there is no way that this thesis can “easily” explain its non-positivist methodology in positivist terms, so that “everyone can understand it”. The reason is that “there is no methodologically neutral metalanguage into which we could reliably translate our warranted knowledge-claims and have them be globally understood.”⁸³ As Ann Tickner notes, in the IR discipline in the US, “reflectivists or post-positivists, a category that encompasses a rich array of theoretical approaches, all of which offer a series of alternatives to rationalism, are presented by the mainstream as operating outside the acceptable realm of academic study and not part of the social-scientific enterprise.”⁸⁴ The epistemology of positivism in IR “has determined what could be studied because it has determined what kind of things existed in international relations.”⁸⁵ Non-positivist studies of IR, accordingly, have been deemed to make no sense. Brook Blair’s recent criticism of post-structuralist theories is an example of this: “the post-structuralist and postmodernist projects have thus far failed to establish any authentic theoretical innovations capable of providing us with a viable framework for furthering our understanding of International Relations.”⁸⁶ As a response to similar criticism, Steve Smith wrote in the mid-1990s that post-modernism “is a genre of work that has been attacked and dismissed, usually by people who have not bothered to engage with the complex issues involved (and maybe without reading the texts either!)”⁸⁷ Post-positivist scholars of IR, in their turn, “view the traditional epistemological foundations of the field [...] as no longer a philosophically defensible basis for making authoritative judgments about validity in political inquiry.”⁸⁸ However, without engaging in this “dialogue of the deaf”, it is sufficient to note Blair’s criticism as evidence of positivism’s ongoing tyranny in IR. This tyranny

⁸² Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 206.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 210.

⁸⁴ J Ann Tickner, “Dealing with difference: Problems and possibilities for dialogue in International Relations,” *Millennium-Journal of International Studies* 39, no. 3 (2011): 610.

⁸⁵ Smith, “Positivism and Beyond,” 11.

⁸⁶ Brook M Blair, “Revisiting the ‘third debate’ (part I),” *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 02 (2011): 828. Note the use of post-structuralism and post-modernism as synonyms. Wight rightly states that “The discipline seems unable, or unwilling, to attempt to make any differentiation between postmodernism and post-structuralism, and tends to treat the two terms as synonymous.” Wight, “Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations,” 40.

⁸⁷ Smith, “Positivism and Beyond,” 29.

⁸⁸ Schmidt, “On the history and historiography of International Relations,” 20. See also Jim George and David Campbell, “Patterns of Dissent and the Celebration of Difference: Critical Social Theory,” *International Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1990): 281-88.

imposes strict limitations on scientific epistemology and ontology. Steve Smith offers a closer look at the roots of such “scientific-ness” claims:

in international relations positivism has tended to involve a commitment to a natural science methodology, fashioned on an early twentieth-century view of physics; that is to say a physics before the epistemologically revolutionary development of quantum mechanics in the 1920s, which fundamentally altered the prevailing view of the physical world as one which could be accurately observed. Accordingly, positivism in international relations, as in all the social sciences, has essentially been a methodological commitment, tied to an empiricist epistemology: together these result in a very restricted range of permissible ontological claims.⁸⁹

3.2. Redefining the “science” of IR

This thesis opposes what Wight unfavorably calls, a “positivism or perish”⁹⁰ approach to IR. It instead concurs with Jackson’s position regarding the need to re-define the “science” of IR.⁹¹ To begin with, Jackson uses the Weberian definition of “science” to settle the five-decade long debate in IR about which theories are scientific and which theories are not.⁹² First, the “scientific-ness” of a particular inquiry should be assessed not based on the chosen method, but rather its purpose, which can be “explaining” and/or “understanding” a particular matter of interest.⁹³ Second, and most importantly, “even someone who rejects our values should be able to acknowledge the validity of our empirical results within the context of our perspective.”⁹⁴ Thus, “it is on *this* basis – and not on the specific content or character of the value-orientations thus applied – that the ‘scientific’ character of an investigation can and should be evaluated.”⁹⁵ Such a Weberian approach to “social science” and “objectivity” proposed by Jackson brings “radical a shift” to the discipline.⁹⁶ In particular, this approach has significant implications for inter-theory debates in IR.⁹⁷

From the Weberian standpoint, the Great Debates in IR can be boiled down to debates about which methodology is the best way to create valid scientific knowledge. Jackson rightly suggests that “[r]ather than judging an argument by the standards of another methodology, it only makes sense to judge an argument by its own methodology, and according to the ways in which that

⁸⁹ Smith, "Positivism and Beyond," 17.

⁹⁰ Wight, "Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations," 47.

⁹¹ For the arguments about the need to re-define the "science" of IR, see Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 1-19.

⁹² See *ibid.*, 20-23.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁹⁵ "Foregrounding ontology: dualism, monism, and IR theory," *Review of International Studies* 34, no. 01 (2008): 148. Jackson suggests that “a study conducted from the perspective of, say, a Marxist conception of class relations represents not a definitively correct or incorrect way of viewing the world, but rather serves as a systematic demonstration of *what it would be like to construct the world in that way.*” See *ibid.*, 148-49.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 148.

⁹⁷ See *ibid.*, 149-53.

methodology fills out the broad definition of science.”⁹⁸ A criticism “that engages with post-structuralism on its own conceptual and methodological terms [...] will allow for a fairer judgment of post-structuralism’s contribution to the study of international relations.”⁹⁹ It is only by following this approach that IR scholars can avoid engaging in a “dialogue of the deaf”. Thus, rather than being concerned with evaluations of “(un)scientific-ness”, scholarly debate in IR should be limited concerns of “internal validity”, that is “whether, given our assumptions, our conclusions follow rigorously from the evidence and logical argumentation that we provide.”¹⁰⁰

3.3. Methodology

The research methodology that this thesis uses is reflexivity.¹⁰¹ Before defining what reflexivity stands for, it needs to be made clear what is meant by “methodology”. Following Jackson’s definition, methodology, “broadly understood”, is a philosophical ontology that “set[s] the context within which particular practices of knowledge-production might make sense.”¹⁰² Research using reflexivist methodology makes two commitments. The first commitment concerns the relationship between the knower and the known, or to use Jackson’s words, the “connection between the researcher and the researched world”.¹⁰³ This commitment pre-supposes that “knowledge-production is in no sense a simple description or recording of already-existing stable worldly objects.”¹⁰⁴ Jackson labels this commitment as “world-mind monism”. Existing in opposition to “world-mind monism” is “mind-world dualism.”¹⁰⁵ The second commitment concerns the scope of knowledge. In this regard, reflexivity “maintains the possibility of knowing things about in-principle unobservables.”¹⁰⁶ This pre-supposition, which Jackson labels as “transfactualism” – as opposed to “phenomenalism”¹⁰⁷ – assumes that “valid knowledge-claims reach beyond experiences to grasp the deeper generative causal properties

⁹⁸ *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 209.

⁹⁹ Richard Devetak, “Post-structuralism,” in *Theories of International Relations*, ed. Scott Burchill, et al. (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 187.

¹⁰⁰ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 22.

¹⁰¹ Reflexivity is one of the four “philosophical ontologies” proposed by Patrick Jackson, the other three being neopositivism, critical realism, and analyticism. See Table 1.

¹⁰² Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 32.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

¹⁰⁵ According to him, dualism “maintains a separation between researcher and world such that research has to be directed toward properly crossing that gap, and valid knowledge must in the end be related to some sort of accurate correspondence between empirical and theoretical propositions on the one hand and the actual character of a mind-independent world on the other.” See *ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹⁰⁷ Phenomenalism is used to define “the limitation of knowledge to those aspects of the world that can be empirically grasped and directly experienced”. See *ibid.*, 42.

that give rise to those experiences.”¹⁰⁸ As far as the focus of reflexivist inquiries is concerned, Jacksons say that:

For reflexivists [...] what is required is a detailed self-examination of the social and historical conditions under which knowledge is produced. The result of this kind of examination—an examination that poses a set of dialectical relationships between a knowledge-producer and her or his own conditions—is not a disclosing of real-but-undetected causal powers, but a way of helping the members of a given society come to a clearer understanding of their situations.¹⁰⁹

In a re-defined “science” of IR, reflexivity is a methodology that can co-exist with other methodologies even though “the four methodologies differ widely with respect to what they hold a valid knowledge-claim to consist of.”¹¹⁰ Among the IR theories that rely on reflexivist methodology are the critical, feminist and post-colonial theories of IR.¹¹¹

Figure 1. Jackson's typology of methodologies. Sources: Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 197.

		<i>Relationship between knowledge and observation</i>	
		<i>Phenomenalism</i>	<i>transfactualism</i>
<i>Relationship between the knower and the known</i>	<i>mind-world dualism</i>	neopositivism	critical realism
	<i>mind-world monism</i>	analyticism	reflexivity

Suganami suggests adding one more commitment to Jackson’s typology of methodologies – the purpose of the knowledge production. According to him, for instance, “analyticists’ aim in producing knowledge claims is to offer an interpretive understanding of the segment of the world found interesting”, whereas reflexivists aim “not only to interpret the world, but also transform it.”¹¹² Furthermore, he argues that the “methodologies differ *in the types of questions they ask* [and] which kind of question one *should* give priority to is not a matter of philosophical ontological choice, faith or taste, but one of political judgment.”¹¹³ In this regard, he offers to add two categories to the Jacksonian typology – interpreting the world and transforming the world. Following a convincing criticism, Suganami suggests that “Jackson’s 2x2 classification table does not work well”¹¹⁴ even though he does not propose an alternative one.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 74.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 167.

¹¹⁰ For details, see *ibid.*, 198.

¹¹¹ See *ibid.*, 39, and 159.

¹¹² Hidemi Suganami, "Meta-Jackson: Rethinking Patrick Thaddeus Jackson's Conduct of Inquiry," *Millenium - Journal of International Studies* 41, no. 2 (2013): 262.

¹¹³ Ibid., 268.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 263.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., footnote 44 on page 263.

Nevertheless, based on Suganami’s article, the following adapted version of Jackson’s table can be drawn:

Figure 2. Adapted version of Jackson’s typology based on Suginami's criticism.

	Phenomenalism	Interpreting the world	Transfactualism	Transforming the world
Representational view of knowledge claim ¹¹⁶	Neopositivism		Critical realism	
Constructionist view of knowledge claim ¹¹⁷	Analyticism			
		Reflexivity		

This study does not claim to be an objective analysis of Tajik-Uzbek bilateral relations, or the mutual construction of the Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” because “[a]ll claims to scientific objectivity are actually social practices imposing order through practices of power.”¹¹⁸ As Jackson states, “objectivity is an ontological stance that is perhaps best named as *dualism* [which assumes that] we have both ‘things’, which are objects of investigation by researchers and [...] and ‘thoughts’, which contain representations of the things.”¹¹⁹ Furthermore, objectivity (or, dualism) raises “a specific set of epistemological problems, largely revolving around techniques to guarantee that knowledge of the world corresponds to the world itself.”¹²⁰ Thus, in ontologically objective studies “valid knowledge means mirroring the world, representing it accurately, and not ignoring any of its important and essential features.”¹²¹ This thesis does not claim to cover all important and essential features of Tajik-Uzbek relations. It rather attempts to “avoid [...] the thing/thought dichotomy altogether, concentrating instead on those practical (worldly) activities that *give rise to both* ‘things’ and ‘thoughts’.”¹²²

3.4. Methods of analysis

Methods are “techniques for gathering and analyzing bits of data.”¹²³ It is claimed that methods are directly linked to the theory in use.¹²⁴ However, more important for this thesis is the appropriateness of chosen methods in the context of the overarching methodology. As Jackson

¹¹⁶ Suganami proposes alternative label for dualism – “representational view of knowledge claim”. Ibid., 257-58.

¹¹⁷ Suganami finds “monism” a problematic notion, so he offers “constructionist view of knowledge claim” to be used instead. Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Wight, "Philosophy of Social Science and International Relations," 40.

¹¹⁹ Jackson, "Foregrounding ontology: dualism, monism, and IR theory," 132.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 133.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid., 131.

¹²⁴ For instance, according to Gee, “any method always goes with a theory [and they] cannot be separated.” See James Paul Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, Fourth ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 11. Similarly, Starr believes that “the methods selected by any researcher must be appropriate to the questions being investigated [which] in turn, must be theory driven.” See Harvey Starr, "Cumulation, Synthesis, and Research Design for the Post-Fourth Wave," in *Evaluating Methodologies in International Relations*, ed. Frank Harvey and Michael Brecher (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 47.

puts it, “methods without methodology can be quite myopic in lacking a big picture within which specific techniques might make sense.”¹²⁵ Considering that

Considering the aims of the thesis as discussed earlier, it uses various methods of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis makes “a set of assumptions concerning the constructive effect of language.”¹²⁶ As far as the practical importance of discourse analysis methods is concerned, Iver Neumann convincingly states that:

Discourse analysis is eminently useful [...] because it says something about why state Y was considered an enemy in state X, how war emerged as a political option, and how other options were shunted aside. Because a discourse maintains a degree of regularity in social relations, it produces preconditions for action. It constrains how the stuff that the world consists of is ordered, and so how people categorize and think about the world. It constrains what is thought of at all, what is thought of as possible, and what is thought of as the ‘natural thing’ to do in a given situation.¹²⁷

According to Milliken, “a normal science of discourse analysis”¹²⁸ makes three assumptions about discourse.¹²⁹ First, discourses construct “social reality”.¹³⁰ This is what Doty calls “the *linguistic construction of reality*.”¹³¹ Second, in any given society, discourses shape commonly accepted understandings of truth and common sense, “limiting possible resistance among a broader public to a given course of action, legitimating the state as a political unit, and creating reasonable and warranted relations of domination.”¹³² Third, discourses are unstable and require significant and constant efforts of “articulation” and “rearticulation”.¹³³

Based on these assumptions, discourse analysis methods follow three goals, i.e., 1) to reveal the process of constructing this “reality”;¹³⁴ 2) to show how the discursive construction of what is good (and bad) disciplines society as well as limiting the options “that policy-makers find reasonable”;¹³⁵ 3) to trace the measures taken “to stabilize and fix dominant meaning” amid the

¹²⁵ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 26.

¹²⁶ Cynthia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips, “Discourse analysis and content analysis: two solitudes?,” *Qualitative Methods: Newsletter of the APSA* 2, no. 1 (2004): 19.

¹²⁷ Iver Neumann, “Discourse analysis,” in *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A pluralist guide*, ed. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 62.

¹²⁸ Jennifer Milliken uses the term “normal science” as opposed to the “bad science” or “dangerous science” – the labels that the “mainstream” theorists use in describing IR theories that rely on discourse analysis. See Jennifer Milliken, “The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods,” *European journal of international relations* 5, no. 2 (1999): 227.

¹²⁹ Milliken calls them “analytically distinguishable bundles of theoretical claims”. See *ibid.*, 228.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 229.

¹³¹ Roxanne Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1993): 302. Emphasis in original.

¹³² Milliken, “The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods,” 237.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 230.

¹³⁴ Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, “Discourse analysis and content analysis: two solitudes?,” 19.

¹³⁵ Milliken, “The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods,” 240.

constant struggle between “hegemonic discourses” and possible alternatives.¹³⁶ Gee suggests that a discourse analyst should seek answers to a set of questions:

- How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?
- What [...] practices (activities) is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)?
- What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as operative)? What identity or identities is this piece of language attributing to others, and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or own identity?
- What sort of relationship or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?
- What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e., what is being communicated as to what is taken to be “normal,” “right,” “good,” “correct,” “proper,” “appropriate,” “valuable,” “the ways things are,” “the way things ought to be,” “high status or low status,” “like me or not like me,” and so forth)?
- How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?
- How does this piece of language privilege or disprivilege [...] different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief [...]?¹³⁷

These questions overlap and complement each other. Most importantly, together they support the above-mentioned three assumptions about discourse that Milliken makes. In revealing the power relations and practices behind the construction of the Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” in Tajikistan, chapters 2-6 of this thesis rely on Milliken’s assumptions and offer answers to the relevant question(s) posed by Gee. In doing so, this thesis uses a set of discourse analysis methods – predicate analysis method, metaphor analysis method, and context (intertextual) analysis method. It adheres to one of the main principles of semantics, according to which “the meaning of sentence must be calculated on the basis of the meanings of its component words.”¹³⁸

Predicate analysis method. A predicate “is a quality or an attribute.”¹³⁹ Through attributing particular qualities and attributes to the subject, “[i]t is characterized as *being* something, *having* something, or *doing* something, all of which constitute types of predication.”¹⁴⁰ At the level of

¹³⁶ Ibid., 230.

¹³⁷ See Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, 32-36. Gee also proposes six tools of inquiry in discourse analysis – situated meaning, “social languages,” “figured worlds,” “intertextuality,” “bid ‘D’ Discourses,” “big ‘C’ Conversation”. For more information, see *ibid.*, 61-77, 81-91. According to him, “an ‘ideal’ discourse analysis” should use all of these six tools to answer each of the seven questions, bringing the total number of questions to be answered to 42. See *ibid.*, 140-41. Considering that Gee’s book is written for the readers of applied linguistics, education, psychology, anthropology and communication, this thesis does not aim at answering 42 questions.

¹³⁸ Teun van Dijk, “Semantic Discourse Analysis,” in *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, ed. Teun van Dijk (London: Academic Press, 1985), 105.

¹³⁹ Charlotte Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations: Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 168.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

linguistics, “[p]redication involves the linking of certain qualities to particular *subjects* through the use of *predicates* and the *adverbs* and *adjectives* that modify them [...]”¹⁴¹ Therefore, predicate analysis requires the extraction of “descriptive characteristics, adjectives, adverbs, and capabilities attributed to the various subject” from the texts being analyzed.¹⁴² For instance, to use Doty’s example, “to state that the United States “has stood for fair play, for aid to the weak, for liberty, and freedom” establishes the United States as a particular kind of subject with particular qualities.”¹⁴³ So, predicate analysis method is “most suited to examining the discursive formation of a particular subjectivity [...]”¹⁴⁴ However, it is not limited to the overview of attributes and qualities attached to the subject. It also explains, “how [...] these constructions can become widely circulated and constitutive of an attitude of “self” toward “other,” *thus making particular practices possible*.”¹⁴⁵ Predicate analysis is also useful in “analyzing the social construction of space and of geopolitical reasoning.”¹⁴⁶

Metaphor analysis method. Using a metaphor in discourses is one of the ways of creating a reality.¹⁴⁷ According to Chilton and Ilyin:

metaphor is an off-record strategy, the goal of which is to manage the most threatening speech act, and to minimize the accountability of the speaker. It is left to the responsibility of hearers to infer metaphorical entailments and relevance to the communication situation. With a metaphor it is possible to avoid a direct reference to a face-threatening phenomenon. The hearer is left to make inferences from knowledge the speaker can assume shared.¹⁴⁸

The Tajik President, for instance, by using metaphors can talk extensively about the atrocities that Tajiks experienced due to waves of violent attacks from conquerors, loss of territories and the nation’s struggle to survive as a result. This allows him to discursively construct self/other relations in the minds of Tajik listeners, considering the familiarity of the population of Tajikistan with the context of the discourse. For a lay listener/reader, it takes an intertextual (contextual) analysis to understand the identities and issues at play in such speech acts. However, a metaphor “leaves room for the negotiation of specific meanings and references,” which makes it “an important diplomatic device.”¹⁴⁹ Therefore, in this case, using metaphors allows the Tajik

¹⁴¹ Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," 306. Emphasis added.

¹⁴² Ibid., 310.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 306. Emphasis added.

¹⁴⁴ Epstein, *The Power of Words in International Relations: Birth of an Anti-Whaling Discourse*, 168.

¹⁴⁵ Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," 308. Emphasis added.

¹⁴⁶ Milliken, "The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods," 232.

¹⁴⁷ Rainer Hülse, "Imagine the EU: the metaphorical construction of a supra-nationalist identity," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 4 (2006): 403.

¹⁴⁸ Paul Chilton and Mikhail Ilyin, "Metaphor in Political Discourse: the Case of the 'Common European House'," *Discourse and Society* 4, no. 1 (1993): 9.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 9-10.

president to go ahead and meet with the Uzbek president even after his speech for a domestic audience where he hints at “historical atrocities” of Uzbeks against Tajiks.

In using metaphorical analysis, a “researcher establishes metaphors used regularly in the language practices of a group or society to make sense of the world.”¹⁵⁰ As Doty rightly puts it, “[e]very discourse has a particular stock of metaphors that is commonly used when referring to the discourse topic.”¹⁵¹ As far as the practical importance of metaphor analysis is concerned, it should be noted that “metaphors not only profoundly influence the ways in which we perceive the world, but also *the actions we decide to take* to maintain those perceptions.”¹⁵² Similarly, Lakoff and Johnson argue that “what is at issue is not the truth or falsity of a metaphor, but the inferences that follow from it and the actions that are sanctioned by it.”¹⁵³

Intertextual analysis method. Metaphor analysis might look like a guess-work if it is not backed up with context/intertextual analysis. In other words, an informed reader can only guess that it is being referred to Uzbeks when the Tajik officials or historians talk about “newcomers”, “barbarians”, “blood-thirsty conquerors”. It requires an intertextual analysis of what is implied and what possible actions might be sanctioned by the metaphoric use of “genocide” to explain Uzbekistan’s cultural and education policy in relation to Tajiks. There is always a question regarding the notion that “since more than one meaning can be created, how do we decide which meaning is intended, is justifiable, and/or makes the most sense?”¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, “[s]peakers and writers rely on listeners and readers to use the context in which things are said or written to fill in meanings that are left unsaid, but assumed to be inferable from context.”¹⁵⁵ In this regard, Gee is right to note that “[a] vast amount [sic] lies under the surface, not said, but assumed to be known or inferable from the context in which the communication is occurring.”¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Hansen notes that “texts build their arguments and authority through references to

¹⁵⁰ Milliken, "The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods."

¹⁵¹ Hülse, "Imagine the EU: the metaphorical construction of a supra-nationalist identity," 403.

¹⁵² Cynthia Kros, "Metaphors We Live (and Die) By," *English Studies in Africa* 55, no. 2 (2012): 54. Emphasis added.

¹⁵³ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, "Conceptual Metaphor in Everyday Language," *The Journal of Philosophy* 77, no. 8 (1980): 485.

¹⁵⁴ Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heide Hamilton, "Introduction," ed. Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heide Hamilton, *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (Blackwell Publishing, 2003),

http://www.blackwellreference.com/subscriber/uid=578/tocnode?id=g9780631205968_chunk_g97806312059681.

¹⁵⁵ Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, 119.

¹⁵⁶ *How To Do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit*, Second ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 14. It should be noted that for Gee, context is a “physical setting in which the communication takes place”, which includes everything such as “what has previously been said and done by those involved in the communication; any shared knowledge those involved have, including shared cultural knowledge.” However, this thesis uses context as a synonym of intertextuality. Context might appear to be “physical”, but only if it has been a dominant discourse on its own right for quite a long time and backed by power relations to stay so. To put it in Doty’s words, “[t]hat meaning does often appear to be fixed and decidable rather than an infinite play of signifiers is indicative of the workings of power.” Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," 302.

other texts: by making direct quotes or by adopting key concepts and catchphrases".¹⁵⁷ In doing so, as Hansen further explains, "new texts rely upon the status of the older, but this process of reading and linking also produces new meaning."¹⁵⁸

Therefore, the other half of the task is to reveal the context, or, what Dijk would describe as the global semantic properties of the discourse. In this regard, a researcher should bear in mind that "besides the local semantic structure, a discourse also has a global semantic structure or macrostructure."¹⁵⁹ As Doty states, "[t]exts always refer back to other texts which themselves refer to still other texts."¹⁶⁰ So, texts are *intertextual* in a sense that they are "'plugged in' to each other as well as to other texts; other foreign policy texts, social science texts, and non-academic text."¹⁶¹ Overall, in order to understand what and who is meant by a particular metaphor and what actions are legitimised by its use, it is essential to view the utterance of metaphors as a part of a larger web of discourses. The lengthy analyses in the third, fourth and fifth chapters are designed to reveal the context in which ongoing self/other relations in Tajik national identity discourses are based. The focus of analysis and the "objects" of analysis of these chapters are informed by Hansen's intertextual research model, which is *modified* for the purpose of this thesis:¹⁶²

Figure 3. Adapted version of Hansen's model of intertextual analysis.

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 3A</i>	<i>Model 3B</i>
<i>Analytical focus</i>	Official discourse: Heads of states Senior civil servants	Cultural representations: Popular culture High culture	Marginal political discourses: Social movements Academics
<i>Object of analysis</i>	Official texts Direct and secondary intertextual links Supportive texts Critical texts	Fiction, poetry	Marginal newspapers, websites, books, pamphlets Academic analysis

As non-positivist research, this thesis does not use "formal methods of IR" and "qualitative methods" (including case study and content analysis methods), which work only within a positivist methodology.¹⁶³ First, the thematic focus on Tajikistan's case might give an impression

¹⁵⁷ Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006), 7.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ Dijk, "Semantic Discourse Analysis," 115.

¹⁶⁰ Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," 302.

¹⁶¹ See *ibid.*, 314.

¹⁶² Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse analysis and the Bosnian War*, 57. The Model 2 from Hansen's original models is not used in this thesis, as there is no political opposition in Tajikistan.

¹⁶³ As Nicholson notes, "formal modeling involves the use of mathematical, diagrammatic, and symbolic methods in the study of problems in international relations." See Michael Nicholson, "Formal Methods in International Relations," in *Evaluating Methodologies in International Relations*, ed. Frank Harvey and Michael Brecher (Ann

of a case study being conducted, however it should not mean a hypothesis-testing positivist case study. Because “[s]tudying single, or multiple, cases does not place a scholar in any particular methodological box.”¹⁶⁴ This work is not a case study, for “studying right cases”¹⁶⁵ is not the primary goal here. It is assumed that “[w]ell-crafted case selection takes into account the universe of possible cases and the logic of comparison implied by the research question.”¹⁶⁶ However, the case of Tajikistan in this thesis has not been chosen out of a “universe of possible cases”. Obviously, no selection process to find out “least likely cases,”¹⁶⁷ “most likely cases”,¹⁶⁸ and “deviant cases”¹⁶⁹ is undertaken before choosing the case of Tajikistan. Similarly, the thesis does not bear in mind any “logic of comparison”. Second, considering the overwhelming reliance of this research on analysis of the publicly available texts, there might be an expectation of the use of content analysis methods. It is a bit tricky to differentiate content analysis from discourse analysis, for both discourse analysis and content analysis “are concerned with drawing conclusions about some aspects of human communication from a carefully selected set of messages.”¹⁷⁰ However, content analysis “adopts a positivist approach” and thus the two methods of analysis have a deeply “conflicting ontology and epistemology.”¹⁷¹ Furthermore, “[c]ontent analysis is the study of the text itself not of its relations to its context, the intentions of the producer of the text, or the reaction of the intended audience.”¹⁷²

As far as the data that this thesis relies on in its analysis, they are the *texts of national identity* that are generated in Tajikistan. Relying on Xavier Guillaume’s definition of the term “text”, which is reviewed in detail in the section 1.4 of Chapter 1, this thesis uses this term to mean narratives of all forms as well as activities and measures that are “readable” by the audience or

Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 28. Levy found out that “[t]he core of the literature on the methodology of qualitative research in the international relations field focuses on comparative and case study methods from a positivistic perspective.” See Jack Levy, “Qualitative Methods in International Relations,” in *Evaluating Methodologies in International Relations*, ed. Frank Harvey and Michael Brecher (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2005), 132.

¹⁶⁴ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 69.

¹⁶⁵ See Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, “Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield,” *Comparative Politics Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 172.

¹⁶⁶ Audie Klotz, “Case Selection,” in *Qualitative Methods in International Relations: A pluralist guide*, ed. Audie Klotz and Deepa Prakash (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 43.

¹⁶⁷ According to Bennett and Elman, “if a theory of interest predicts one outcome in a case, if the variables of that theory are not at extreme levels that strongly push toward that outcome, and if all of the alternative hypotheses predict a different outcome in that case, this is a least-likely case for the theory of interest.” See Bennett and Elman, “Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield,” 173.

¹⁶⁸ According to Levy, “a most-likely case design can involve selecting cases where the scope conditions for a theory are fully satisfied.” See Levy, “Qualitative Methods in International Relations,” 144.

¹⁶⁹ Following the definition provided by Bennett and Elman, “Deviant cases are cases that do not conform to the predictions made by the theory or theories under investigation.” See Bennett and Elman, “Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield,” 176.

¹⁷⁰ Kimberley Neuendorf, “Content analysis: a contrast and complement to discourse analysis,” *Qualitative Methods: Newsletter of the APSA* 2, no. 1 (2004): 33.

¹⁷¹ Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, “Discourse analysis and content analysis: two solitudes?,” 20.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

observer. As Hansen rightly notes, “the body of texts should include key texts that are frequently quoted and function as nodes within the intertextual web of debate”.¹⁷³ Government policies, official documents, and academic and journalistic publications (which do not often risk challenging the government’s stance) about are the key texts that this thesis relies on. These texts, as will be shown in the relevant chapters, are frequently quoted or referred to and serve as nodes. Last, the thesis often uses the term “discourse” as synonym to Guillaume’s “text”, without any aim at engaging any academic debate on what discourse is and is not.

4. Structure

To better understand the flow of the argumentation of the thesis, the following pattern of connection between the chapters should be noted. The “empirical” chapters – Chapters 3, 4, 5, directly stem from Chapter 2. In other words, Chapter 2 reveals the issue, which is then further elaborated on in details in Chapters 3-5. A reader might not be able to find any links between, for instance, between Chapters 1 and Chapter 4, as the former is about the IR theories and the latter is about Sadriddin Aini’s role in forming the Tajik identity. Chapter 2 aims at playing a linking role between the empirical chapters and the theoretical chapter.

Chapter 1 presents the analytical framework of this thesis based on theories of IR. Almost every piece of IR research starts with a review of realist, liberalist, and constructivist theories.¹⁷⁴ However, this chapter skips outlining the merits and limitations of (neo)realism and (neo)liberalism to avoid repeating the criticism these theories have received from constructivist and post-structuralist standpoints. Considering that identity politics is a matter of the Third Debate in IR,¹⁷⁵ the chapter rather starts with a review of Wendt’s constructivist theory, which challenged then-dominant “mainstream” theories of IR in several respects, including with regard to the issue of a nation state’s identity in international politics. Then, it outlines other constructivist inquiries into the identity-IR nexus, which unlike Wendt, utilized the post-structuralist approach, influenced by post-structuralist/post-modernist schools of humanities, social and political sciences. Namely, the chapter reviews David Campbell’s post-structuralist writing followed by a short criticism of Iver Neumann’s “Copenhagen” school of IR. Furthermore, tracing the advancements of the post-structuralist IR school, the chapter reviews Xavier Guillaume’s theoretical works, which largely build on Campbellian post-structuralism. Along with

¹⁷³ Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse analysis and the Bosnian War*, 73-74.

¹⁷⁴ Jennifer Hochschild, "Comments and Reflections - Symposium I: Ian Shapiro's *The Flight from Reality in the Human Sciences*," *Newsletter of the American Political Science Association Organized Section on Qualitative Methods* 3, no. 2 (2005): 11.

¹⁷⁵ Christian Reus-Smit, "International Relations, Irrelevant? Don't Blame Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 3 (2012): 532.

demonstrating the merits of post-structuralist theories developed by Campbell and Guillaume, the chapter also reveals their limitations.

Most scholarly works on IR theories contribute to the field in one of three ways: they either reveal the compatibility of two competing theories; find that one theory is powerful and another flawed; or challenge all existing theories and propose a new one.¹⁷⁶ This chapter tries to make a contribution in all three areas. First, acknowledging that all three scholars (Wendt, Campbell, Neumann) have made ground-breaking contributions to the identity-focused IR theories in the 1990s with their ripple-effects observable in the 2000s and 2010s, the chapter argues that Campbell's post-structuralist theory of IR is more capable of explaining the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of national identity, as well as the diverse and elusive means of constructing the identity both in domestic and international realms. Second, even though Campbell's theory is incompatible with Wendt and Neumann's theories, followers of Wendt and Neumann have come up with useful concepts that not only perfectly fit into, but also enrich, Campbell's theory. In this regard, the chapter analyses the scholarly works of Huysmans, McSweeney, Steele, and Mitzen, who contributed the term of "ontological security" to IR studies. Last, this chapter proposes an analytical framework, which is both based on Campbell's poststructuralist IR theory and critically engaged with it by incorporating the concept of ontological security. Overall, based on this analytical framework, the chapter attempts to provide a new explanation for the role of the politics of national identity in international relations. The expectation is that the new approach does not suffer from, what Reus-Smit calls, "a relevance deficit," and does not use "ornate language" merely as a "badge of membership"¹⁷⁷ – as some post-structuralist theories of IR are believed to do.

Chapter 2 attempts to reveal why the most "domestic" aspects of the politics of national identity are not purely domestic, *per se*. The chapter focuses on the practice of remembering the national heroes as parts of an attempt to boost national identity. It explores why celebrating the lives and deeds of the heroes – which, upon first glance, might appear to be irrelevant to international relations – can become a factor in understanding/explaining the complexities of Tajikistan's foreign relations. Precisely, the chapter focuses on the case of Heroes of Tajikistan, the title given to historical personas that the government chooses as the most important ones in the history of the nation. It is followed by a review of the proposals in Tajikistan about expanding the ranks of the Heroes, as well as the government's attempts to create another league of national heroes for those who do not qualify for being a Hero. This leads to the next

¹⁷⁶ Hochschild, "Comments and Reflections - Symposium I: Ian Shapiro's *The Flight from Reality in the Human Sciences*," 11.

¹⁷⁷ Reus-Smit, "International Relations, Irrelevant? Don't Blame Theory," 526.

section of the chapter, which is about the meaning and value that the Heroes of Tajikistan are officially depicted as bearing and representing. The chapter sets the tone regarding the analytical importance of focusing on the Heroes to achieve a better understanding of the foundations of national identity and the image of “other” that the state attempts to construct. It paves the way for chapters 3-5 of the thesis that analyze, in detail, the connections between discourses about the Heroes, the construction of national self-identification/representation and the “other” in the realms of national territoriality, language and literature, and historiography.

Chapter 3 reveals how, through remembering Nusratullo Makhsum (1881-1937) and Shirinsho Shotemur (1899-1937), the two Heroes of Tajikistan, the Tajik state attempts to create the image of a Tajik “self” and an Uzbek “other”. Considering that the “heroism” of Makhsum and Shotemur took place during the process of the creation of Tajikistan, the first section of the chapter provides a historical analysis of NTD in Central Asia in the 1920s. In particular, it shows how the elites, who represented the Uzbek, Kazakhs, and Turkmen ethnic groups, dominated the delimitation process and why the interests of Tajik nation were represented poorly. The second part of the chapter focuses on the leadership showed by Makhsum and Shotemur after the Tajik ASSR was created within the Uzbek SSR in 1924/5. It also deals with the leadership displayed by these two national heroes when Tajikistan eventually ceded to being an autonomous region within Uzbekistan in 1929. Finally, the chapter analyses the dominant discourses in post-Soviet Tajikistan about the events of the 1920s, in general, and the positive roles that Makhsum and Shotemur played in relation to the territoriality. It reveals that the texts concerning national identity in Tajikistan both celebrate the establishment of Tajikistan and mourn its creation on territories that do not match the historical homeland of the Tajiks. In other words, these texts educate Tajiks to be thankful to the founding fathers of Tajikistan for securing a safe-haven for the “survival” and “revival” of the Tajik nation, which otherwise would have completely disappeared as a result of a “genocide” and “loss of territories” caused by the Uzbeks and some pro-Uzbek Tajiks. So, Tajikistan is the homeland of Tajiks, however, territorially it is incomplete. “[S]tates are never finished as entities” but rather “are (and always have to be) in the process of becoming.”¹⁷⁸ Occasional outcries about returning the “lost territories” are not necessarily the manifestation of a covert plan, but rather a reminder of the incompleteness of the process of constructing Tajik statehood. Discourses about “genocide” and “lost territories” situate ongoing tense relations between Tajikistan with Uzbekistan in an “understandable” context. As is shown in chapter 6, these discourses make Uzbekistan’s hostile position look like as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

¹⁷⁸ David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 12.

Chapter 4 reveals the role of Sadriddin Aini (1878-1954), a Hero of Tajikistan, in the construction of the Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” through the instrumentalization of language and literature. The chapter traces Aini’s personal journey towards becoming a defender of the Tajik language and identity in the 1920s and onwards. As this chapter shows, as an educational reformist, Aini was marginalized from politics by the Young Bukharans, who eventually came to dominate the political scene in Bukhara and later in Uzbekistan. As a result, he became close to newly-emerging Tajik political leaders and cooperated with them in their struggle against Uzbek leadership. This chapter particularly focuses on two of Aini’s achievements; first, Aini’s role in the standardization of the Tajik language. Second, Aini’s compilation of samples of literary works in the Tajik language to prove to his Uzbek counterparts that the Tajiks have a rich literary language and history. Along with these contributions, the chapter also reviews how texts of national identity view Aini’s literary works as replicating the historical truth about the oppression of the Tajik nation. It also analyses his literary works to show how he narrated the victimized image of the Tajiks who had suffered in the hands of the Uzbek rulers. The chapter ends with an analysis of the dominant narratives about Aini’s role in the creation of Tajik national identity and an examination of his debates with his Uzbek contemporaries.

Chapter 5 examines the services of Bobojon Ghafurov (1908-1977), which earned him the title Hero of Tajikistan. The chapter reveals that Ghafurov succeeded in writing the history of the Tajik nation in a way that positioned the Tajiks as the most ancient and advanced people of Central Asia, causing debates with his colleagues from Uzbekistan. The chapter begins with an explanation of how Ghafurov emerged as a Tajik national historian and introduces the prominent scholarly works that make up the core of his legacy. Next, the chapter provides a detailed review of the evolution of Ghafurov’s views via a review of his major publications. In particular, his position regarding the origins of Tajik nation, its relations to the Iranian/Persian people, as well as the origins of the Turkic tribes and the Uzbek people is analyzed. The chapter also covers the criticism that Ghafurov’s scholarly position received from Uzbek historians and officials. Finally, it analyses official and scholarly discourses surrounding Ghafurov and his works, which reveal that, in Tajikistan, Ghafurov’s historiography is viewed as a severe blow to the pan-Turkist Uzbek ideology. The chapter concludes that his arguments continue to play a major role in the discursive construction of Tajikistan’s historical superiority.

Chapter 6 consists of three parts. The first part is about the demonization of Uzbekistan in Tajikistan’s texts of national identity as a result of Uzbekistan’s involvement in the Tajik civil war in 1992-1997. It briefly reviews the role of Uzbek players in the Tajik civil war, including Uzbekistan itself. Then it reviews the dominant discourses in official Tajik sources and media, which portray Uzbekistan not only as an external force, hindering national unity in Tajikistan,

but also as a party that caused the civil war. This part ends with an analysis of the attempts, in Tajikistan, to discursively connect Uzbekistan's negative role in the Tajik civil war (1992-1997) to its "historical atrocities" dating back to the 1920s. The second part of the chapter reveals the exacerbation of Uzbekistan's negative image in Tajikistan due to Uzbekistan's position on the Roghun HPS. Reviewing the uncompromising position of both the Uzbek and Tajik governments, this thesis shows how the disagreement has culminated in diplomatic and economic "warfare". Finally, the chapter establishes links between narratives about how Uzbekistan has been preventing Tajikistan's economic independence and prosperity and historically dominant discourses about the "genocide of Tajiks" and "lost territories" in the 1920s. The chapter ends with an analysis of the texts of national identity in Tajikistan that portrays President Rahmon as a Hero of Tajikistan, who united the Tajiks after the civil war and has been pursuing the path of energy and economic independence by mobilizing Tajikistan to build the Roghun HPS. This chapter implies that discourses about the historically abusive and unjust attitude of Uzbek leadership to the Tajik nation significantly exacerbate and amplify the perception of Uzbekistan as Tajikistan's enemy in political and economic terms in the post-Soviet period.

5. Limitations

Several limitations of this thesis should be noted. First, I have not been able to gather most of the primary data – interviews and archive materials – for analysis due to hurdles created by the Tajik and Uzbek government officials. My supervisory panel is aware of the fact that the Embassies of Tajikistan in Tashkent and Bishkek have refused to accept my visa application on several occasions, referring to the absence of documents that confirm my association with a hosting Tajik academic institution. The Tajik universities in Dushanbe and Khujand that I approached with a request for affiliation abruptly ended the correspondence with me, or with the networks I engaged, every time when I presented the abstract of the thesis and the tentative interview questions. Similarly, my efforts to get access to the state archives in Uzbekistan were unsuccessful. The General Director of UzArchive Agency, under the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan, A. Kh. Abdullaev provided a written explanation of denial. Second, partly due to the failed field trip to Tajikistan, this thesis does not include the narratives and discourses on Mirzo Tursunzoda, one of the Heroes of Tajikistan. The available resources on his personality are not as abundant as they are in the case of all of the other Heroes. Third, this research is not an all-encompassing analysis of identity politics in Tajikistan. As was stated above, the main concern of this thesis is to present an analysis of the self/other dichotomy in narratives concerning the Heroes of Tajikistan and an examination of the interconnectedness of these narratives with tensions created by the Roghun project. Fourth, how the population of Tajikistan perceives the

politics of identity in Tajikistan is beyond the interests of this research, which is rather concerned with the state's efforts to create a dominant narrative of self/other relations. Fifth, the focus on the Uzbek "other" should not mean that it is the only, consistent "other" in identity narratives in Tajikistan. As was shown in the literature review at various stages, Russia, Islam and Iran appeared as "others" in the identity discourses. This point will be returned to briefly in Chapter 6. Last, the chapters of this thesis are not designed to provide a complete biography of each of the Heroes of Tajikistan.

Chapter 1. Identity Politics and Ontological Security: Fitting National Identity into IR Theory

1. National identity in the main theories of IR

1.1. The social identity of state: the structural constructivist explanation of international relations

The social constructivist theory of IR developed by Alexander Wendt should be regarded as groundbreaking due to the challenge it posed to traditionally dominant theories. However, Wendt's contribution to the study of identity in IR has been underestimated. As Zehfuss puts it, "[t]he conception of identity is crucial to both the constructivist move and the systemic character of Wendt's argument, even if it is not its declared focus."¹⁷⁹ Wendt himself was well aware that "[i]dentity formation has not been a significant concern of mainstream systemic theorists, neorealist or neoliberal."¹⁸⁰ So he attempted to address this issue. Wendt believes that identity is socially constructed and sustained as a result of interstate relations.¹⁸¹ Identity is not "exogenously given" contrary to the assumptions of the rationalist theories of IR.¹⁸² In Wendt's constructivist theory, how states "identify" themselves in relation to other states defines the very nature of international relations:

If states identify only with themselves, so to speak, the system will be anarchic. If they identify with a world state it will be hierarchical [...]. And if they identify with each other, such that they have a collective identity in which each is bound to cooperate with the other, they would constitute a decentralized authority system, an "international state" that is neither anarchy nor hierarchy.¹⁸³

For Wendt, assumptions about self-help and the anarchic nature of international relations, as well as the notions such as the "normality" of war and mutual suspicion and the "exceptionality" of peace, cooperation, and trust were wrong. He rather argues that everything depends on the interplay of the identities of states. In his own words, "[w]hether or not the structure of a state's system is anarchic is intimately tied to the distribution of state identities."¹⁸⁴ So, "if today we

¹⁷⁹ Maja Zehfuss, "Constructivism: a relentless quest for synthesis," in *Constructivism and International Relations: Alexander Wendt and his critics*, ed. Stefano Guzzini and Anna Leander (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 93.

¹⁸⁰ Alexander Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," in *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, ed. Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), 48.

¹⁸¹ See, for instance, "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992).; "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," in *Social Theory of International Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹⁸² "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 391.

¹⁸³ "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," 47-48.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

find ourselves in a self-help world, this is due to process, not structure."¹⁸⁵ Overall, for Wendt identity is too important a factor to ignore in observing international relations.

Wendt distinguished two layers of identity in states: corporate and social. Corporate identity means "intrinsic qualities that constitute actor individuality."¹⁸⁶ This includes ethnicity, race, and gender. According to Wendt, for ordinary people, corporate identity is "the body and personal experience of consciousness,"¹⁸⁷ whereas, for states, it is what motivates the need for security, recognition, and development.¹⁸⁸ The social identity of a state, in its turn, is comprised of "the sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others."¹⁸⁹ So, in Wendt's theory, it is the social identity of the state, not its corporate identity, which is constructed in relation to "other":

[Social identities] are "ontologically dependent on relations to others; for example, one cannot be an "anticommunist" if there are no communists around, nor a "balancer" if there is no one to balance. In this respect, social identities are a key link in the mutual constitution of agent and structure, embodying the terms of individuality through which corporate agents relate to each other."¹⁹⁰

Though Wendtian constructivism has challenged rationalist interpretations of international relations, it has some serious limitations. First, the "corporate identity" of a state is deemed as given and appears immune from international relations. For the theory to work, the corporate identity needs to be deemed as existing prior to state¹⁹¹ and international politics.¹⁹² Its sustainability is rather a matter of domestic politics. Most importantly, due to its "self-organizing" nature,¹⁹³ it is of minimum interest to Wendt's constructivist theory. Thus, social constructivism does not apply to this layer of identity. Second, even though the "social identity" of a state is socially constructed, its "constructedness" is limited to either being power-seeking, self-minded or altruistic. To put it in Zehfuss' words, "Wendt asks us to assume two actors, *ego* and *alter*, who then come to interact only after we have imagined them on their own."¹⁹⁴ The only explanation for this limitation is that Wendt's main concern was to demonstrate that egoism is not the only feature that identifies states. He was keen to prove that they can also be cooperative and altruist. In other words, he was overwhelmingly focused on demystifying the anarchy-driven greedy state identity. In any case, Wendt's theory, no matter how

¹⁸⁵ "Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics," 394.

¹⁸⁶ "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," 48-49.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ See *ibid.*

¹⁹² See *Social Theory of International Politics*, 328.

¹⁹³ "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," 51.

¹⁹⁴ Zehfuss, "Constructivism: a relentless quest for synthesis," 108.

groundbreaking it was at its time, fails to fully grasp the origins and importance of the multi-layered identities of nation-states. As the next section of the chapter shows, post-structuralist theories of IR are better equipped in this regard. As Wendt himself acknowledges, his theory is rather “essentialist” and, in comparison to post-structuralist theories, is a “somewhat weak claim.”¹⁹⁵

1.2. The foreign as a threat to identity: a discursive understanding of international relations

One of the most comprehensive attempts to show the importance of identity in the analysis of international relations belongs to David Campbell. For him, nation (“people” and “imagined political communities”), national identity (“the identity of a ‘people’”), and nationalism are constructed by the state to legitimize itself and its practices.¹⁹⁶ By aligning itself to these constructs, the state becomes a national state, though it ideally seeks to be a nation-state, which is impossible to achieve.¹⁹⁷ Thus, in Campbell’s view, “states are never finished as entities”, they are “in permanent need of reproduction” and “always in process of becoming.”¹⁹⁸ In other words, “the drive to fix the state’s identity and contain challenges to the state’s representation cannot finally or absolutely succeed.”¹⁹⁹ Paradoxical as it may sound, the continuity of this process of “reproduction” or “becoming” is essential to the existence of the state, because “[f]or a state to end its practices of representation would be to expose its lack of prediscursive foundations; stasis would be death.”²⁰⁰

As far as the method of construction of identity is concerned, it is done “through the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside,’ a ‘self’ from an ‘other,’ a ‘domestic’ from a ‘foreign.’”²⁰¹ In Campbell’s theory, there is nothing prior to or outside of the interaction between identity and difference, and both identity and difference are constituted performatively.²⁰² The performative act that defines the boundaries of identity/difference dichotomy is foreign policy. So on the one hand, foreign policy is a “boundary-producing political performance.”²⁰³ On the other hand, it “helps produce and reproduce the political identity of the doer supposedly behind the deed.”²⁰⁴ As can be seen, foreign policy has an unconventional

¹⁹⁵ Wendt, "Identity and Structural Change in International Politics," 50.

¹⁹⁶ Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, 11.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, x.

meaning in Campbell's theory. In his view, the conventional explanation of foreign policy as a "bridge between sovereign states existing in an anarchic world, a bridge that is constructed between two prior, securely grounded, and nominally independent realms"²⁰⁵ is misleading. Campbell rather proposes to view foreign policy as a performative act that is concerned "with *the establishment of the boundaries* that constitute, at one and the same time, the 'state' and 'the international system.'"²⁰⁶ In this unconventional sense, foreign policy encompasses two layers: "foreign policy" (in inverted commas) and Foreign Policy (with capital letters).²⁰⁷ According to Campbell, "Foreign Policy serves to *reproduce* the constitution of identity made possible by "foreign policy" and to *contain* challenges to the identity that results."²⁰⁸

Campbell argues that the differentiation of inside from outside, self from other, and domestic from foreign is based on the principles of differentiation of superior from inferior. According to him, "the social space of inside/outside is both made possible by and helps to constitute a moral space of superior/inferior, which can be animated in terms of any number of figurations of higher/lower."²⁰⁹ He views "biomedical discourses" as the roots of such differentiation where the physiological body is represented as healthy and clean in contrast to all possible diseases ("bipolarity of normal/pathological"). He believes that people tend to view the "social" as a healthy body while any difference is regarded as a dangerous illness.²¹⁰ States have a vested interest in exaggerating the difference as this allows them to fulfill the role of defender of the "healthy body" from the threat of "disease." Emphasizing this point, Campbell argues that "the very domains of inside/outside, self/other, and domestic/foreign [...] are constituted through the writing of a threat."²¹¹ The state's function to "write a threat" is inherent and resembles what Campbell calls an "evangelism of fear":

[T]he state project of security replicates the church project of salvation. State grounds its legitimacy by offering the promise of security to its citizens who, it says, would otherwise face manifold dangers. The church justifies its role by guaranteeing salvation to its followers who, it says, would otherwise be destined to an unredeemed death. Both the state and church require considerable effort to maintain order within and around themselves, and

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 40.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 69. According to Campbell, the former is "divorced from the state as a particular resolution of the categories of identity and difference and applies to confrontations that appear to take place between self and other located in different sites of ethnicity, race, class, gender, or geography." Whereas Foreign Policy is "a state-based and conventionally understood" performance. In fact, Campbell uses the former to mean the politics of identity, while the latter means the traditional foreign policy of a state. Presumably, he invents "foreign policy" and Foreign Policy merely to show that there is no internal and external policies when it comes to the identity formation and interaction with other nations (It takes him 60 pages to supply argumentation). Because internal and external policies already would mean that the border between them exists. But for Campbell, a border does not exist before the difference between self and other becomes evident.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 73.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 75.

²¹¹ Ibid., x.

thereby engage in an evangelism of fear to ward off internal and external threats, succumbing in the process to the temptation to treat difference as otherness.²¹²

In other words, it is an inherent function of the state to use foreign policy to create a threatening “other” and defensible “self.” Thus, “[t]he constant articulation of danger through foreign policy is [...] not a threat to a state’s identity or existence: it is its condition of possibility.”²¹³ As an example, Campbell refers to the discursive construction of “true” “Americanness” in the US, in opposition to “barbarian” “otherness.” At various times the discourse in the US has inscribed:

women, the working class, Eastern Europeans, Jews, blacks, criminals, coloreds, mulattos, Africans, drug addicts, Arabs, the insane, Asians, the Orient, the Third World, terrorists, and other others through tropes that have written their identity as inferior, often in terms of their being a mob and horde (sometimes passive and sometimes threatening) that is without culture, devoid of morals, infected with disease, lacking in industry, incapable of achievement, prone to be unruly, inspired by emotions, given to passion, indebted to tradition, or... whatever “we” are not.²¹⁴

As will be discussed later in this chapter, this dissertation builds upon Campbell’s interpretation of international relations and identity formation. Using the case of Tajikistan’s “foreign policy” and Foreign Policy, it attempts to draw qualitatively new conclusions about Tajikistan’s relations with Uzbekistan. However, this dissertation stretches Campbell’s theory further to draw conclusions about the detailed functioning of the “foreign policy”-making process. To avoid any confusion, this dissertation will avoid using Campbell’s terminological apparatus. This will primarily be achieved by replacing “foreign policy” by “politics of identity” (or, “identity politics”) and Foreign Policy by foreign policy. As far as the Campbellian foreign policy (which combines “foreign policy” and Foreign Policy), that term will be avoided. Furthermore, this dissertation attempts to show that Campbell’s theory will benefit from integrating relatively new concepts and assumptions that can be found in emerging studies.

1.3. International relations as Self/Other relations²¹⁵

Social-constructivist and post-structuralist theories were not the only ones that attempted to shed light on identity formation in IR. Iver Neumann tried to come up with a theory that would occupy a middle ground. Contrary to the assertions of rationalist/structuralist theorists, he argues that “[i]dentity does not reside in essential and readily identifiable cultural traits but in

²¹² Ibid., 50-51.

²¹³ Ibid., 13.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 89.

²¹⁵ The title is borrowed from Iver Neumann, “Self and Other in International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 2 (1996): 154.

relations."²¹⁶ According to him, "[i]t is the cultural logic of 'us and them,' of collective identity, of group consciousness" that shapes the international society of states.²¹⁷ He viewed international relations as an *international society* of states (rather than an anarchic system of states), borrowing the opinion of Hedley Bull. Drawing on this opinion, Neumann not only speculated about the construction of an "international societal" collective identity, but also about a regional collective identity,²¹⁸ a sub-regional identity,²¹⁹ and a national identity.²²⁰ He made no differentiation between the ways that regional identity and national identity are constructed:

It is often maintained that Central Europe is a project radically different from national projects in the region since it unites where national projects divide. This, however, is not necessarily so. Since nation-building and region-building projects are both instances of identity politics, they will necessarily have a unifying as well as divisive aspects. The all-important question is rather *how* differentiation is produced.²²¹

At all levels, he believes, self-definition requires a "constituting" "other." His scholarly works focus on the analysis of the European "self" vis-à-vis the Ottoman "other," Central European "self" vis-à-vis the Russian "other," and Russian "self" vis-à-vis the European "other." According to him, "a thing is perceived as much in terms of what it is *not* as in terms of what it *is*."²²² In his view, the self and the other mutually constitute each other:

Identity is inconceivable without difference. In order for some human collectives to acknowledge that they are in some respect identical, that they have a common identity in those respects, they have to contrast that identity to something different. This is unavoidable, and therefore in itself not worthy of great attention. However, the ways in which a collective may forge a common identity by differentiating itself externally from other collectives, are many and various. Since the production of identity and of difference – of self and other – proceed together, they will also color each other.²²³

What differentiates Neumann from post-structuralist theorists is that he posits that hostile relations with the "other" can become friendly; "one should not rule out the possibility of turning a traditionally apposite Other into a *positive* Other, with which one could have mutually

²¹⁶ *Russia and the idea of Europe: A study in identity and international relations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 1.

²¹⁷ Iver Neumann and Jennifer Welsh, "The Other in European Self-Definition: An Addendum to the Literature of International Society," *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 4 (1991): 328.

²¹⁸ For more on how "[t]he Other, i.e., the non-European barbarian or savage, played a decisive role in the evolution of the European identity and in the maintenance of order among European states", see *ibid.*, 329.

²¹⁹ See Iver Neumann, "Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other," *East European Politics & Societies* 7, no. 2 (1993).

²²⁰ For his study on Russian identity, see *Russia and the idea of Europe: A study in identity and international relations*.

²²¹ "Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other," 350.

²²² Neumann and Welsh, "The Other in European Self-Definition: An Addendum to the Literature of International Society," 331.

²²³ Neumann, "Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other," 350.

fruitful interaction."²²⁴ Nevertheless, most of Neumann's assumptions sound similar to those of post-structuralist or even postmodernist theories of IR. For instance, Neumann argues that "[i]n discussing Europe, the Russians have [...] clearly been discussing themselves, and so the debate is an example of how Russians have talked themselves into existence."²²⁵ This is what Xavier Guillaume, a post-structuralist theorist of IR, would call an "utterance." Although it is evident that, in Neumann's theory, identity is constructed discursively, Neumann tries to avoid linking himself with the post-modernists or post-structuralists. He rather associates himself with, what he calls, "the Copenhagen coterie of international relations," (along with Wæver, Hansen, Holm, Welsh) a school of theorists whom Neumann posits at the middle ground between rationalist/structuralist theorists (e.g., Hedley Bull and Kenneth Waltz) and post-structuralists/post-modernists (e.g., Ashley, Der Derian, Shapiro, Walker, Campbell).

The biggest contribution of Neumann to IR theory is his comprehensive analysis of how the self/other dichotomy, as a form of collective identity formation, has traveled to IR from disciplines like ethnography, psychology, and philosophy.²²⁶ Furthermore, he argues that "othering" can unite several competing national "selves" under a regional identity in the face of a non-regional "other."²²⁷ Finally, 'the Copenhagen coterie', in his opinion, has proved that international cooperation is possible.²²⁸ Nevertheless, these assumptions in Neumann's works do not necessarily distance him from those whom he calls post-structuralist scholars. His analytical methods are not always free from elements of both post-structuralism and post-modernism. Moreover, the dialogical understanding of collective identity formation that he advocates for is at the core of post-structuralism.²²⁹ After all, as Neumann acknowledges, Hansen and Wæver of "the Copenhagen coterie" owe a "debt to the theorizing of Ashley and Walker."²³⁰ Lastly, Neumann himself occasionally refers to Ashley, Der Derian and Foucault.²³¹ To conclude, Neumann influenced a range of scholars, including Rumelili, Diez, and Bukh,²³² who continued his efforts to maintain distance from Campbellian post-structuralist theories when studying the self/other dichotomy. While acknowledging Neumann's great contribution, this

²²⁴ Neumann and Welsh, "The Other in European Self-Definition: An Addendum to the Literature of International Society," 331.

²²⁵ Neumann, *Russia and the idea of Europe: A study in identity and international relations*, 194.

²²⁶ See "Self and Other in International Relations."

²²⁷ For how Russia played the role of "other" for Central Europe, see "Russia as Central Europe's Constituting Other.", For how "the Turks" have played the role of "other" for European collective identity, see Neumann and Welsh, "The Other in European Self-Definition: An Addendum to the Literature of International Society."

²²⁸ Neumann, "Self and Other in International Relations," 162.

²²⁹ Neumann acknowledges this. See *ibid.*, 156-61.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 162.

²³¹ See *Russia and the idea of Europe: A study in identity and international relations*, 2, 4.

²³² See Bahar Rumelili, "Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding the EU's Mode of Differentiation," *Review of International Studies* 30, no. 1 (2004)., Thomas Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering 'Normative Power Europe'," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (2005)., Alexander Bukh, *Japan's National Identity and Foreign Policy: Russia as Japan's 'Other'* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011).

dissertation argues that non-antagonistic relations of the “self” with “other” are impossible as the “other” stops fulfilling its constructive function as soon as the “self” seeks friendly relations with it.

1.4. Identity/alterity nexus: a dialogical understanding of international relations

The dialogical understanding of IR that Neumann advocated for has been advanced to a new level by Xavier Guillaume, a post-structuralist IR scholar.²³³ Guillaume’s view on the processual formation of an identity within and beyond a state is revolutionary in the sense that it leads to a qualitatively new understanding of the term “international,” and thus, of international relations. For Guillaume, identity is as important an attribute as the “power” and “interest” that a state brings into international relations.²³⁴ His definition of identity is as follows:

An identity, a specific self-understanding/representation, [is] a social continuant, as a series of on-going events and/or occurrences plotted through a multitude of commitments and identifications that basically give the structures and the horizons determining what the good is, what should and should not be, what should be done and how, or what or whom one should be associated with, distinguished from or opposed to.²³⁵

For Guillaume, “identity is both a discursive and performative act,”²³⁶ and therefore it looks like an “utterance.” Based on Bakhtin’s definition of “utterance,” Guillaume argues that like utterance, identity has three dimensions: expressivity, contextuality, and relationality.²³⁷ Expressivity implies that identity is expressed in texts. “Texts,” in his interpretation, are not merely “written words in specific media, or to the sole effects of representation.”²³⁸ They are rather “all activities, including material practices, by and through which human beings are ‘readable.’”²³⁹ This “readability” or expressivity of identity does not mean anything without “its contextualization within a historical, socio-cultural, economic and political assemblage.”²⁴⁰ Lastly, relationality of identity means that identity as a social continuant is “not self-contained,” but rather defined by its “extrinsicness.”²⁴¹ In other words, national identity should be

²³³ See Xavier Guillaume, “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002)., “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” *Japanstudien*, no. 15 (2003)., “Unveiling the ‘international’: Process, identity and alterity,” *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 35, no. 3 (2007)., “From process to politics,” *International Political Sociology* 3, no. 1 (2009)., *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

²³⁴ “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 24-25.

²³⁵ *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 38.

²³⁶ “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 12.

²³⁷ *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 33.; “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 13-15.

²³⁸ *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 35. See also *ibid.*, 44.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 35. See also *ibid.*, 44.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 36. See also “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 13.

²⁴¹ *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 37.

understood as “participating in a continuous dialogical process of what itself is in relation to alternative understandings and representations.”²⁴² Guillaume labels this alternative understanding and representation as “alterity.” Relations between “identity” and “alterity” are “dialogical.” According to him, “[t]his dialogical approach [...] is *dialogical* in the sense that it considers identity to represent a multitude of “answers” to alterity, to multiple self-understandings/representations.”²⁴³

So far as identity is utterance, it presumes the presence of a narrator. According to Guillaume, “it is obvious—but not necessary—that the state be considered the main chief narrator, as the sovereign expression of national identity in the international realm.”²⁴⁴ The chief narrators are the “holders of political power and cultural authority.”²⁴⁵ Therefore, they are the “central and authoritative agents setting up linguistic and performative models [that] define a polity’s environment and its dominating self-understanding/representation”.²⁴⁶ The set of methodological tools that states rely on to fulfill these activities is called the politics of alterity. The politics of alterity is a “boundary-producing political performance,” which makes it similar to Campbell’s “foreign policy.”²⁴⁷ The politics of alterity has two components – alterity rhetoric and practices of alterity. Alterity rhetoric can be seen in “the different textual or discursive expressions that constitute the texts of foreign policy” as well as “in any type of ‘textual’ expression [...] related to the delimitation and production of national identity.”²⁴⁸ While alterity rhetoric is more about the expressive aspects of the politics of alterity,²⁴⁹ the practices of alterity are the practical steps that a state/government undertake (i.e., what they do and how they behave) to enable the “actual application of the rhetoric”²⁵⁰ in order to render alterity and identity opaque. States use these practices to “concretely establish [...] the boundaries defining the norms within and beyond the state and, consequently, either eject [...] the ones that are considered as exterior to the boundaries enacted, or integrat[e] the ones that are considered as analogous to them.”²⁵¹ What lies within the state’s borders is known as “domestic” or “internal” and what lies beyond the state’s boundaries is considered “international.”

While Guillaume’s incorporation of Bakhtin’s views into his analysis of IR proves to be insightful,

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid., 3.

²⁴⁴ “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 16.

²⁴⁵ “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” 88.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ For Guillaume’s acknowledgement of this similarity, see *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 57. For Guillaume’s utilization of Campbell’s definition, see “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 15., “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” 88.

²⁴⁸ “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 15-16.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 16.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 17.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 16.

there are some limitations in his post-Campbellian theory. His concept of the politics of alterity does not operate unless it is paired with “narrative matrices”²⁵² that shape “knowledge space and moral space.” He uses *La Republique* as a central narrative matrix in France²⁵³ as well as *shinkoku shiso* and *kokutai* as the narrative matrices in Japan.²⁵⁴ He fails to explain where these matrices come from or how and why they shape knowledge and moral space. The matrices sound like an ideology or a national idea which defines what is right and wrong, what is acceptable and unacceptable. This dissertation, on the other hand, argues that, first, ideologies and national ideas are results of a state’s politics of identity/alterity, and not of readily available, operating matrices for a politics of alterity.

Furthermore, Guillaume argues that “othering” is merely one figuration of alterity, which means that alterity can be good as well as bad.²⁵⁵ Criticizing the Campbellian way of “othering”,²⁵⁶ he states that “focusing solely on the mechanism of othering limits our ability to grasp the complex configurations of power relations at play in the formation, performance, and transformation of a [...] collective identity.”²⁵⁷ In other words, he refuses to accept the importance of the “threat” of the “other” to the “self” and assumes that non-threatening figurations of “other” are possible. However, the empirical parts of his scholarly works are full of the examples where the “other” is perceived as a “threat” to identity; e.g., Japanese identity as an answer to the ‘Western’ threat,²⁵⁸ *kokutai* as a tool against perceived threats from modernism and Americanism,²⁵⁹ Christianity as a threat,²⁶⁰ the portrayal of “Western ideologies, such as liberalism and communism [...] as threatening Japanese self-understanding/representation”,²⁶¹ liberalism and socialism as a threat to *kokutai* and *tennosei*,²⁶² “the heterodox behavior and way of thinking of some Japanese people” as a threat to “the harmony of the political community as a whole”,²⁶³ “imported and unnatural Western doctrines and perspectives” as a threat to “harmony”,²⁶⁴ a

²⁵² He defines narrative matrices as “symbolic resources and repertoires available to social agents, which are present for long periods and are reinvested with significance by these social agents in various contexts and within certain relationalities.” See *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 55.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 55-57.

²⁵⁴ “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” 90-109.

²⁵⁵ See “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 15. He relies on Todorov’s “axiologic levels” of alterity, which implies that the other can be bad as well as good. See Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992), 185.

²⁵⁶ Othering, in Guillaume’s belief, is “but one mechanism in those larger processes [of the dialogical approach] and its predominance in our reflections prevents researchers from thinking about the identity/alterity nexus beyond dichotomized relations.” See Guillaume, *International Relations and Identity: A Dialogical Approach*, 3., for more, see *ibid.*, 11, 138.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

²⁵⁸ “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 21.

²⁵⁹ “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” 85, 86.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 93, 95.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 101.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 104.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 106.

“Japanese person following Western ideologies or religions (whether Christianity, Communism or Western Liberalism)” as “a westernized alien and, therefore, a threat to the peace and harmony of the Japanese realm”²⁶⁵, and so on.²⁶⁶

Lastly, despite his claims that non-threatening alterity is possible, Guillaume abundantly uses the term “danger”²⁶⁷ whenever he refers to the “other.” As already shown in the previous section of this chapter, the practice of attributing threat and danger to the “other” is a characteristic feature of Campbell’s theory, which Guillaume attempts to criticize. Thus, to some degree, Guillaume’s attempt to develop a post-structuralist theory that goes beyond “othering” is not successful. Rather, there are significant similarities between his and Campbell’s theories. This is not to say, however, that Guillaume’s theory is a complete failure. The three concepts that he introduces to the study of identity in IR are important contributions to IR theory; politics of alterity as being comprised of alterity rhetoric and the practices of alterity, identity as utterance (including its expressivity, contextuality and relationality), as well as state as a “chief narrator” (or, histor). This dissertation incorporates these notions in its theoretical framework.

1.5. Ontological security and international relations

The introduction of the concept of “ontological security” to studies of the role of identity in international relations was a breakthrough in IR theory. This concept had been a long-missing piece in the IR jigsaw, capable of revealing the extent to which the national identity politics, national security policy, and foreign policy of a state are intertwined. Inspired by Anthony Giddens’²⁶⁸ use of this concept in his sociological inquiries, Jef Huysmans, and Bill McSweeney brought it into the IR discipline in the late 1990s. While Huysmans and McSweeney attempted to incorporate the notion of ontological security into Campbellian and Wendtian constructivist theories, respectively, it was Brent Steele and Jennifer Mitzen, who speculated about a possibly new IR theory resting on the notion of ontological security. Although they have not been successful in their attempts, the introduction of the concept of ontological security to IR theory has been enriching. It should be noted that over the last decade a significant number of

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 109.

²⁶⁶ See also “Unveiling the ‘international:’ Process, identity and alterity,” 755, 56., and “From process to politics,” 78.

²⁶⁷ See “Foreign Policy and the Politics of Alterity: A Dialogical Understanding of International Relations,” 19, 22, 24., “Misdirected Understandings: Narrative Matrices in the Japanese Politics of Alterity Toward the West,” 93, 95, 98, 103, 08.

²⁶⁸ For Giddens’s application of this concept to Sociology, see Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991). Giddens in his turn borrowed the concept from Ronald Laing, a Scottish psychiatrist. For Laing’s use of the concept, see Ronald D. Laing, *The divided self: an existential study in sanity and madness* (London, New York, Victoria, Ontario, and Auckland: Penguin Books, 1990 (1960)).

publications made further contributions to the study of ontological security.²⁶⁹

Huysmans acknowledges the importance of a threatening “other” to the construction of the “self.”²⁷⁰ However, a fear of the “other” can also be replaced by a “fear of uncertainty and ambiguity.”²⁷¹ For example, the demise of the USSR removed the threat that communism posed to the United States’ identity and brought in “a chaotic condition [in the post-Cold War era] in which there were no certainties.”²⁷² This caused ontological insecurity for the United States. For Huysmans, ontological security is a “mediation of order and chaos” whereas “daily security” is a “mediation of threat” from enemies and strangers.²⁷³ While dividing security into separate “daily” and “ontological” categories has been a breakthrough in IR, the weakness of Huysmans’ theoretical assumption lies in his overwhelming focus on the “fear of death.” While death sounds threatening to humans,²⁷⁴ Huysmans’ transfer of this fear to states is problematic. He believes that an individual’s fear of a criminal and a state’s fear of a rival state are the same and that both are driven by fear of death. In his own words “[t]he general category of death is displaced by concretized dangers, inimical forces ranging from the devil to criminals and rival states.”²⁷⁵ Huysmans does not elaborate on why/how this “displacement” occurs or on why/how a “rival state” obtains resemblance to a “devil/criminal.” It is probable that a further elaboration

²⁶⁹ For instance, Alanna Krolikowski, "State Personhood in Ontological Security Theories of International Relations and Chinese Nationalism: A Skeptical View," *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 1 (2008). Will Delehanty and Brent J Steele, "Engaging the narrative in ontological (in)security theory: insights from feminist IR," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, no. 3 (2009). Felix Berenskoetter and Bastian Giegerich, "From NATO to ESDP: A Social Constructivist Analysis of German Strategic Adjustment after the End of the Cold War," *Security Studies* 19, no. 3 (2010). Amelia Hadfield-Amkhan, *British Foreign Policy, National Identity, and Neoclassical Realism* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010). Ayse Zarakol, "Ontological (In)security and State Denial of Historical Crimes: Turkey and Japan," *International Relations* 24, no. 1 (2010). Dragan Staniševski, "Fear Thy Neighbor: Ontological Security and the Illusion of National Purity," *Administrative Theory & Praxis* 33, no. 1 (2011). Sean Kay, "Ontological Security and Peace-Building in Northern Ireland," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 2 (2012). Stuart Croft, "Constructing Ontological Insecurity: The Insecuritization of Britain's Muslims," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 2 (2012). Harun Ercan, "Talking to the ontological other: armed struggle and the negotiations between the Turkish state and the PKK," *Dialectical Anthropology* 37, no. 1 (2013). Jelena Subotić, "Narrative, Ontological Security, and Foreign Policy Change," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10.1111/fpa.12089(2014). Jeremy Youde, "Shame, ontological insecurity and intercountry adoption," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 27, no. 3 (2014). Bahar Rumelili, "Identity and desecuritisation: the pitfalls of conflating ontological and physical security," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 18, no. 1 (2015). Maria Mälksoo, "'Memory must be defended': Beyond the politics of mnemonical security," *Security Dialogue* 46, no. 3 (2015). Martin J. Bayly, "Imperial ontological (in)security: 'Buffer states', International Relations and the case of Anglo-Afghan relations, 1808–1878," *European Journal of International Relations* 21, no. 4 (2015). Christopher Browning, "Nation Branding, National Self-Esteem, and the Constitution of Subjectivity in Late Modernity," *Foreign policy analysis* 11, no. 2 (2015). Karl Gustafsson, "Memory politics and ontological security in sino-japanese relations," *Asian Studies Review* 38, no. 1 (2014). "Routinised recognition and anxiety: Understanding the deterioration in Sino-Japanese relations," *Review of International Studies* Firstview article, no. June (2016). Joseph MacKay, "The nomadic other: Ontological security and the Inner Asian steppe in historical East Asian international politics," *Review of International Studies* 42, no. 3 (2016). May Darwich, "The Ontological (In)security of Similarity Wahhabism Versus Islamism in Saudi Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 10.1093/fpa/orw032(2016).

²⁷⁰ Jef Huysmans, "Security! What do you mean? From Concept to Thick Signifier," *European Journal of International Relations* 4, no. 2 (1998): 238-40.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 240.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 241-42.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 235-37.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 237.

would take him towards Campbellian post-structuralism, given that Huysmans argues that “[s]ecurity policy is a practice of postponing death by countering enemies,”²⁷⁶ and this seems to replicate Campbell’s assumptions. Huysmans’ theory does not answer such questions as whether or not ontological security is achievable or whether “death” is a matter of physical or ontological security.

As far as McSweeney’s theoretical assumptions are concerned, they appear inherently flawed considering that his study is based on Wendtian constructivism, which has not withstood the criticism of post-structuralist theories. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that McSweeney’s usage of the term is a bit different from that of other IR scholars. In his interpretation, ontological security is not merely a “question of confidence that *we* are the same, and *they* are different,” but rather “a prior confidence that we and they share a common, fundamental identity” upon which the self/other and us/them differences can be constructed.²⁷⁷ In practical terms, ethnic differences are possible among human beings, rather than among “us Americans and them baseball hats.” In attempts to translate his application of identity from the human/society level to the societal/state level, McSweeney relies on the Wendtian concepts of “societal identity” and “state identity.”²⁷⁸ Thus, his claims carry all the drawbacks of Wendtian theory, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Without a proper review/criticism, McSweeney swipes away Campbell’s theory by criticizing it for sharing Morgenthau’s and Waltz’s assumptions that states have a fixed egoistic identity.²⁷⁹

The Mitzen-Steele debate raised the use of “ontological security” in the IR-identity nexus to a qualitatively new level, mostly due to a more comprehensive re-engagement with Giddens’ works. The biggest contribution of Mitzen is to explain the processes that states undertake to maintain ontological security and avoid ontological insecurity. She calls these processes “routines.” According to her,

In any given social environment, actors solidify identity and learn to be ‘agentic’ through routinized relations with significant others. From a platform of stable routines, aspiring agents come to know who they are and therefore can act. Then, because routines anchor identity, actors become attached to, or invested in, their routines.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 236.

²⁷⁷ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: a sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 157.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 158-61.

²⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, 60-61.

²⁸⁰ Jennifer Mitzen, “Anchoring Europe’s civilizing identity: habits, capabilities and ontological security,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 13, no. 2 (2006): 271.

Mitzen rightly notes that “[l]eaving old routines behind generates ontological insecurity”²⁸¹ because “[l]etting go of routines would amount to sacrificing our sense of agency, which would be hard to do.”²⁸² Considering that “routines depend on others responding predictably,”²⁸³ unpredictability in the changed routines pose identity insecurity. This is why, Mitzen believes, a conflictual relationship, no matter how costly in terms of economic and physical security it might be, appears rational to states and stays routinized, especially when conflicting relations are the source from which national identity is drawn. Thus, it is no wonder that “ontological security can conflict with physical security.”²⁸⁴ To be more precise, “[e]ven harmful or self-defeating relationship can provide ontological security, which means states can become attached to conflict.”²⁸⁵ Based on this, Mitzen argues that ensuring security of identity might be more important for states than conflict prevention, because “[w]here conflict persists and comes to fulfill identity needs, breaking free can generate ontological *in*security, which states seek to avoid.”²⁸⁶ Finally, Mitzen acknowledges the importance of othering and myth-making for maintaining self-identity. To put it in her words, securing one’s “self-conception” is maintained “by projecting negative aspects of the Self onto an Other or otherwise essentializing Self and Other, such as through stereotyping, relying on enemy images, resurrecting national myths, etc.”²⁸⁷ However, she never explains how othering and myth-making practices are related to routines. Similarly, she does not attempt to theorize the links between othering, mythmaking and foreign policy routines. Nevertheless, based on the review above, her contribution to the field is enormous.

Brent Steele attempts to fill these gaps. He argues that discursive construction of self-identity through narrative is not only necessary to maintain the ontological security of nation-states, but also “gives life to routinized foreign policy actions.”²⁸⁸ Both foreign policy and defence policy are planned in accordance with identity politics, in Steele’s opinion. As he puts it, “[o]ntological security illuminates not only why states pursue “non-material” incentives in their foreign policy actions, but also how nation-states structure their militaries to serve identity needs rather than simply “physical” security needs.”²⁸⁹ As a result, preference is given to ontological security rather than to physical security. To ensure the security of their self-identity (ontological security) states

²⁸¹ "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 3 (2006): 362.

²⁸² "Anchoring Europe's civilizing identity: habits, capabilities and ontological security," 274.

²⁸³ "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," 347.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 342.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 343.

²⁸⁷ "Anchoring Europe's civilizing identity: habits, capabilities and ontological security," 274.

²⁸⁸ Brent Steele, *Ontological security in International Relations: Self-identity and the IR state* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 3.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 149.

pursue materially costly and physically dangerous policies.²⁹⁰ Because “[w]hile physical security is (obviously) important to states, ontological security is more important because its fulfillment affirms a state’s self-identity (i.e., it affirms not only its physical existence but primarily how a state sees itself and secondarily how it wants to be seen by others).”²⁹¹

In Steele’s approach, “othering” is not the only source of ontological insecurity, nor is it the main. He believes, rather, that “[t]he anxiety which engulfs the Self does not necessarily have to originate from the Other.”²⁹² According to him, the self is “more intrinsically dynamic” and possible “within the internal dialectic.”²⁹³ Construction of the “self”, if any, can take place mainly within the nation-state, but not as a result of social interaction with an external “other”. Such an approach places Steele’s theory within the realist school, which he openly admires and attempts to reform. Using the language of realist theory, Steele argues that “states are self-interested,” that they “form their security interests on the basis of their own self-interest,” and that their “self-interest supersedes international morality and international law.”²⁹⁴ In his version of realism, states are not driven by the urge for national survival but rather by “ontological security-seeking” behavior.²⁹⁵ In Steele’s opinion, states do everything it takes to ensure the security of their identity. For this purpose, states have “a menu of choices for action, from the deployment of military forces to the articulation of a narrative of the self in the face of identity threats.”²⁹⁶ These assumptions look unobjectionable until one starts questioning what Steele calls the “intrinsically dynamic” processes within a state.

Steele describes “shaming” (synonymous with “insecuritizing”) states, through reminders of “past failure”, as the main source of their anxiety.²⁹⁷ In other words, for a state, handling shameful memories of the past in an appropriate manner becomes a matter of ontological security. Thus, “the struggle for ontological security is intertwined with the ability of agents to fixate on collective memories.”²⁹⁸ Remembering the past creates grounds for foreign policy. “In recalling past events, and in organizing those self-relevant events into a narrative, social agents not only provide particular interpretations of history but enliven history by using it to create the basis for action.”²⁹⁹ Also, states attach meaning to biographical narratives, and thus define national “interest” for themselves and subsequently decide upon mechanisms to secure their

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 148.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 45.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 74.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 55.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

interests.³⁰⁰ So, domestically intrinsic matter fuels external behavior. However, there is a serious discrepancy in this mechanism; Steele fails to acknowledge that the acts of “shaming” at the international level which trigger domestic “collective memories” and “biographical narratives” are a socially constructed “feeling.” The “shame” that Steele discusses cannot be internally triggered; it is rather a result of a state’s social interaction with “others.”

There are other limitations in Steele’s theoretical assumptions. For instance, Steele views the state as an “anxious agent.”³⁰¹ This labeling looks like an exaggeration considering that, other than being “shamed” at an international level, Steele fails to acknowledge any sources of state anxiety. After all, shame is not an issue in most nations. Moreover, similar to Mitzen, Steele does not provide an empirically rich definition of the “routines” which, according to him, are driven by the state’s never-ending “anxiety” about being.³⁰² Furthermore, all three case studies that Steele uses for his analysis are concerned with why states choose to remain neutral or take part in from military conflicts, as if waging or not waging war is the standard agenda for all states. Finally, even though Steele does not have anything to say against Campbell,³⁰³ and rather sees room for ontological security in poststructuralist theories of IR,³⁰⁴ he refuses to view the “other” as the main source of ontological insecurity. His criticism of Campbell is unconvincing and insubstantial. Moreover, establishing that states have a self-help nature does not necessarily imply the sole validity of realist theories of IR. It goes without saying that there are several minor issues about Steele’s speculations regarding notions as “healthy” and “unhealthy” ontological security; “artificial” identity³⁰⁵; “external enemies” and “internal strangers”;³⁰⁶ and the transition of “anxiety” into “fear”.³⁰⁷ None of these terms are well-defined or convincingly integrated into Steele’s theoretical assumption.

2. Analytical framework and theoretical assumptions of the thesis

All of the theories mentioned above have influenced the analytical framework employed in this dissertation, but the theories developed by Campbell, and Guillaume, as well as Mitzen, and Steele, will be engaged with more closely. As shown above, each of these scholars has made breakthroughs in their own right and the basic theoretical assumptions of this dissertation build upon their work. However, as briefly reviewed above, each of them also have their limitations, and some more than others. This dissertation attempts to address those issues and make a

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 72.

³⁰¹ See *ibid.*, 60.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 60-61.

³⁰³ See *ibid.*, 30-31.

³⁰⁴ See *ibid.*, 63-66.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 63.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

³⁰⁷ See *ibid.*

contribution to IR theory. It dwells deeply on the details of “domestic” aspects of identity formation and “othering” to show how the self/other dichotomy is linked to foreign policy and international relations. In particular, as will be discussed below, it introduces notions of national heroism/anti-heroism as the two poles of “knowledge space,” to borrow Guillaume’s words, or “moral space” in Campbell’s terms. This will be helpful in showing why and how “purely” domestic debates about heroes/anti-heroes have direct links to international relations. Furthermore, this dissertation integrates the locales of “identity construction” such as linguistics, literature, historiography and statehood into IR theory to show that they are not only matters of domestic concern but also have strong links to nation-states’ external relations.

2.1. Identity politics as a boundary-making performance

“The boundary-making political performance” of a state is one of its core functions. Almost all policies (social, economic, trade, military, foreign, security, education, etc.) conducted by a state contribute to this performance. Boundary-making political performance always seeks answers to the following questions: “Who we are” as a nation? Where do the challenges to “our” self-identification and perception come from? Where are the boundaries between “us” and those challenging “us”? How do we maintain the differences between “us” and “them”? States rely on all possible means to forge national identity, identify active and passive challenges to that identity, and then act as a protector of national identity. This function cannot be fulfilled solely through identification of a nation’s enemy via foreign policy; through teaching national history in schools; or through building museums and statues, etc. All of a state’s policies contribute to the construction of national “self” and an “other”, as well as to the boundaries between them. This dissertation uses the notion of the “politics of identity” to summarize the boundary-making aspects of a state’s policies. It avoids using Campbell’s “foreign policy” and Guillaume’s “politics of alterity” as these terms can be misleading.

2.2. Epistemic function of identity politics

Identity is always associated with positivity. Anything that does not fit in with this positivity, or that passively ignores or openly challenges it, is unacceptable and dangerous, thus going beyond the boundaries of identity. This explains the polarity of qualities associated with the self” and the “other”. In maintaining ontological security, the politics of identity aims at defining and defending “the truth” about the national “self.” According to this “truth,” the “self” bears positive qualities whereas the “other” carries negative features. Similarly, the “self” is superior, whereas the “other” is inferior. At any given time, the boundaries of these positive and negative qualities defines the boundaries of what is acceptable and unacceptable. The politics of identity

generates knowledge about these acceptable and unacceptable qualities. Ultimately, this knowledge informs what is moral and what is immoral for both the individual and the collective, representing and identifying with the nation. It is an expectation that people act within the “knowledge space” or “moral space” of identity. Otherwise, an individual or collective of people who “disobey” become associated with the “other.” The knowledge and moral space of identity are created performatively and discursively. Therefore, the politics of identity include methods ranging from an action toward a foreign nation, to a textbook writing, to a national celebration, to a major infrastructure construction.

2.3. Maintaining ontological security through identity politics

The ultimate goal of the politics of identity is to ensure ontological security. Some nation-states feel more ontologically secure than others. Nevertheless, to some degree, every nation has its concerns and anxieties related to the “other.” Threats emanating from the “other” might range from passive to active. The “other” ceases to fulfill its function when it does not pose any challenge to the “self.” This might happen when the moral and knowledge bases of either the “self” or the “other” shift. In this case, the “self,” based on certain moral and knowledge bases, comes across an “other” which ignores or challenges that morality or knowledge. The “Self” and the “other(s)” are fluid, multilayered, and in a constant state of “emergence.” The more active a threat is, the more chances there are that it ceases to be an issue of ontological security and becomes one of physical security. The level of perceived threat to identity dictates the policy instruments that the state uses to address it (this can range from erecting a monument to deploying troops). Ontological security is as important as economic stability and military security and it is therefore no wonder that states make economically and militarily costly decisions to keep the dominant narratives of national identity intact. No identity is immune from ontological insecurity. Therefore, the politics of identity is perpetual, like the state system itself.

Language is an important aspect of national identity. Various terms are used to explore the links between language and national identity. Eric Hobsbawm believes that “[a]t all events problems of power, status, politics and ideology and not of communication or even culture, lie at the heart of the nationalism of language.”³⁰⁸ John Joseph prefers to use “national linguistic identity” to define the linguistic aspect of the “us and them” dichotomy. According to him, “[t]he more steps ‘they’ undertake to suppress our identity, the more motivated we are to maintain and even strengthen it.”³⁰⁹ Leigh Oakes defines a similar phenomenon as “linguistic nationalism.” He

³⁰⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 110.

³⁰⁹ John Joseph, *Language and Politics*, ed. Alan Davies and Keith Mitchell, *Edinburgh Textbooks in Applied Linguistics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 39.

explains it using the example of Germany, where anti-French feelings resulted in leading German intellectuals such as Herder, Fichte, and Humboldt advocating national pride based on an appreciation of the German language.³¹⁰ Therefore, it can be said that “language is an important variable in power relations between dominant and subordinate groups.”³¹¹ In other words, “[c]ompetition between languages represents competition between groups.”³¹² The following paragraph best summarizes the dividing and uniting functions of language:

[L]anguage, and in particular the existence of broadly shared language, is very often a primary and critical component in the successful moulding of a population as a nation. As a symbolic marker and index of individual and group identity, language has the potential to function as an important boundary device, separating distinct sub-populations off from neighbouring others with different, possibly unintelligible language habits, and binding the former together with shared feelings of identity and group self-interest. Spread amongst a significantly wide population of speakers via the use of various mass media, a common language can assist in the construction of a geographically widespread, imagined community of speakers and the building of nation-like polities, providing linguistic links are also reinforced with other shared cultural properties. The promotion of a standardized, common language throughout a territory and its inhabitants also has the ability to even out socio-economic inequities present in a society and encourage the unification of a population through the provision of equal (or at least improved) opportunities for advancement and future prosperity.³¹³

Furthermore, “[h]istory’ makes up a substantial part of a biographical narrative [of the nation]”³¹⁴ and states select certain periods in the past to appear in their biographical narrative.³¹⁵ Creation of a national biographical narrative substantiates ontological security. The purpose of the biographical narrative is “to provide the Self with knowledge about its place in ‘the world’, specifically to meaningfully situate the Self and delineate its existence in time and space, to provide us with a necessary sense of orientation about where we come from and where we are, or could be, going.”³¹⁶ Ultimately, “[t]he political potency of a national biography lies in its function to provide a community with a basic discourse, or master narrative, which guides and legitimizes courses of action and provides ontological security.”³¹⁷

³¹⁰ Leigh Oakes, *Language and National Identity: Comparing France and Sweden* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2001), 22, 22-23.

³¹¹ Carol Schmid, *The Politics of Language: Conflict, Identity, and Cultural Pluralism in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 9.

³¹² Robert McColl Millar, *Language, Nation and Power* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 30.

³¹³ Andrew Simpson, "Language and National Identity in Asia: a Thematic Introduction," in *Language and National Identity in Asia*, ed. Andrew Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1.

³¹⁴ Felix Berenskoetter, "Parameters of a national biography," *European Journal of International Relations* 20, no. 1 (2014): 270.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 270-72.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 269.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 279.

3. Conclusion

Even though the state's "border-making" function is the main reason for the creation of the knowledge/moral space and the self/other dichotomy, the power of a discursive construction of the dangerous "other" should not be overestimated. Uruguay, for instance, no matter how hard it tries, can never succeed in creating a bad image of Uzbekistan, or Uzbek leadership, or the Uzbek nation with the purpose of using it as dangerous "other" vis-à-vis sustainable "self". There should be a point of contact, at least, or friction at best, between the "self" and potential "other(s)." Furthermore, a threat to ontological security and a threat to existential security should not be mistaken for one another. Famine, war, sanctions, and blockades, coups, and the military drills of neighboring nations are, rather, matters of existential security. True, their effects can be politicized and used for identity/difference construction. However, those physical and natural threats themselves cannot be discursively constructed out of nowhere.

The thematic focus on this thesis is the politics of national identity in Tajikistan. Within the framework of the above-mentioned theoretical assumptions, it explains 1) how the politics of national identity in Tajikistan creates the boundaries of the Tajik "self" and Uzbek "other"; 2) how Tajikistan attempts to ensure ontological security from a threatening "other"; and 3) how Tajikistan defines the moral/knowledge space of identity. To do that, this dissertation focuses on three areas of self/other friction – statehood/territoriality, language/literature, and historiography. In all three areas, the Tajik government relies on images of famous Tajik scholars and political figures, all of whom are recognized as Heroes of Tajikistan, with texts that contribute to the politics of national identity hailing their lives and deeds as an example for the Tajik people.

This dissertation shows that the practice of hero-making is an act that defines the moral and knowledge space of identity. The qualities of the Heroes and their causes, which they upheld as the best possible ones for the whole nation to follow, define the most *acceptable* national features and also hints at what is *unacceptable*. The latter quality is principally associated with either anti-heroes or "others." Therefore, it is enriching to understand why Tajikistan chose certain heroes. Being one of the overlooked aspects of identity politics, an analysis of practices surrounding hero-making might illuminate aspects of how the moral/knowledge space of identity is defined and how the boundaries of the self and the other are drawn. Overall, addressing the common criticism – i.e., post-structuralist theories of IR are "an exercise in complication for complication's sake"³¹⁸ – this dissertation uses the case of Tajikistan's identity

³¹⁸ Antony O'Loughlin, "Overcoming poststructuralism: Rawls, Kratochwil, and the structure of normative reasoning in International Relations" (PhD Dissertation, Cardiff University, 2012), 19.

politics to show that such theorizations can hold strong explanatory power.

Chapter 2. The Role of Remembering National Heroes in the Politics of Identity: Defining the Moral Space of Identity in Tajikistan

1. Remembering the Heroes of Tajikistan and their role in the politics of identity

Maintaining national unity has been a priority task for the Tajik government since the end of the civil war in 1997. Along with declaring 27 June, the day when the peace accord was signed, the Day of National Unity,³¹⁹ the Tajik government announced Sadriddin Aini and Bobojon Ghafurov were awarded with the title of “Heroes of Tajikistan” on 8 September, 1997.³²⁰ This is the highest state award in Tajikistan.³²¹ By that time, these two figures were already uncontested and unconditionally famous people within Tajik society. There was no shortage of knowledge and discourse about the services they had rendered to the Tajik nation. Even though those discourses were created during Soviet rule, narratives about their exemplary lives and deeds were equally acceptable in post-Soviet Tajikistan. President Emomali Rahmon was chosen by the parliament as the next “Hero of Tajikistan” on 11 December 1999.³²² Since then three more people were awarded the title of “Hero of Tajikistan”. On 7 May 2001, Mirzo Tursunzoda, a famous Soviet Tajik poet and writer, received the title of Hero of Tajikistan.³²³ On 27 June 2006, the president bestowed the same honour on Nusratullo Makhsom and Shirinsho Shotemur. Members of the Tajik intelligentsia represented by the Academy of Science of Tajikistan, the Union of Writers, Union of Artists, Union of Musicians and Union of Theatre Actors wrote a letter to President Rahmon thanking him for perpetuating images of these Tajiks.³²⁴

The Tajik government exerts significant effort to promote the lives and deeds of these people by organizing a series of public events, meetings, conferences and publications, etc. For instance, in 1998, Tajikistan celebrated the 90th anniversary of Bobojon Ghafurov. A year before that, during the 29th session of the General Assembly of UNESCO in Paris in October-November, the government successfully lobbied for the inclusion of Ghafurov’s 90th anniversary to the list of anniversaries, historic events and eminent personalities to be celebrated by Member States and

³¹⁹ The President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon argues that “In the history of states and nations of the world, there are important events and dates, which as time goes by gains a [significant] role and place as national values, which teaches the nation to follow the path of respect and veneration and defend this asset and invaluable achievement. The Day of National Unity is one of those historic and fateful dates for the nation of Tajikistan.” See Emomali Rahmon, “Tabrikoti televizioni ba munosibati Ro’zi vahdati milli,” 26 June 2013.

³²⁰ See “Az darichai Tarikh,” *Haqiqati Sughd*, 2011?

³²¹ See Article 2 of *Law of Tajikistan on State Awards of the Republic of Tajikistan*, 2001

³²² “Az darichai Tarikh.”

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Abdufattoh Sharipov and Zarovuddin Sirozhov, *Emomali Rahmonov: God Ariiskoi tsivilizatsii (Vnutrenniia i vneshniia politika Prezidenta Tazhikistana)* (Dushanbe: Devastich, 2006): 315-6

Associate Members.³²⁵ This series of public events and celebrations culminated on 21 December 2008, with a grand ceremonial meeting.³²⁶ With similar jubilation the 120th anniversary of Sadriddin Aini was celebrated, the main event taking place on 15 April 1998, the writer's birthday.³²⁷ A decade later, the government sponsored a similar series of public events, conferences and publications to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Ghafurov and the 130th anniversary of Aini.³²⁸

Mirzo Tursunzoda's 100th anniversary in 2011 was also celebrated on a similar scale and in a similar style. Upon the request of the Tajik government in 2009, the anniversary was included in the list of UNESCO's 2010-2011 celebrations and anniversaries.³²⁹ The government financed the construction of the Museum of Tursunzoda in the city of Tursunzoda.³³⁰ On this occasion, the Tajik State Institute of Arts, named after Mirzo Tursunzoda, held a year-long series of events, including a poem reading contest, theatrical staging, seminars, meetings with the writers and poets, a book fair, as well as a conference, "Mirzo Tursunzoda: About Peace and Friendship."³³¹ Additionally, two public publishing houses took over the task of releasing Tursunzoda's selected poems in Tajik and Russian, with English translations, as well as an edited volume of memories of Tajik and foreign writers and poets featuring Tursunzoda and two volumes of poems authored by Tursunzoda specifically for school children.³³² Moreover, several national and local public gatherings took place. For instance, on 26 April 2011, there was a public event in Khujand city devoted to the 100th anniversary of Tursunzoda.³³³ On 12 May 2011, the Centre for Educational Development and the Academy of Education of Tajikistan hosted a conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Tursunzoda.³³⁴ On 11 October 2011, the Writers' Union of Tajikistan organized a poetry evening devoted to Tursunzoda's poems.³³⁵ To conclude the series of events, on 14 October 2011, a public ceremony, participated in by President Rahmon, was held.³³⁶

Similar events of remembrance were devoted to Nusratullo Makhsum and Shirinsho Shotemur. The government sponsored the celebration of Makhsum's 125th anniversary in 2006 and 130th

³²⁵ see "Khronologiya sobytiĭ Natsional'noĭ Komissii Respubliki Tadjikistan po delam UNESCO v 1991-2010 gg.," *UNESCO*, 2014, 2011.

³²⁶ See Zarifi, *Emomali Rahmon - bunyonguzori siyosati khorizhi Tozhikistan.*: 233

³²⁷ "Az darichai Tarikh."

³²⁸ See Mavzhuda Hasanova and Akmal Kadamov, "V Tadjikistane otmetili 130-letnii iubilei Sadriddina Aini," *Asia-Plus*, 15 April 2008.

³²⁹ See "Khronologiya sobytiĭ Natsional'noĭ Komissii Respubliki Tadjikistan po delam UNESCO v 1991-2010 gg.."

³³⁰ "V Tursunzade stroitsia muzei v chest' 100-letia Mirzo Tursunzade," *Avesta.Tj*, 14 January 2011.

³³¹ Liudmila Dubinina, "V TGII sostoiatsia iubileinyie meropriiatiia, posviashennyie M.Tursunzade," *Khovar*, 22 January 2011.

³³² "Tadjikistan otmechayet vek narodnogo poeta Mirzo Tursunzoda," *Khovar*, 12 October 2011.

³³³ "K 100-letiiu mastera slova Mirzo Tursunzade," *Pressa.tj*, 27 April 2011.

³³⁴ "Narodnomu pisatelĭu i poetu Tadjikistana Mirzo Tursunzade 100 let," 2014, no. 29 May 2014, 2011.

³³⁵ Avaz Iuldashev, "Tadjikistan otprazdnuiet 100-letnii iubilei Mirzo Tursunzade," *Asia-Plus*, 28 September 2011.

³³⁶ "E.Rahmon: Vsiu svoiu zhizn Mirzo Tursunzoda posviatil sluzheniiu narodu," *Avesta.Tj*, 14 October 2011.

anniversary in 2011. In particular, in 2006 President Rahmon unveiled Makhsum's statue in the latter's hometown.³³⁷ During the opening ceremony, President Rahmon stated that "remembering this selfless representative of Tajik nation is the duty of every proud citizen of Tajikistan."³³⁸ In 2011, the Academy of Science of Tajikistan held a conference devoted to the 130th anniversary of Makhsum, during which a dozen Tajik historians remembered the role of Makhsum in the establishment of Tajikistan.³³⁹ Additionally, a book was published with the title "In the Onset of the History," that included primary documents about Makhsum's political activity and scholarly articles about him.³⁴⁰

The case of Shotemur's remembrance perhaps bears the best evidence about Tajikistan's efforts to promote the Heroes. On 25 February 2009, the government of Tajikistan adopted a special decree "About the Plan of Events on Preparation and Organization of the 110th Anniversary of Hero of Tajikistan Shirinsho Shotemur".³⁴¹ The organization committee established by this decree was assigned with "preparation and spreading of materials about Shirinsho Shotemur in mass-media, preparation, and publication of a collection of works about Shotemur written by local and foreign scholars and writers."³⁴² Moreover, within July-October 2009, the organisation planned to erect a monument of Shotemur in Khorog city park, restore his house and turn it into a museum, create a documentary, hold a conference called, "Shirinsho Shotemur and the Issues of Creation of a State of Tajiks", as well as publish a book titled, "Wherever I am, I Want to be with Tajiks".³⁴³ Along with the central government's decree, the head of the Gorno-Badakhshon Autonomous Region, Qodiri Qosim issued an order on the measures that would be taken to celebrate the 110th anniversary of Shirinsho Shotemur at the regional level. Among other events, Qosim planned to organize a conference with grandiose title "Shirinsho Shotemur and the Geopolitical Issues of Tajikistan from His Days to the Present."³⁴⁴

Throughout 2009, the following notable events devoted to the commemoration of Shotemur took place. First, "Irfon", the publishing house of Tajikistan's Ministry of Culture, published a book titled "Shirinshoh Shotemur" edited by Qurbon Alamshoev and Haidarsho Pirumshoev.³⁴⁵ Second, the statue was installed in October in Khorog.³⁴⁶ Interestingly, President Rahmon issued

³³⁷ Sharipov and Sirozhov, *Emomali Rahmonov: God Ariiskoi tsivilizatsii (Vnutrenniaia i vneshniaia politika Prezidenta Tazhikistana)*: 302

³³⁸ Ibid.: 302

³³⁹ "Konferentsiia v chest' 130-letii Nusratullo Makhsuma v AN RT," *Khovar*, 1 July 2011.

³⁴⁰ Ra'no Nusratulloeva, "U istokov istorii Tazhikistana," *Khovar*, 4 July 2011.

³⁴¹ "110-letii Shirinsho Shotemura otmetiat v respublike na gosudarstvennom urovne," *Asia-Plus*, 12 March 2009.

³⁴² Ibid.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ Lutfisho Dodo, "Giromidoshti Sh.Shotemur," *Khovar*, 17 April 2009.

³⁴⁵ Beknazari Abubakr, "Ba istiqboli 110-solagii Qahramoni Tozhikiston," *Khovar*, 11 September 2009.

³⁴⁶ Takhmina Goibnazarova, "Pamiatnik Gerou Tazhikistana Shirinsho Shotemuru," *Khovar*, 24 September 2009.

orders to replace the statue of Lenin with the statue of Shotemur.³⁴⁷ Third, the National Library of Tajikistan hosted a conference called “Shirinsho Shotemur – Hero of Tajikistan” on 16 October.³⁴⁸ Moreover, a month-long book fair, during which hundreds of books were displayed, was organized around the theme of “Sources on Shirinsho Shotemur’s Life and Deeds”. Finally, on 20 October, there was a public celebration, in which President Rahmon was a participant, devoted to the 110th anniversary of Shirinsho Shotemur.³⁴⁹ President Rahmon used the occasion to instruct the Ministry of Culture to open a corner of Shotemur in the National Museum of Tajikistan, and to erect a memorial tomb above his grave in the outskirts of Moscow. He also ordered the Agrarian University of Tajikistan to be named after Shirinsho Shotemur.³⁵⁰

It should be noted that Tajik scholars have expended much effort on discovering new primary sources on Shotemur’s life and political activity. This has contributed to the emergence of solid textual knowledge and discourse on Shotemur’s role in the establishment of Tajikistan. For instance, a book titled, “Shirinsho Shotemur in the History of Revival of Tajik Statehood” authored by Qurbon Alamshoev was published in 2013, and was reportedly dedicated to the 115th anniversary of Shotemur that was celebrated in 2014.³⁵¹ It is also noteworthy that in August 2008 Qurbon Alamshoev discovered the so-called “second letter” authored by Shirinsho Shotemur and addressed to Joseph Stalin, leader of the USSR. The letter clearly demonstrates how hard Shotemur struggled against Uzbek pressure and defended the rights of the Tajiks to establish a state.³⁵² A year later, two rare videos of Shotemur were discovered.³⁵³ There have also been efforts to depict Shotemur’s figure through literary works. Thus, a book compiling the literary works devoted to Shirinsho Shotemur was published in 2012.³⁵⁴

Other than the jubilees and celebrations, the government of Tajikistan has also undertaken other measures to promote images of the Heroes of Tajikistan. The most widespread additional measure is the proliferation of portraits of the Heroes in public schools, higher education institutions, public cultural venues and other public areas. Moreover, throughout Tajikistan there are cities, suburbs, streets, and institutions named after these Heroes. The Central Bank has also put the images of the Heroes on banknotes. Even planes are named after the Heroes.

³⁴⁷ "Rahmon Zhoi Leninro ba Shohtemur Dod," *Millat*, 23 October 2009., Zarinai Khushvaqt, "Paikari Shohtemur ba Zhoi Lenin," *BBC Tajik*, 20 October 2009.

³⁴⁸ Takhmina Goibnazarova, "Nauchnyie suzheniia o Shirinsho Shotemure," *Khovar*, 15 October 2009.

³⁴⁹ "Chashni qahramon dar sathi oli surat girift," *Zhumhuriyat*, 20 October 2009.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ Paʼrav Chorshanbiev, "V Dushanbe Izdana kniga o zhizni i deiatel'nosti Shirinsho Shotemur," *Asia-Plus*, 21 October 2013., Haidarsho Pirumshoev, "Shirinshoh Shotemur va Ehioi Davlatdorii Tozhikon," *Zhumhuriyat*, 6 February 2014., Faiz Mirasan, "Naqshi Sh.Shotemur dar ta'rikhi ehioi davlatdorii tozhikon," *Khovar*, 10 February 2014.

³⁵² Lutfisho Dodo, "Maktubhoi Navi Shirinshoh Shotemur Ba Kreml," 28 August 2009.

³⁵³ See Mirzozhaloli Shohzhamol, "Nakhustin Video az Shirinsho Shotemur," *Radioi Ozodi*, 24 August 2009.

³⁵⁴ TojNews, ""Shohtemur dar Adabiioti Tozhik" nashr shud," *TojNews*, 1 November 2012. Firuza Davlatova, "Shirinsho Shotemur dar Adabiioti Tozhik," *Khovar*, 31 October 2012.

Somon Air, the only air company in Tajikistan, has a fleet of Boeing airplanes that bear the names of the Heroes. As a representative of the company reported:

The board of directors and management of "Somon Air" have collaboratively decided that our newly acquired airplanes be named after the national heroes of Tajikistan. Thus, in March 2009, the second Boeing that landed in Dushanbe was named after Sadriddin Aini, the founder of modern Tajik literature. In May 2011, we bought another Boeing 737-700 and named it Shirinsho Shotemur; today another Boeing 737-900 arrived, and we have named it after Bobojon Ghafurov. By the end of the year we are expecting the arrival of Boeing 737-300 – Nusratullo Makhsum.³⁵⁵

Without judging the success and quality of such measures, it is evident that promoting the Heroes is an important aspect of Tajikistan's national identity politics. The state exerts a monopoly of power in this regard and chooses whom to promote as a Hero and how this will be done. Before analyzing why the state chooses to hail these particular people, it is worth mentioning how state keeps this rank of Heroes closed for other potential "candidates."

2. The potential candidates for the title of Hero of Tajikistan

According to Article 8 of the *Law of Tajikistan on State Awards of the Republic of Tajikistan 2001*, "[t]he title of "Hero of Tajikistan", a high award, is bestowed upon those who have rendered services to the state and the people. These services are often in regard to the fulfilment of a heroic, military and professional deed for the sake of the freedom, independence and prosperity of the Republic of Tajikistan."³⁵⁶ The appropriateness of these six people to be the Heroes of Tajikistan is above question in Tajikistan. However, some politicians and activists would like to see more Tajiks receiving this highest award. In September 2006 the IRPT requested that President Rahmon posthumously grant Said Abdullo Nuri, the founder of the IRPT, the title of Hero of Tajikistan.³⁵⁷ Said Abdullo Nuri, who died in 2006, was the leader of the opposition during the civil war in Tajikistan in 1992-7. Together with President Rahmon, he signed the peace treaty in Moscow in 1997 that put an end to the Tajik civil war. IRPT deemed that Said Abdullo Nuri deserved credit for the establishment of peace and national unity in Tajikistan. The request went unheeded.

Similarly, the head of the DPT Masud Sobirov requested President Rahmon to acknowledge Qadriddin Aslonov as a Hero of Tajikistan. According to him, "it is gratifying to note that during the [20 years of independence] such outstanding compatriots as Sadriddin Aini, Mirzo

³⁵⁵ Zhamilia Huseinova, "Alisher Rustamov: Razvitiie aviakompanii - eto razvitiie gosudarstva!," *Vechernii Dushanbe*, 2011.

³⁵⁶ *Law of Tajikistan on State Awards of the Republic of Tajikistan*, 2001

³⁵⁷ "HNIT: "Nuri sazovori unvoni qahramon ast", " *Radioi Ozodi*, 25 September 2006.

Tursunzoda, Bobojon Ghafurov, Shirinsho Shotemur, Nusratullo Makhsum and Emomali Rahmon have been conferred with the title of hero of Tajikistan.” However, “it would be fair to give the same title to Q. Aslonov” because there is his signature on the Declaration of the Independence of Tajikistan.³⁵⁸ Aslonov was known as a person who issued orders to demount the Statue of Lenin in Dushanbe and had outlawed the CP in Tajikistan for some time.³⁵⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that the harshest criticism of this initiative came from the CP of Tajikistan. Ismoil Talbakov, the First Deputy Chairman of the CP of Tajikistan called DPT’s initiative “another intrigue”. According to him, Qadriddin Aslonov has left more “black stains” on the history of the nation than positive deeds.³⁶⁰ Again, there was no any official reaction from the government, though a high-ranking official from President Rahmon’s political party called for the title of “Hero of Tajikistan” not to be devalued by such proposals.³⁶¹

There were also calls for title of “Hero of Tajikistan” to be awarded to Abdurahim Khojibaev, a political figure from the Soviet past of Tajikistan. During the public event devoted to his 110th anniversary that took place in Khujand city, Khojibaev was remembered as being one of the Tajik statesmen during the early Soviet period, who contributed to the formation of Tajik statehood. There were calls to put him on the same rank as Makhsum and Shotemur.³⁶² One of the participants in the event, Usmonjon Gafforov, argued that Abdurahim Khojibaev’s book entitled *Tajikistan* was one of two books – the other being Sadriddin Aini’s *Anthology of Tajik Literature* – that “played a major role in the formation of a separate Tajik Republic at the beginning of the 20th century”.³⁶³ These calls largely went unnoticed by the Tajik public and the government.

In 2013, a Tajik journalist Ahmadshohi Komil wrote an open letter to the government of Tajikistan calling for them to recognize Tohiri Abdujabbor – a founding leader of a perestroika-era political movement called “Rastokhez” – as a Hero of Tajikistan.³⁶⁴ According to him, Tohiri Abdujabbor had made an immense contribution to the conceptualisation of national independence. Komil also argued that Tohiri Abdujabbor played an important role in giving Tajik language the status of a state language.³⁶⁵ Previously, Ahmadshohi Komil had issued a brochure, *The Architect of Tajikistan’s Independence*, which featured a compilation of positive opinions

³⁵⁸ As quoted in Païrav Chorshanbiev, "Demokraty predlagaiut prisvoit' Kadriddinu Aslonovu zvaniie geroia Tazhikistana," *Asia-Plus*, 11 July 2011.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ See Avaz Iuldashev and Païrav Chorshanbiev, "Aslonov ne zasluzhivaiet zvaniia "Geroia Tazhikistana", partii," 11 July 2011.

³⁶¹ See *ibid.*

³⁶² Sanavbar Maksudova, "110-letie so dnia rozhdeniia pervogo Sovnarkoma respubliki " *Khovar*, 5 May 2010.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ See Ahmadshohi Komil, "Qadrshinosi az Tohiri Abduzhabbor ba tahkimi vahdat mosoidat mekunad," *Millat*, 22 June 2013.

³⁶⁵ "Ahmadshoh Komilzoda: Ba Tohiri Abduzhabbor unvoni "Qahramoni Tozhikiston" boiad dod," *Asia-Plus*, 27 July 2013.

about the life and deeds of Tohiri Abdujabbor.³⁶⁶ Ahmadshohi Komil's proposal met with criticism in the Tajik mass-media³⁶⁷ but did not elicit attention from the government.

So far, the government of Tajikistan has shown little interest in awarding the title of "Hero of Tajikistan" to any new candidate. This implies that the government considers the six Heroes as having in common something special that makes them incomparably high-ranking and exemplary. The government acknowledges that there are plenty of prominent personalities from the distant and recent history of the nation, yet they have not "qualified" to be ranked alongside the Heroes. To them, the government offers other types of acknowledgments. Thus, in 2010 the Directorate of Construction of Governmental Properties under the Executive Apparatus of the President of Tajikistan requested the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan to compile a list of 44 prominent Tajik personas whose likenesses could be used to fill the public space. The Directorate had a plan to use statues of 22 of them in the foyer of the new building of the National Library of Tajikistan and the other 22 were expected to appear in an alley before the entrance to the National Museum of Tajikistan.

This selection process caused debates within the working group as well as in the media. As the representative of the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan put it, a group of "famous scholars, cultural practitioners and researchers" worked on the project and "there were a lot of discussions and disagreements while identifying the great sons of Tajik nation, who contributed to its formation and development"³⁶⁸. Khudonazar Kholiqnazarov, Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, issued a call to avoid using the word "heroes" for these 44 figures and to instead denote them as "outstanding personalities".³⁶⁹ Abdunabi Sattorzoda, a former politician³⁷⁰, acknowledged that "heroes are necessary, absolutely," but questioned the selection method and criteria. In his words, "if these criteria are not determined, and everything depends on the opinion of particular people, on their sympathy and antipathy, then, of course, this is not for the benefit of the cause."³⁷¹ Using unknown selection criteria, the Ministry omitted the Heroes of the Soviet Union from the list "due to limited space" and promised to create a room in the National Museum of Tajikistan for them and "those famous personalities, who could not make it onto the list."³⁷²

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ See, for instance, Hafiz Saifullaev, "Ideia kak Provokatsiia," *Narodnaia Gazeta*, 28 August 2013., Zhum'a Murodov, "'Rastokhez" - asosguzori zhangi grazhdani!," *Khatlon Press*, 10 October 2013.

³⁶⁸ As quoted in "Prikazano schitat' geroiami," *Asia-Plus*, 24 March 2011 2011.

³⁶⁹ See Anora Sarkorova, "Tazhikistan vybiraet sebe natsional'nykh geroiev," *BBC Russian*, 27 December 2010 2010.

³⁷⁰ Sattorzoda headed the Opposition delegation during the Moscow negotiations in 1997 that marked the end to civil war in Tajikistan. After the civil war, he served as a deputy foreign minister in 1999-2006.

³⁷¹ Abdunabi Sattorzoda, quoted in Sarkorova, "Tazhikistan vybiraet sebe natsional'nykh geroiev."

³⁷² As quoted in "Prikazano schitat' geroiami."

As soon as the Ministry's list of 44 heroes was released,³⁷³ it attracted criticism. Some thought that list was incomplete, while the others believed that the list included persons that did not deserve to be there. The two big questions addressed the creators of the list were: what criteria was the list compiled on and why these issues were not brought up for public discussion before being reviewed in the ministry.³⁷⁴ Sayfullo Safarov, Deputy Director of the Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, expressed his disagreement with the work of the Ministry saying that "any issue of societal importance should be discussed with the people."³⁷⁵ A year earlier, though, Safarov was optimistic about the initiative and stated that "We need heroes. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have whole alleys of their national heroes, why we do not have them?"³⁷⁶ Kamoludin Abdullaev, a historian, noted that the list would look absolutely different should there have been any polls in this regard. According to him, it was an unsuccessful imitation of the Soviet practice:

When does a state experience a demand for the cult of heroes? We had this during the Great Patriotic War [i.e., Second World War] when the whole Soviet historiography was busy with it upon the direction from the top. In particular, [Sadriiddin] Aini wrote the novels about Muqanna and Temur Malik. At that time this was necessary to raise the patriotism at the state level. A debugged machine of agitation-propaganda worked for this purpose, [and] there was a strong political governance, a million strong editions, and qualified cadres. We do not have anything of that. [...] We have neither a daily newspaper, nor film production, nor a normal TV, nor money, nor, most importantly, motivation to "heroize" the mentioned list.³⁷⁷

Opinions were also expressed that none of the personalities, including the "Heroes of Tajikistan," deserved to be perpetuated. An early example of such position belongs to Olga Tutubalina, a journalist, and blogger at Asia-Plus, an independent news agency in Tajikistan. She argued that "the real national heroes in Tajikistan are neither the classics of literature, poets, and writers nor the Soviet leaders of the state and most importantly not the current leaders."³⁷⁸ According to her, the real heroes that deserve to be hailed in contemporary Tajikistan are the Tajik labor migrants in Russia, whose money remittance back to the home country makes more than a third of the GDP of the nation. Therefore, she calls to promote their images; "let, for instance, Somon Air [a Tajik air company] depict in its new aircraft the [image of] new hero of

³⁷³ Asia-Plus 2011

³⁷⁴ See "Prikazano schitat' geroiami."; Sarkorova, "Tazhikistan vybiraiet sebe natsional'nykh geroiev.", Kamoludin Abdullaev, "Prikazano Schitat' Geroiami," *History of Central Asia since 1860s*, 2011, Kamoludin Abdullaev - Historian from Tajikistan., Galim Faskhutdinov, "V Tazhikistane nabralos' 44 geroia," *DW*, 1 March 2011 2011.

³⁷⁵ As quoted in "V Tazhikistane nabralos' 44 geroia."

³⁷⁶ As quoted in Sarkorova, "Tazhikistan vybiraiet sebe natsional'nykh geroiev."

³⁷⁷ Abdullaev, "Prikazano Schitat' Geroiami."

³⁷⁸ Ol'ga Tutubalina, "Geroi ne te," *Blogi Asia-Plus*, 15 December 2011.

Tajikistan – some Jamshed from Asht or Suhrob from Kulob”.³⁷⁹ Indirectly, she also implies that President Rahmon does not deserve the title of “Hero of Tajikistan”:

There is a bit of heroism in bringing in peace to one’s own country, but it is impossible to achieve this single-handedly, as it takes at least two heroes for this. The second hero has got “lost” in the annals of contemporary history. Perhaps this is why the first one also does not look that convincing.³⁸⁰

Overall, the government of Tajikistan has ignored criticism of its hero-hailing politics and has not reacted to any proposals to create more Heroes. While the recommendations regarding the “candidates” are spontaneous, there seems to be a well-thought out and consistent rationale behind the government’s choice of the six people selected to be Heroes. This gives the impression that the group of six Heroes of Tajikistan remains closed, a club of divinity-like personalities. It does not mean, however, that the government has stopped thinking about the hero-hailing aspect of identity politics. The case of 44 “heroes” demonstrated that the government was keen to acknowledge as many “outstanding people” as possible. However, none of the 44 have qualified to join the six Heroes so far. This raises a question. Based on what criteria does the government decide whether a personality deserves to be a Hero or not? As the next section attempts to show, there is a very specific selection criteria.

3. The selection criteria for Heroes and the moral/knowledge space of identity

As one Tajik journalist argues, the scholars, journalists, and writers of Tajikistan are *obliged* “to expend more effort in showing the real face and history of” the Heroes.³⁸¹ “Because, the analysis of their historical paths, the rich experience of these people in solving the difficult political, social and economic issues of Tajikistan can serve as good schooling and a good example for the youth of the Republic.”³⁸² The efforts to commemorate and hail the heroes can be understood as an act that sets the moral space of national identity and its boundaries. By promoting this, the state intends to inform the masses about what the best and worst way of collective being is. It defines, precisely, the desired specificities as they lie within the space and boundaries of identity. What is undesired, unacceptable, dangerous, and threatening is represented as residing beyond the space and boundaries of identity. In short, hero-hailing is a boundary-making process. The preliminary analysis below and the detailed ones in the following chapters show that the official discourses about what good the Heroes have done, what they have spent their lives for, what they fought for, and importantly, what they fought against, contribute to a constitution of the “self,” the “other” and the boundaries between them. As this dissertation attempts to show, in

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ Pirumshoev, "Shirinshoh Shotemur va Ehioi Davlatdorii Tozhikon."

³⁸² Ibid.

the case of Tajikistan, the “heroic” means a revival and promotion of the national “self,” as well as a simultaneous defence of that self from the “other”. The official discourse represents all of the six Heroes as contributors to the revival of the Tajik state and nation.

Official discourses and historiography represent the Heroes as having executed a grand nation-building effort since the collapse of the Samanid Empire, which is recognized as the most civilized period in Tajik statehood and was preceded by the “barbarian” Turkic tribes. All Heroes are remembered as contributing at least to one of the following aspects of Tajik national revival, a) the rise of national consciousness and the establishment of Tajik statehood; b) the establishment of linguistic and literary foundations of national identity; and, c) the founding of national historiography. In all of these three locales of construction, there is either a hidden or overt message about the struggle against the Uzbek “other.” In Tajik national identity discourse the Uzbeks are, as Nourzhanov puts it, the “readily recognizable “other.”³⁸³ This can be explained by the fact that Tajikistan’s “revival” as an “independent” state is related to its secession from Uzbekistan in the late 1920s. Official discourses represent all six of the Heroes as the driving forces behind this revival and independence. On top of that, President Rahmon’s policies in relation to Uzbekistan are officially explained as leading towards independence from Uzbekistan in terms of energy and transportation.

To begin with, Shotemur and Makhsum are commemorated as the Tajik leaders, who struggled for the independence of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan. As the President’s decree states “the glorious sons of the Tajik nation” Makhsum and Shotemur received awards for “constructive state activities and outstanding services for the establishment of state independence from the Republic of Tajikistan.”³⁸⁴ The official discourses acknowledge them as the founding fathers of the Tajik state in its current form, its revival occurring long after the collapse of the Samanid Empire. As the next chapter shows in detail, there is historical evidence that proves Shotemur’s and Makhsum’s intentions to gain a wider autonomy and later an independence from the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. As President Rahmon puts it, Shotemur’s success in “establishing the main fundamentals for a new life and defending the historical rights of the Tajiks to form a national state” made him a “selfless fighter and founder of the national state of Tajiks.”³⁸⁵ These

³⁸³ Nourzhanov, "The Politics of History in Tajikistan: Reinventing the Samanids."

³⁸⁴ Emomali Rahmonov, "Farmoni prezidenti zhuhurii Tozhikiston dar borai ba Nusratullo Makhsum dodani unvoni "Qahramoni Tozhikiston", " *Prezidenti Zhuhurii Tozhikiston*, 27 June 2006., "Farmoni prezidenti zhuhurii Tozhikiston dar borai ba Shirinsho Shotemur dodani unvoni "Qahramoni Tozhikiston", " *Prezidenti Zhuhurii Tozhikiston*, 27 June 2006.

³⁸⁵ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur," *Prezidenti Zhuhurii Tozhikiston*, 20 October 2009.

two Heroes are commemorated as struggling for and securing the national state where the Tajik nationhood had a chance to survive and revive.

Second, Sadriddin Aini is remembered as having done a historical service to the Tajik nation by proving that Tajik language and literature does exist, contrary to the affirmations of Uzbeks nationalists. This, as the official discourses argue, has been helpful in proving the existence of the Tajik nation; "Sadriddin Aini, proving the existence of the Tajik people as an ancient nation of Central Asia, raised the question of the legitimacy of this nations' establishment of a state of its own."³⁸⁶ As it will be shown in Chapter 4, Sadriddin Aini's writings had already become a matter of national pride and an object of numerous studies in the fields of Tajik linguistics and historiography during the Soviet period. Aini is also credited for raising the national consciousness of Tajiks. As official narratives puts it, "it is Master Aini, who, with his patriotic, enlightening articles [...] gave a serious impulse to the awakening of the Tajik nation".³⁸⁷ While Aini is remembered as creating the best examples of Tajik literature and laying the foundations of modern Tajik literary language, the Tajik poet Mirzo Tursunzoda is hailed for successfully continuing his job and passing it Aini's legacy on to the next generation. Tursunzoda's "services and aspirations still shine brighter than before and were alike the deeds of Sadriddin Aini and Bobojon Ghafurov in forming and strengthening the national mentality, pride for the fatherland, and state independence, high patriotism, the stability of peace, security, and unity of the nations of the world."³⁸⁸ There is also an argument that the national unity politics in Tajikistan has borrowed relevant lessons from the poet's works.³⁸⁹ Moreover, "works by [Tursunzoda] admonish the growing generation to be sensitive and prescient in defense of the Fatherland and national mentality."³⁹⁰ As Chapter 4 reveals in detail, official narratives about Aini and Tursunzoda represent their lifestyle and writings as "heroic" due to their contributions to reviving the Tajik national identity through preserving and developing Tajik language and literature.

Third, Bobojon Ghafurov is commemorated in Tajikistan as comprehensively debunking the position of Uzbek chauvinists and nationalists by proving, scientifically, that, historically, Tajiks are the native people of the Central Asian region, whereas all other Turkic tribes are newcomers. He is remembered for "saving the face of the Tajik nation, safeguarding its rich history and

³⁸⁶ "Vystupleniie na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashennom 6-oi godovshine nezavisimosti respubliki," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 8 September 1997.

³⁸⁷ Emomali Rahmon, "Vystupleniie na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashionnom 100-letiiu Tazhikskoi pechati," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 10 March 2012.

³⁸⁸ "Sukahnrioni dar zhalasai botantana ba iftikhori 100-solagii Qahramoni Tozhikiston Mirzo Tursunzoda," *Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston*, 14 October 2011.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

culture from the ill-intentioned distortions."³⁹¹ His works are believed to have "laid the centuries-worth foundation of self-consciousness and independence of Tajiks."³⁹² Aini also proved that the "Tajiks withstood against the conquerors, who were stronger than them, but whom they defeated by preserving the enchanting native language, literary and cultural traditions and [...] national identity."³⁹³ The narratives authored by Ghafurov are also key within the official discourse representing the struggles of Shotemur, Makhsum, and Aini as heroic and historically significant figures for the Tajik nation. Along with national pride about the great past, Ghafurov's arguments create a scholarly foundation for a national trauma regarding unfair territorial delimitation in the 1920s and represent the Uzbeks and Uzbekistan as currently residing in originally Tajik lands. So, Ghafurov's "heroism" consists of his success in creating knowledge about the historical primogeniture of the Tajiks vis-à-vis other nations of Central Asia, mainly, Uzbeks. Chapter 5 of this thesis presents a detailed analysis in this regard. Especially, this aspect of Ghafurov's works inspiring a generation of Tajik historians, who were more explicit in pinpointing the "otherness" of Uzbeks. As Nourzhanov puts it, the new theorists of ethnic revival emerged in post-civil war Tajikistan and "asserted that the greatest sin committed by the Uzbeks, *vis-à-vis* the Tajiks, was to rob the latter of the heartland of their civilization - Samarkand and Bukhara, and to assimilate the Tajik population remaining in Uzbekistan by force."³⁹⁴ That all this is in line with the official position of the government can be seen in the viewpoints of President Rahmon, when he says that "historians, social scientists and all [members of] intelligentsia within the country must make a contribution to the study and propaganda of life and immortal writings of this great son of a nation".³⁹⁵

Finally, President Rahmon, the only living Hero of Tajikistan and current head of state is positioned as a *national leader* who is working hard to unite his nation and develop it further. He is also simultaneously portrayed as a *strongman*, who is successfully standing against the aggressive behavior of Uzbekistan towards Tajikistan. As the authors of a state-sponsored book about President Rahmon put it, "the most significant successes and achievements of the country are the results of selfless work and the heroic efforts of Emomali Rahmonov."³⁹⁶ As chapter 6 of this thesis analyses in detail, either coincidentally or intentionally, President Rahmon's policies in relation to Uzbekistan seem to parallel the oft-hailed "heroism" of the five Heroes of

³⁹¹ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 100-solagii zodro'zi Bobozhon Ghafurov," *Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston*, 24 December 2008.

³⁹² Rahmonov, "Vystupleniie na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashennom 6-oi godovshine nezavisimosti respubliki."; *ibid.*

³⁹³ Rahmon, "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 100-solagii zodro'zi Bobozhon Ghafurov."

³⁹⁴ Nourzhanov, "The Politics of History in Tajikistan: Reinventing the Samanids."

³⁹⁵ Rahmon, "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 100-solagii zodro'zi Bobozhon Ghafurov."

³⁹⁶ Sharipov and Sirozhov, *Emomali Rahmonov: God Ariiskoi tsivilizatsii (Vnutrenniaia i vneshniaia politika Prezidenta Tazhikistana)*.: 8

Tajikistan. President Rahmon appears to be doing his best for the development and prosperity of Tajikistan as well as asserting Tajikistan's independence from Uzbekistan in areas such as energy and transportation. Within the last decade, Rahmon's two roles, i.e., national leadership and handling tense relations with Uzbekistan, have been getting intertwined. One example of this intertwining is Rahmon's plans to build Roghun hydroelectric power station (HPS) at any cost despite a fierce opposition of Uzbekistan. He has promoted the project as a matter of national pride and prosperity:

I would like to refer to each proud citizen, to all the generous and patriotic people of the nation, and particularly, to qualified constructors and specialists in the energy and construction field, calling for their active participation in the prompt construction and finalization of Roghun HPS and for them to make a contribution to the achievement of the nation's energy independence.³⁹⁷

Despite numerous hurdles that Uzbekistan has erected to hinder this project, as well as the Uzbeks' readiness to so go as far as to launch a war, Tajikistan has no plans to abandon its quest for energy independence. In his Annual Address to the Parliament of Tajikistan in 2014, Rahmon continued to mention Roghun HPS as a "crucial object" for Tajikistan.³⁹⁸

4. Conclusion

There is a meaning behind the "scarcity" of national Heroes in Tajikistan. As this chapter attempted to show, the official narratives represent these Heroes as defenders of the Tajik nation and state from the dangerous Uzbek "other." Thus, Shirinsho Shotemur and Nusratullo Makhsom are hailed for securing autonomy for the Tajik nation within the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, and later seceding from the Uzbek SSR as an independent Tajik SSR. Sadriddin Aini, in his turn, is credited for proving that there is centuries-old Tajik language and literature. His findings were helpful for the Tajik intellectuals and national leaders in their arguments against the Uzbek leaders with regards to Tajik autonomy and independence. Mirzo Tursunzoda is officially commemorated for continuing Sadriddin Aini's mission. As far as Bobojon Ghafurov's heroism is concerned, he wrote the history of the Tajik nation, where the Tajiks appeared as superior to all other Central Asian nations. Along with national pride about the ancient and rich history of the nation, his texts created grounds for mourning about the "lost" territories of the nation.

³⁹⁷ Emomali Rahmon, "Payomi Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Mazhlisi Oliy Zhumhurii Tozhikiston," *Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston*, 25 April 2008.

³⁹⁸ "Payomi Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Mazhlisi Oliy Zhumhurii Tozhikiston," *Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston*, 23 April 2014.

The politics of hero-making is about promoting the “best” attributes, ones which the state deems to be important for the whole nation. The analysis of these politics is helpful in better understanding the politics of identity and foreign policy of the state. In Tajikistan, discursive representation of Heroes overtly or covertly implies that the Uzbek nation, its leaders, and Uzbekistan as a state, have been and, still are, the most dangerous “other” and a threat to Tajik national self-identification. In a continuation of the duties of previous Heroes, President Rahmon appears to be not only saving the nation from collapse after the civil war but also to be successfully standing against the economic and political aggression of Uzbekistan. In this regard, the dominant “heroic” discourse in the national identity politics in Tajikistan, as well as the state’s steadily deteriorating relations with Uzbekistan, appear to be interconnected and informative of each other. Neither of these two tendencies can exist separately; both of them have their roots in the processes through which Tajikistan was formed as a state in the 1920s and, still, have not lost their actuality for the state.

Chapter 3. National State and National Identity: Remembering Shirinsho Shotemur and Nusratullo Makhsum as the Founding Fathers of Tajikistan

1. The dominance of the Tashkent clan, the Bukhara clan and the Turkmen tribal leaders in NTD in Central Asia

The history of Tajikistan has been well-studied in the Western academia.³⁹⁹ One commonly made argument is that the establishment of Tajikistan as the Tajik nation-state came about as a result of socio-political processes in Central Asia. These processes are supposed to have culminated in the 1920s in the form of a NTD. As discussed below, the most important players before and during NTD were the regional clans from Bukhara and Tashkent and the Turkmen tribes. As far as the elites representing the Tajiks in the NTD processes are concerned, they joined the struggle for the territories relatively late. Most importantly, during the final stage of the NTD process, the Tajik leaders clashed with the powerful Uzbek leaders, a group consisting of experienced and influential members of the Bukhara and Tashkent clans. As the first leaders of the Tajik political entity, Makhsum and Shotemur dealt with the consequences of delimitation and struggled to have its outcomes revised. They were not part of the delimitation process.

1.1. The utilization of Turkmen, Uzbek, and Kirgiz (Kazakh) identities by the elites of Tashkent, Bukhara and the Transcaspian province and the lack of interest in the Tajik issue

In 1920, there were four political-administrative entities in Central Asia – Bukhara, Khorazm, Turkestan, and Kirgiz⁴⁰⁰ Republics. The first two were People's Socialist Republics,⁴⁰¹ while the

³⁹⁹ Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*; Francine Hirsch, *Empire of nations: ethnographic knowledge and the making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005); Arne Haugen, *The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Edward Allworth, *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance. A Historical Overview* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994); Bert Fragner, "'Soviet Nationalism': An Ideological Legacy to the Independent Republics of Central Asia," in *Identity Politics in Central Asia and the Muslim World. Nationalism, Ethnicity and Labour in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Willem van Schendek and Erik J. Zürcher (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001); Anita Sengupta, "Imperatives of National Territorial Delimitation and the Fate of Bukhara 1917-1924," *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 3-4 (2000); Steven Sabol, "The Creation of Soviet Central Asia: The 1924 National Delimitation," *Central Asian Survey* 14, no. 2 (1995); Helene Carrere d'Encausse, *The Great Challenge: Nationalities and the Bolshevik State, 1917-1930* (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, 1992); *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Nourzhanov and Bleuer, *Tajikistan: A Political and Social History*.

⁴⁰⁰ The Kirgiz ASSR, with Orenburg as its capital city, was formed in August 1920. In June 1925, the Kirgiz ASSR was re-established as Kazakh ASSR with a new capital city in Kyzyl-Orda. Within 1920-1925, the ethnonym of *Kirgiz* was used to denominate Kazakh people. At the same period, *Kara-Kirgiz* was used as ethnonym of the contemporary Kyrgyz people. This chapter uses the terms *Kirgiz* and *Kara-Kirgiz*.

⁴⁰¹ Both Bukhara and Khorazm republics were tied to Russia with economic and political treaties, which in practice limited their independence. For instance, Bukhara signed a "military-political agreement" with Russia in November 1920. A Tumanov, "Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovleniie i uprocheniie sovetsoi vlasti v Tadzhikestane," in *Tazhikskaiia SSR za 25 let*, ed. V Kozachkovskii and P Hamrokulov (Stalinabad: Tazhigosizdat, 1955), 32. Also, Bukhara and Russia signed the "Alliance Treaty" and "Economic Pact" in March

latter two were Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics within Russia. The governments of each of these republics included some powerful and ambitious local political elites, who were in close alliance with the Bolsheviks of Russia, but who also had their own vision about the future of their republics. This vision was very different from,⁴⁰² if not in outright conflict with, the plans of the Russian Bolsheviks and⁴⁰³ even though the Russian Bolsheviks were a dominant force, they still had to consider the opinions of local elites when it came to regional politics.

While administrative reforms by the Bolsheviks, known as ethnic-based regionalization (*raionirovaniie*)⁴⁰⁴, were quite promptly designed for Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus, it took longer for Soviet leadership to come up with reforms suitable for implementation in Central Asia. *Raionirovaniie* and the formation of National Councils (*sovety*), which began in Ukraine, “served as a model for the rest of the Soviet Union.”⁴⁰⁵ The earliest signs of *raionirovaniie* are probably the establishment of ethnic departments in the Nationalities Commissariat [i.e. Ministry] of Turkestan ASSR by mid-1919. These groups covered ethnicities such as the Uzbeks, Kirgizs, Tajiks, Russians and Jews among others.⁴⁰⁶ In April 1921, the *Kara-Kirgiz* province was established in Turkestan.⁴⁰⁷ However, local leaders did not welcome these reforms. For instance, in January 1920 Turar Ryskulov, Chair of the CEC of the Turkestan CP, proposed to unite the Turkic-speaking nations of the Soviet Union and create the Turkic Republic.⁴⁰⁸ In June 1920, in order to entirely reform the territorial-administrative structure of Turkestan ASSR, Vladimir Lenin, head of the Russian CP, made a proposal to “compile the map (ethnographic and other) of Turkestan and demarcate [on it the borders of] Uzbekia, Kirgizia and Turkmenia” and “inquire

1921. See M. P. Georgadze et al., *Siezd Sovetov v Dokumentakh* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia Izdatel'stvo Iuridicheskoi Literatury, 1960), 553.

⁴⁰² As it will be shown below in this chapter, the leaders of Bukhara tried to achieve a complete independence of Moscow, whereas the various elites in Turkestan were more focused on expanding the republic to form a bigger Turkic state. Khorazm, with the smallest territory, was rather interested in keeping the status-quo and worried about losing its territories or independence. The leaders of the Kirgiz ASSR were in constant bitter negotiation with the Moscow regarding their borders of the autonomy and the Russian SFSR.

⁴⁰³ Other than the elites, there was also a resistance movement to the communists system known as the Basmachi movement, which was in a constant negotiation with the local elites. For instance, Khojaev admitted during the interrogation after his arrest that his government had close connections with the Basmachi movement: “We have tried to use Basmachestvo, which by this time was already widespread within Bukhara. We have tried to create new cadres of Basmachestvo.” *Voennaia kollegiia verkhovnogo suda soiuza SSR, Sudebnyi otchiot po delu anti-sovetskogo "pravo-trotskogo bloka"*, 1938, 196.

⁴⁰⁴ The term *raionirovaniie* was mainly used to describe regionalisation policies in Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. In Central Asia, the similar measures are defined by term *natsional'noie-territorial'noie razmezhevaniie* – NTD.

⁴⁰⁵ Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 35.

⁴⁰⁶ Hasan Ali Karasar, “The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmzhevanie,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 7 (2008): 1250.

⁴⁰⁷ G. Nepesov, “Voznikoveniie i razvitiie turkmenskoi sovetskoi sotsialisticheskoi respubliki,” *Voprosy Istorii*, no. 2 (1950): 10.

⁴⁰⁸ V. Ustinov, Turar Ryskulov, (Almaty: Kazakhstan, 1996), <http://bibliotekar.kz/turar-ryskulov-v-m-ustinov-chitat-nigu/glava-iii-sovetskaja-tyurkskaja-respubli.html>.

into the conditions of merging or dividing these three parts."⁴⁰⁹ The Russian communist leadership in Turkestan ASSR opposed this proposal:

Considering that thoughts on the establishment of national Turkmen, Uzbek, and Kirgiz republics might lead to concrete action being taken shortly, it is necessary to avoid these thoughts and proceed with caution [...] The decision about these republics should be considered as a last resort, to be used when all other means have been exhausted. It absolutely should not be the current agenda. [...] Any immediate implementation of such a decision will bring in [...] the greatest chaos. Certainly, the most unfavorable nationalist elites of all republics will benefit from this. Our power to control this is limited, as we even have no enough power to handle Turkestan.⁴¹⁰

Local leaders in the region admired the idea of territorial delimitation. As Karasar puts it:

The realisation of national-territorial delimitation was the aim of various political projects including those of Turar Ryskulov for the creation of a single Turkic Republic with a single Turkic people; and of M. Sultan Galiev for the creation of a single Turkic Space with one Turkic nation; as well as the nationalist project of Mustafa Chokaev for the establishment of an independent and united Turkestan. [...] the delimitation was a victory for yet another project, that of the National Communists led by Faizulla Khojaev.⁴¹¹

So, in contrast to the opposition from “non-native communists” the NTD was met with “the ambitious and enthusiastic support of some native communists of Central Asia.”⁴¹² However, the local leaders were not unanimous in their vision about the national territorial delimitation, which led to competition among local them. Long before the territorial delimitation process defined the borders of new national states in Central Asia, tribal and ethnic animosities were fuelled by disagreements over territories and resources. Additionally, conflict was created by the clashing interests of the powerful clans and, as a result, groups started to outline possible cracks on the political map of the region. By the time the NTD started in the second half of 1924, the inter-ethnic and inter-clan tension in the region was so great that there proposals were made to the Russian government that NTD “should definitely be postponed”:

The internal situation in the Middle Asian republics is a picture of war where everyone is against everyone, and this is the case with different nationalities. Everyone is carrying a stone that could be thrown at another in his breast, and everyone has divided the skin of a not yet hunted bear. It is being discussed now whether Teke Turkmen are superior to Bukharan or Khivan Turkmen, or whether Bukhara is superior to Samarkand or Samarkand superior to Bukhara; all regions are getting involved in the controversy, and the destiny of Tashkent is being discussed. This place is like a beehive, a Pandora’s Box. [...] The rapid

⁴⁰⁹ Vladimir Lenin, *Polnoie sobraniie sochinenii*, 5 ed., vol. 41 (Moscow: Izdatelstvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1981), 436.

⁴¹⁰ An excerpt from the letter of V.Kyibyshev, M.Frunze, D.Gopner, and F.Goloschekin of June 5, 1920, addressed to Lenin. As quoted in Dina Amanzholova, "Kazakhskaiia avtonomiia: ot zamyslov natsionalov k samoopredeleniiu po-sovetskii," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 21(2004): 127.

⁴¹¹ Karasar, "The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmzhevanie," 1249.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 1248.

and careless implementation of national delimitation may lead to a general and real conflict.⁴¹³

The traditional animosity between Uzbeks and Turkmens of Khorazm, which had been going on since 1912,⁴¹⁴ became an important factor in regional politics. When serious ethnic clashes occurred in 1922, Bukhara supported the Uzbeks while the Turkmens of the Transcaspian province of Turkestan supported the Turkmens. The Turkmens of Turkestan ASSR “advocat[ed] for the establishment of a separate Turkmenia in Transcaspia, with the inclusion of some areas from Khorazm.”⁴¹⁵ They complained that the Uzbeks were assimilating with the Turkmens in Khorazm.⁴¹⁶ Khodjaev, according to the records of the Soviet security services, traveled to Khorazm in 1922 to unite the local Uzbeks against the Turkmens.⁴¹⁷

The leadership of Khorazm had been attempting to play down Uzbek-Turkmen ethnic animosity, because they were afraid of losing Turkmen-dominated areas of Khorazm to Transcaspia, which was de-facto known as a Turkmen territory by the Bolsheviks.⁴¹⁸ There was no doubt that Transcaspia would be attractive to the Turkmens of Khorazm, because 40% of Central Asian Turkmens lived in Transcaspia.⁴¹⁹ With the 30% of Central Asian Turkmens living in Khorazm and 27% in Bukhara,⁴²⁰ delimitation was most likely to result in the loss of Turkmen-dominated territories for Bukhara and Khorazm. This prospects of delimitation was so encouraging to Turkmen leaders that they even sought Stalin’s permission to seize the Turkmen provinces of Persia.⁴²¹ Chicherin’s top secret message to Stalin sums up the role of the Uzbeks and the Turkmens in the then-forthcoming NTD:

It is becoming clear that the main initiators of the national delimitation – the Uzbek commercial bourgeoisie – hope to get rid of poor areas and create a large cotton-producing region, which would provide them with commercial opportunities. [...] Turkmen political figures are supporting the project because it would give them a chance to become the heads of a new state.⁴²²

⁴¹³ An excerpt from Chicherin’s letter to Stalin dated May 22, 1924, as translated and quoted by Karasar. See “Chicherin on the delimitation of Turkestan: Native Bolsheviks versus Soviet foreign policy. Seven letters from the Russian archives on razmezhevanie,” *Central Asian Survey* 21, no. 2 (2002): 206.

⁴¹⁴ See “The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmezhevanie,” 1251.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ See *ibid.*, 1254.

⁴¹⁸ See *ibid.*, 1251.

⁴¹⁹ Nepesov, “Voznikoveniie i razvitiie turkmenskoi sovetskoi sotsialisticheskoi respubliki,” 8. The Ersari tribe of Turkmen lived in Bukhara, whereas in Khorazm, the Turkmen predominantly belonged to the Yomut tribe. The dominant tribe, Teke, lived in the Transcaspian province of Turkestan ASSR. See Adrienne Edgar, “Genealogy, Class, and “Tribal Policy” in Soviet Turkmenistan, 1924-1934,” *Slavic Review* 60, no. 2 (2001): 279.

⁴²⁰ Nepesov, “Voznikoveniie i razvitiie turkmenskoi sovetskoi sotsialisticheskoi respubliki,” 8.

⁴²¹ Chicherin, the People’s Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, in his letter to Stalin urged the latter to “use his influence on Turkmen comrades in order to dissuade them from seizing the Turkmen parts of Persia”. See Karasar, “Chicherin on the delimitation of Turkestan: Native Bolsheviks versus Soviet foreign policy. Seven letters from the Russian archives on razmezhevanie,” 209.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, 207.

As far as national leaders in Turkestan ASSR are concerned, there was a serious disagreement between two groups of local elites, both of which were represented in the government of Turkestan ASSR. The dispute was over relations with Kirgiz ASSR. For instance, Turar Ryskulov was a fierce supporter of joining the territories of Turkestan ASSR and Kirgiz ASSR. He reportedly had talks with the Kirgiz RevCom, an interim government, in March 1920 about uniting Turkestan ASSR with Kirgiz ASSR and making Tashkent the capital city of the new, unified nation.⁴²³ However, the “Uzbek comrades” who were being led by “Comrade” Islamov were “worried about the loss of Tashkent⁴²⁴ to “Kirgizia”.⁴²⁵ Islamov was against any economic or political association with the Kirgiz Republic.⁴²⁶ Moreover, Alikhan Bukeikhanov, leader of the Kirgiz national movement known as *Alash* (which established an autonomous Alash-Orda state in Semipalatinsk in 1917), was still politically active.⁴²⁷ Furthermore, Turkestan ASSR was still home to several, clandestine *Jadid* liberal-democratic movements such as *Milli Ittihad*, *Milli Istiqlol*, *Ittihad va Taraqqirot*, and *Shuroi Islomiia*. These movements contained conservative groups of Islamic clergy, such as *Shuroi Ulamo*, who have been linked to *Bashmchestvo*. All of these groups were equally anti-Soviet, but they differed in their methods of struggle and ideological foundations.⁴²⁸ Last, but not least, the process of establishing Kirgiz ASSR during 1919-1920 demonstrated that local elites could be assertive when making territorial claims.⁴²⁹

Even though local leaders were politically active and ambitious, the history of Central Asia in the early 1920s should not be viewed separately from events in Moscow. The most important events were the adoption of the New Economic Plan by the Russian CP in 1921, the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922, ongoing ideological struggles within the Russian CP, and Stalin’s rise to power after Lenin’s death in January 1924. It is not a coincidence that territorial delimitation in Central Asia, which had been hanging in the air since early 1920, was realized in the year after Lenin’s death. During the four years when the politics of *razmezhevanie* were idle in Central Asia, the local elites, as described above, came to dominate conversations about national identity and territorial delimitation. Therefore, the local political elites hit the ground running when Stalin,

⁴²³ See Amanzholova, "Kazakhskaiia avtonomiia: ot zamyslov natsionalov k samoopredeleniiu po-sovetskii," 141fn46.

⁴²⁴ Kirgiz were against Tashkent being given to Uzbek republic. See Karasar, "The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmzhevanie," 1256.

⁴²⁵ It is unclear who the “comrade Islamov” was. Most probably, it is Shoahmad Islamov, the last Chair of the Soviet of People’s Commissariats of Turkestan ASSR.

⁴²⁶ Kirgiz were against Tashkent being given to Uzbek republic. See Karasar, "The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmzhevanie," 1256.

⁴²⁷ Amanzholova, "Kazakhskaiia avtonomiia: ot zamyslov natsionalov k samoopredeleniiu po-sovetskii," 125.

⁴²⁸ See K. Radjabov, "Struggle for Independence in Turkestan and Muslim Clergy," *Oriente Moderno* 87, no. 1 (2007).

⁴²⁹ See Amanzholova, "Kazakhskaiia avtonomiia: ot zamyslov natsionalov k samoopredeleniiu po-sovetskii," 117-26.

the former People's Commissar for the Issues of Nationalities of Soviet Union, initiated the process of NTD in the region during 1924.⁴³⁰

In January 1924, the Organizational Bureau of the CC of the CP of Russia requested Jannis Rudzutak, Head of the Central Asian Bureau of the CC, to compile all of the proposals regarding NTD in the region.⁴³¹ In February-March 1924, the Communist Parties of Bukhara, Khorazm, and Turkestan convened separately to prepare their proposals for Moscow. Particularly, on 25 February 1924, the CC of the CP had a meeting "about the territorial delimitation of Soviet Central Asia into several separate republics."⁴³² The meeting decided to divide the Bukhara region into Uzbek and Turkmen republics. The CC approved Khojaev's "Main theses on the establishment of Uzbekistan."⁴³³ Following the meeting, on 10 March, the Organizational Bureau of the CC created the final version of the proposal, which allocated "Mastchoh, Qarotegin, and Gharm for Tajiks to form a Tajik Autonomous Oblast' within the Uzbek Republic."⁴³⁴ In Turkestan, the discussions were rather fierce, and proposals about the future of the states in the region ranged from calls for a unitary state to calls for several, ethnic-based states.⁴³⁵ As documents from the meeting show, representatives of both the Kara-Kirgiz and the Turkmens were vocal.

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Considering the support for delimitation from the communists of Central Asia, the Political Bureau of the CC of the CP of Russia gave the green light to these reforms.⁴³⁷ On 28 April 1924, the Central Asian Bureau of the Russian CP and the Communist Parties of the Central Asian Republics convened to discuss how to administrate NTD in the region.⁴³⁸ During the meeting, the representatives of Khorazm K. Adinaev and M. Abdusalamov announced their opposition to

⁴³⁰ As Abdullo Rahimbaev, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkestan, mentioned in one of his speeches, Stalin observed the ongoing scandalous debates regarding the Turkestan's status and came to conclusion that "Central Asia needs to be delimited based on the national criteria; national republics should be formed, [...] where every nation will form its own republic." As quoted in K. Alymbekov, "Natsional'no-territorial'noie razmezhevanii Sredneaziatskikh respublik: problemy i spetsifika (1920-24)," *Vestnik Issikkul'skogo Universiteta*, no. 7 (2002): 107-08.

⁴³¹ Andrei Makashov, *Partiinaiia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoini organizatsiia Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike* (Dushanbe: Tazhikgosizdat, 1964): 38; Alymbekov, "Natsional'no-territorial'noie razmezhevanii Sredneaziatskikh respublik: problemy i spetsifika (1920-24)," 107.

⁴³² Rahim Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1991), 31.

⁴³³ Alexei Arapov, "My ne voidiom v istoriiu? K politicheskoi biografii Faizully Khodzhaeva (1896-1938)," *Nauchnyi Sait Arapova A.V.*, 4 December 2005.

⁴³⁴ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 31.

⁴³⁵ See Alymbekov, "Natsional'no-territorial'noie razmezhevanii Sredneaziatskikh respublik: problemy i spetsifika (1920-24)," 107-09.

⁴³⁶ See *ibid.*, 107-08.

⁴³⁷ See *ibid.*, 109; See also S Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanii v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenii dlia Obrazhovaniia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," in *Materialy k Istarii Tazhikskogo Naroda v Sovetskii Period*, ed. Bobojon Ghafurov (Stalinabad: Tazhikgosizdat, 1954), 103.

⁴³⁸ I. Pogorel'skii, *Istoriia Khivinskoi revoliutsii i Khorezmskoi narodnoi sovetskoi respubliki 1917-1924 gg.* (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo Universiteta, 1984), 218.

NTD and decided to keep the Khorazm Republic intact.⁴³⁹ The convention devolved into a struggle for territories and resources, the outcome of which was not suitable for the elites of Khorazm. As a result of the April meetings, the Central Asian Bureau established the Special Commission on National Territorial Delimitation. This Commission was composed of the Uzbek,⁴⁴⁰ Kirgiz and Turkmen committees.⁴⁴¹ The Special Commission, after two week-long debates, decided to create Uzbek and Turkmen republics, as well as autonomous Kirgiz and Tajik provinces.⁴⁴² It was decided that the autonomous Tajik territory would consist of “the mountainous parts of Bukhara, Ghuzor, Kulob, Mastchoh and other regions.”⁴⁴³ Based on proposals made by the Special Commission, the Political Bureau of the Russian CP issued a decree entitled: “On the National Delimitation of Republics in Central Asia”. The decree was dated 12 June 1924.⁴⁴⁴

Following proposals made by the Central Committees and the Soviets of the People’s Commissars of Bukhara and Turkestan: a) an independent Turkmen republic from the Turkmen parts of Turkestan, Bukhara and Khorazm will be established; b) an independent Uzbek republic from the Uzbeks parts of Bukhara and Turkestan will be established; c) with the Turkmen parts excluded, Khorazm will be left within its previous borders.⁴⁴⁵

Despite its decision to refrain from NTD, Khorazm demonstrated its compliance with the *raionirovanie* policy, when, in May 1924, it established two autonomous ethnic entities – the Turkmen and Karakalpak-Kazakh provinces.⁴⁴⁶ Simultaneously, the government of Bukhara divided the republic into five provinces – Zarafshon, Qashqadaryo, Surkhon, Chorjui, and Eastern Bukhara.⁴⁴⁷ Even though there is no evidence that *raionirovanie* in Bukhara took place based on ethnic divides, it is worth noting that these ethnic provinces became the “building blocks” during the NTD (the first three provinces were given to Uzbek republic, leaving Chorjui for the Turkmen Republic and Eastern Bukhara for the Tajik province). It seems that the government of Bukhara

⁴³⁹ Ibid., 219.

⁴⁴⁰ The Uzbek sub-committee had 5 members: Abdulla Rahimbaev (head), Rustam Islamov, Usmonkhoja Ishankhojaev (People’s Commissar for Education in Turkestan ASSR), Abduqodir Muhiddinov, and Pulatov.

⁴⁴¹ Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, 42.; I. Pogorel'skii, *Istoriia Khivinskoi revoliutsii i Khorezmskoi narodnoi sovetskoi respubliki 1917-1924 gg.*, 218.

⁴⁴² *Istoriia Khivinskoi revoliutsii i Khorezmskoi narodnoi sovetskoi respubliki 1917-1924 gg.*, 218.

⁴⁴³ Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, 43.

⁴⁴⁴ Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovanii Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki.": 103; Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike.*: 41

⁴⁴⁵ I. Pogorel'skii, *Istoriia Khivinskoi revoliutsii i Khorezmskoi narodnoi sovetskoi respubliki 1917-1924 gg.*, 219. In late July and early August 1924, the leadership of Khorazm agreed to be part of the territorial delimitation and the Political Bureau of the Russian Political party amended its original decree accordingly. See *ibid.*, 219-20.

⁴⁴⁶ Karasar, "The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmzhevanie," 1254.

⁴⁴⁷ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 32.

had its own expectations regarding what to keep for the Uzbek republic and what to give away to others.

The Tajik leaders did not play any important role during NTD.⁴⁴⁸ The Special Commission on National Territorial Delimitation established a Tajik sub-committee within the Uzbek Committee on 28 May 1924.⁴⁴⁹ It had one member – Chinor Imomov. As was shown above, the various sides of the debate each already had their plans in relation to the autonomous, Tajik territory. Therefore, the Tajik sub-committee was created post-factum. When the Russian CP approved the decision of the Special Commission in June 1924, the delimitation process started and local elites became engaged in fierce debates about the borders of the Uzbek, Kazakh, and Turkmen republics.⁴⁵⁰

The Central Commission on NTD, which was composed of the representatives of the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Turkmens, was established on 15 July 1924.⁴⁵¹ The aim of the Commission was to solve any disputes between these groups. As Nourzhanov and Bleuer suggest, “[w]hile Uzbek, Kazakh, Turkmen and Kyrgyz officials bargained ferociously for every inch of land, the Uzbek national sub-commission quietly determined borders for the Tajiks.”⁴⁵² According to Masov, the Tajik representatives Ch. Imamov, A. Khojibaev, and M. Saidjanov joined the debates too late and participated in an indecisive manner, largely giving in to the will of the Uzbek representatives.⁴⁵³

On 16 September 1924, the CEC of Turkestan ASSR made a decree to “present the Tajik nation with the right to secede from the Turkestan Soviet Socialistic Republic and to form the Autonomous Tajik Province [Oblast].”⁴⁵⁴ Three days later, the 5th Congress of the Soviets of Bukhara, “[e]xpressing the high will of the people of Bukhara” announced an “agreement to form, together with the Uzbeks of Turkestan and Khorazm, the Uzbek Soviet Socialistic Republic and Tajik Autonomous Province [Oblast].”⁴⁵⁵ Shortly thereafter, the processes surrounding the establishment of an autonomous Tajik province were finalized, following the “approval” of the people of Eastern Bukhara; in their 1st Congress, the parliamentarians of Eastern Bukhara

⁴⁴⁸ See Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, 49-54.

⁴⁴⁹ See *ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁵⁰ See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 39-40.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁵² Nourzhanov and Bleuer, *Tajikistan: A Political and Social History*, 40.

⁴⁵³ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 35.

⁴⁵⁴ As quoted in Tumanov, "Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovlenie i uprocheniie sovetskoi vlasti v Tadjikistane," 37.

⁴⁵⁵ As quoted in Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevaniiie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znacheniiie dlia Obrazhovaniia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 105.

welcomed the decisions made by the higher-ranking party institutions.⁴⁵⁶ Overall, none of the politically dominant local elites in Central Asia chose to represent the Tajiks or to advocate for the establishment of a Tajik state. Instead, they bet on the Turkmen, Kirgiz, and Uzbek identities. During four years following Lenin's suggestions to create "Turkmenia," "Uzbekia," and "Kirgizia", these proposed entities were chosen as form-factors of national statehood by the local elites.

It is common to argue that the Tajik-speaking elites of Bukhara betrayed the Tajik nation during territorial delimitation. However, the struggle at the time was not only one for national identity. The main concern of the elites was to emerge from NTD with larger territories under their control. For the elites of Bukhara, the main issue was to concede as little territory as possible to the Turkmen leaders and to gain as great an area as possible from Turkestan. There was little doubt that the Transcaspian province of Turkestan was going to be Turkmenia.⁴⁵⁷ To prevent possible separation of the Turkmen-dominated territories of Bukhara and Khorazm, the leadership of Bukhara bet on the Uzbek identity.

As Karasar rightly observed, Khojaev, the head of the Bukhara clan, had ambitions to take the 'best and most delicious' pieces of the Khorazmian PSR and Turkestan ASSR, and to establish a Greater Uzbekistan, prosperous and wealthy, having discarded all of its impoverished parts."⁴⁵⁸ Even though making Bukhara an independent nation had been his primary aim before territorial delimitation,⁴⁵⁹ he decided to take advantage of the Soviet *raionirovaniie/razmezhevaniie* policy and increase the scope of Bukhara's territory.⁴⁶⁰ As Khalid argues, "Bukhara did not disappear without a trace: Uzbekistan was explicitly created 'on the basis of Bukhara'."⁴⁶¹ According to Arapov, the establishment of Uzbekistan represented the revival of Bukhara and its enrichment as a result of new resources from Turkestan and Khiva.⁴⁶² In this struggle, the Khojaev-led elite of Bukhara was at odds not only with the Turkmens and the government of Khorazm but also with the elites in Turkestan, the most influential of whom decided to establish a bigger "Kirgizia".

⁴⁵⁶ Makashov, *Partiinaiia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukrepleniie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 40.

⁴⁵⁷ It was already known as *Turkmen Province* in 1921. See Nepesov, "Vozniknoveniie i razvitiie turkmenskoi sovetskoi sotsialisticheskoi respubliki," 7.

⁴⁵⁸ Karasar, "The Partition of Khorezm and the Positions of Turkestanis on Razmezhevanie," 1254. The author refers to the "Letter of Chicherin to Stalin", a document discovered in an archive in Russia.

⁴⁵⁹ According to Khojaev's confession during one of the interrogations, "he was against the delimitation" because his ultimate goal was the independence of Bukhara from Russia with the help of Britain. The NTD would mean that Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks of Bukhara would seek their own ethnic states. In order not to appear as the enemy of the forthcoming territorial-administrative reforms, he had to use it for his own benefit. So, he admits that he is known as the supporter of delimitation because he actively agitated for it. See *Sudebnyi otchiot po delu anti-sovetskogo "pravo-trotskogo bloka"*, 196.

⁴⁶⁰ He viewed his political leadership in Uzbekistan as the second phase of his anti-Soviet struggle. See *ibid.*, 196-97.

⁴⁶¹ Adeeb Khalid, "The Bukharan People's Soviet Republic in the Light of Muslim Sources," *Die Welt des Islams* 50, no. 3-4 (2010): 358-59.

⁴⁶² Arapov, "My ne voidiom v istoriiu? K politicheskoi biografii Faizully Khodzhaeva (1896-1938)."

Amid these struggles, representing the Tajik nation or fighting for its interests was not a desirable strategy the politically dominant elites of Central Asia.

1.2. The establishment of the autonomous Tajik Republic and the emergence of Makhsum as a Tajik national leader

On 11 October 1924, three days before the actual processes of NTD started,⁴⁶³ the Political Bureau of the CC of the Russian CP decided to provide the Tajiks with an autonomous republic instead of an autonomous province.⁴⁶⁴ This decision was approved by the CEC of the USSR on 24 October 1924.⁴⁶⁵ By 27 October 1924, the establishment of the Central Asian republics and autonomies as territorial entities was finalized.⁴⁶⁶ Tajik historians link the sudden change of the status of Tajik autonomy to a full-fledged republic to Nusratullo Makhsum.⁴⁶⁷ Right before the establishment of the Tajik ASSR in late October 1924, Makhsum was the Chair of the Regional Executive Committee of the Eastern Bukhara Province. It was at this point that he gained access to documents on NTD. He found NTD to be unfair to the Tajiks, so he, to use Rahid Ghani Abdullo's words, "constantly bombarded Moscow with the documents of appropriate contents – letters, reports, so on."⁴⁶⁸ One of his letters to Stalin is often quoted. In that letter Makhsum wrote that "[t]he borders of the 'Tajik Autonomous Province' have been determined incorrectly, because many places with a Tajik majority population, border the planned Tajik province [i.e., the Tajik Autonomous Province], but remain outside of its boundaries, instead appearing within

⁴⁶³ The dissolution of the Turkestan ASSR on October 14, 1924 started the national territorial delimitation in Central Asia. Bukhara and Khorazm followed the suit right away. See Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetsoi vlasti v respublike*, 43. Razhbov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovaniiia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 106. M Irkaev, Iu Nikolaev, and Iakhia Sharapov, *Ocherk Istorii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)* (Stalinabad: TazhikGosIzdat, 1957), 104.

⁴⁶⁴ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetsoi vlasti v respublike*, 43.

⁴⁶⁵ Razhbov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovaniiia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 106. Tumanov, "Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaiia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovlenie i uprochenie sovetsoi vlasti v Tazhikistane," 38.

⁴⁶⁶ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetsoi vlasti v respublike*, 47. Instead of the dissolved Turkestan, Bukhara, and Khorazm, the following new entities were formed: two Soviet republics (Turkmen and Uzbek), two autonomous Soviet republics (Kirgiz and Tajik), and one autonomous Soviet provinces (Kara-Kirgiz). The Kirgiz ASSR was renamed as Kazakh ASSR in April 1925, and seceded from Russia to establish Kazakh SSR in December 1936. The Kara-Kirgiz AP was renamed as Kirgiz AP in May 1925, and became Kirgiz ASSR in February 1926, before it seceded from Russia in December 1926. Tajik ASSR seceded from Uzbek SSR in December 1929.

⁴⁶⁷ Makhsum's 14-year career as a government official began at the age of 40. The first four years of his career were spent in the government of Bukhara PSR. He started his work at the local managerial positions – a Chair of Regional Committee for Food Supply to Red Army in Gharm (1921-22), one of the three Plenipotentiaries on the Issues of the Eastern Bukhara (1922-23), a member of Emergency Dictatorial Commission on the Issues of Eastern Bukhara (1923), and the Deputy Chair of the RevCom of Gharm (1923).

⁴⁶⁸ Rashid G. Abdullo, "On stroil nezavisimyi Tazhikistan," *Asia Plus*, 23 June 2011.

Uzbekistan". He also argued that "[t]he decree about the inclusion of Tajikistan to Uzbekistan in the form of an autonomous province infringes the national rights of Tajiks [...]."⁴⁶⁹

To solve this "unfairness" toward the Tajiks, in his letter Makhsum proposed two measures; the first was to "include Ura-Tiube, Khodzhent, Kanibadam, Isfara, Sokh, Rishtan, and Uch-Kurgan, as well as other bordering places with a Tajik majority population within Tajikistan"; the second was to, "present Tajikistan a full opportunity to be established completely freely with the conditions, similar to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, without any dependence upon the latter. The geographic conditions and the number of the population of Tajikistan fully meet the conditions of its organization into an independent republic."⁴⁷⁰ Makhsum's letter may have influenced Moscow's position on the status of Tajik autonomy.⁴⁷¹ Thus, the plans of the Special Commission on NTD were overwritten by the Russian CP.⁴⁷² The CEC of Eastern Bukhara, headed by Makhsum, sent a telegram to the CEC of the USSR saying that "[t]he decision of the Central Committee [of the Russian CP] about the Tajik [Autonomous] Republic, undoubtedly, is of the correct approach to take in order to achieve a solution, both in relation to the political and economic issues."⁴⁷³

Since then, and up until his removal from his post in 1934, Makhsum acted as head of the Tajik state. The reason why the Bukhara/Uzbek government's picked Makhsum was that he was an acting governor of East Bukhara, which was about to become the biggest part of the new Tajik political entity. In Eastern Bukhara, he started his career in local managerial positions – he was Chair of the Regional Committee for Food Supply to the Red Army in Gharm (1921-22), one of the three Plenipotentiaries on the Issues of Eastern Bukhara (1922-23), a member of the Emergency Dictatorial Commission on the Issues of Eastern Bukhara (1923), and the Deputy Chair of the RevCom of Gharm (1923). Right before the establishment of the Tajik ASSR in 1924, Makhsum was working as a Chair of the Regional Executive Committee of the Eastern Bukhara Province. In the newly-established autonomous Tajik Republic, he worked as Chair of the Tajik

⁴⁶⁹ See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*: 50; Manuchehr Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana," *Internet zhurnal "Seryi Volk"*, 17 April 2013.

⁴⁷⁰ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 51. Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁴⁷¹ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 51. Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁴⁷² See R. Masov and Sh. Sultanov, "Nustarullo Makhsum," *Agitator Tazhikistana*, no. 3 (1989): 23. See also Manuchehr Alimardonov, "Syn Natsii - Istoriia Naroda," *Proza.ru*, 19 July 2013.

⁴⁷³ As quoted in Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoini organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 40.

RevCom in 1924-1926,⁴⁷⁴ which was set up by the Uzbek RevCom in November 1924.⁴⁷⁵ On 7 December 1924, the Tajik RevCom announced the establishment of the Tajik ASSR within the Uzbek SSR.⁴⁷⁶ The function of the Tajik CP was temporarily filled by the Uzbek CP's Organizational Bureau in Tajikistan. The Tajik RevCom, together with the Organizational Bureau, moved to Dushanbe city in early 1925.⁴⁷⁷ On 15 March 1925, at a public event organized by the Tajik RevCom and Organizational Bureau, the masses of Tajikistan were informed about the establishment of the Tajik ASSR.⁴⁷⁸ Stalin sent a congratulatory letter to the Tajiks on this occasion.⁴⁷⁹

The final stage of state-building in regards to the Tajik ASSR was the replacement of the RevCom with an elected government. The elections were announced to take place in November 1926.⁴⁸⁰ The inaugural Congress of the Soviets of Tajik ASSR took place on 1-12 December 1926.⁴⁸¹ The Congress made several historic decisions. Firstly, it adopted a Declaration about the establishment of the Tajik ASSR. The text of this declaration states: "The first inaugural All-Tajik Congress of the Soviets, on behalf of the peasants of Tajikistan, confirms, before the whole world, an uncompromising decision to voluntarily join the Uzbek SSR and consequentially the USSR in claiming the rights to be an autonomous republic."⁴⁸² Secondly, the Congress elected the CEC Tajik ASSR, which replaced the Tajik RevCom.⁴⁸³ Makhsum was elected as Chair of the CEC and stayed in this post until 1934.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁴ RevCom was an interim government tasked with organizing the elections to the Soviets, which would convene to elect the permanent government. RevCom was dissolved in 1926 when the elections were organized successfully. By that time the High Council (Verkhovniy Soviet), the Parliament, and the Central Executive Committee (Tsentral'nyi Iсполnitel'nyi Komitet), the executive government body, were functional.

⁴⁷⁵ The Uzbek RevCom itself was established as an interim government of newly established Uzbekistan by the CEC of Bukhara on 18 November 1924. See F. I. Kalinycheva et al., *Siezdy Sovetov v Dokumentakh*, vol. VII (Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia Izdatel'stvo Iuridicheskoi Literatury, 1965), 79.

⁴⁷⁶ Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovaniia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 110. The Uzbek SSR was announced as established by Uzbek RevCom on December 5, 1924. See *ibid.*, 109.

⁴⁷⁷ Exact date varies in the Soviet sources. January 3, 1925 as per Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukrepleniie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 57. Or, February 5, 1925 as per Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istorii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 106.

⁴⁷⁸ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukrepleniie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 95.

⁴⁷⁹ Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istorii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 106. Tumanov, "Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaiia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovleniie i uprocheniie sovetskoi vlasti v Tazhikistane," 39-40.

⁴⁸⁰ Iu Nikolaev, "Ukrepleniie Organov Gosudarstvennoi Vlasti Tazhikskoi ASSR," in *Materialy k Istorii Tazhikskogo Naroda v Sovetskii Period*, ed. Bobojon Ghafurov (Stalinabad: TazhikGosizdat, 1954), 196.

⁴⁸¹ Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovaniia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 110.

⁴⁸² As quoted in Tamara Kashirina, *Pervyi Vsetazhikskii S'ezd Sovetov* (Dushanbe: Donish, 1984), 11.

⁴⁸³ Razhabov, "Natsional'no-gosudarstvennoie razmezhevanie v Srednei Azii i Ego Znachenie dlia Obrazhovaniia Tazhikskoi Sovetskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 110.

⁴⁸⁴ Kashirina, *Pervyi Vsetazhikskii S'ezd Sovetov*, 40.

The newly-established, autonomous Tajik Republic had a territory of 135,620 sq.km. From Bukhara PSR, it inherited four provinces (i.e., Garm, Dushanbe, Kulob, Qurghonteppa, and all of the parts of former Eastern Bukhara) and one district (Karatag) with the population of 603,838 people. Out of the territories of the former Turkestan ASSR, the autonomous Tajik Republic initially received the Panjakent and Uroteppa districts,⁴⁸⁵ which had a population of 135,665. This population was made up of 65.4% Tajiks, and 32.8% Uzbeks⁴⁸⁶. The territory and population of the Republic increased further on 2 January 1925, when the Presidium of the CEC of the Soviet Union decided to give the Pamir region (renamed as Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province) of the former Turkestan ASSR to the Tajik ASSR.⁴⁸⁷

Relations between the government of the Uzbek SSR and the Tajik ASSR have been tense. Historical documents show that Makhsum was frustrated with the lack of attention given by Uzbekistan to Tajikistan's socio-economic conditions. He was straightforward and unceremonious in his talks with Uzbek leaders. The minutes of one of the meetings in the Congress of the Soviets of Uzbekistan, in which Makhsum participated as the Head of the autonomous Tajik Republic, show him fiercely criticizing the Uzbek leadership, especially Khojaev.⁴⁸⁸ For instance, Makhsum complained that Uzbekistan had shown no leadership in affairs of Tajik autonomy:

[F]or the last two and a half years, there has been no observation, no examination of the Tajik Republic organized by the government of Uzbekistan. It has not examined any of our work [to check] what we are doing, how we are doing, and what we should do.⁴⁸⁹

He was also dissatisfied with the unfair distribution of goods and resources to Tajikistan by the Uzbek ministries and agencies:

Let's take the provision of the goods to the Republic [of Tajikistan]. We are still receiving no more than 50% of what we are entitled to [from the Uzbek narkomats and Uzbek organizations, such as Uzbektorg, Uzbekbiliashu, Uzbekselkhoz]; we have never received the full amount to which we are entitled. [...] The Uzbek CEC and economic organizations should put an end this abnormality.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁵ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 49.

⁴⁸⁶ Tumanov, "Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovlenie i uprocheniie sovetskoi vlasti v Tazhikistane," 39. The other estimates show that the population was 779403, of which 610393 people were Tajiks, and 139813 were Uzbeks. See Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 49.

⁴⁸⁷ Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istorii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 105.

⁴⁸⁸ see "Stenograficheskii Otchet 3-go Kurultaia Sovetov Uzbekiskoi Sovietskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Respubliki," 1929, 172.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

Makhsum was sure that the Uzbek side was only interested in gathering a greater agricultural harvest from Tajikistan:

[H]ow are we being served by Uzhklopkom, Uzpakhtasoiz, and Uzel'soiz? Very badly. These organizations are preoccupied with expanding the fields; their only concern is that the Tajik Republic should yield more cotton. However, Uzbkhlopkom has never given any thought to giving us more [man]power, to paying more attention to our republic or providing us with necessary goods, and so forth.⁴⁹¹

On top of political and economic discrimination, Makhsum was concerned about the conditions of the Tajik ethnic minority in Uzbekistan. According to him, they were being oppressed and had also been barred from receiving an education or any other information in their native language:

Here, many comrade mentioned in their speeches that one nation is oppressing the other, not giving schools, etc. I think this abnormality needs to be abolished. Congress should issue a firm directive that the official line of the Soviet Union, the line of the Party is that there should not be any oppressed nationality, that each nationality should receive proper schooling, and run their government in their native language.

He warned the Uzbek side that should the issues of the Tajik minority not be resolved, there would be complaints to higher authorities:

If [the Tajiks are] hindered in resolving their issues, the people, who are aware of the nationalities policies will direct their demands, if not to here, then to higher organizations. We need to end these talks about oppressed nationalities and give each nation schools, books, newspapers and the ability to govern, in their native language.⁴⁹²

1.3. Tajik ASSR's Independence from Uzbekistan: the role of Shotemur

The secession of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan was deemed to be the achievement of the Tajik leader, Shirinsho Shotemur.⁴⁹³ After the establishment of the Tajik ASSR, Shotemur was appointed to several positions simultaneously. For instance, he worked as a Representative of the Central Control Commission of the CP of Uzbekistan in Tajikistan, and the People's Commissar of Inspection of Workers and Peasants in the RevCom of the newly-established Tajikistan⁴⁹⁴. He was also a member of the Organizational Bureau of the CP of Uzbekistan in Tajikistan,⁴⁹⁵ an interim party organization. On top of all of his duties, Shotemur was regularly

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., 172-73.

⁴⁹² Ibid., 173-74.

⁴⁹³ see "Shirinsho Shotemur - Geroi Tazhikistana," *Asia-Plus*, 13 August 2009.; Farzona Shoakova, "Shirinsho Shotemur. Pervyi grazhdanin Tazhikistana," *Asia-Plus*, 5 November 2012.

⁴⁹⁴ Andrei Makashov and Viktor Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1964), 7. The Inspection of Workers and Peasants (*Raboche-Krestianskaia Spektsiia*) was a Soviet government body (1920-34) at the ministerial level, which mainly controlled the proper implementation of state budget.

⁴⁹⁵ Makashov, *Partiinaia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukrepleniie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 55-56.

dispatched to various regions of Tajikistan to establish Soviet governance or strengthen existing Soviet government institutions. For instance, in December 1924, he was dispatched to Dushanbe to prepare the new capital city for the arrival of the Tajik government, who were relocating to Dushanbe from Samarkand. In July 1925, he was sent to the Kulob region as one of three members of the Special Commission, which was formed to regulate the acceptance of new members into the ranks of the CP.⁴⁹⁶

Shotemur was twice called off from his studies in Moscow and appointed to the highest government positions in Tajikistan. For instance, in 1929, while Shotemur was studying at the University of Communist Workers of the East (Moscow), the newly-established CP of Tajikistan recalled him so that they could appoint him as the party's Executive Secretary.⁴⁹⁷ In acknowledgment of his services, the Soviet government awarded him with the Order of Red Banner in 1930.⁴⁹⁸ In 1932, he decided to step down from these government positions and go to Moscow to study at the Institute of the Red Professorate (Moscow), and in 1933 he was called away from his studies, back to Tajikistan so that he might serve as Chair of the CEC of Tajikistan.⁴⁹⁹

The reason why Shotemur was such a sought-after person during the rule of the Tajik RevCom was that he had gained an excellent reputation and a wide variety of experiences, while implementing a range of economic, administrative and ideological policies in various provinces of Turkestan ASSR. For instance, in 1921, as a part of the *prodrazverstka*, a Soviet economic-agricultural initiative on food security, Shotemur was despatched to Ferghana and Khujand.⁵⁰⁰ Shortly after, Shotemur was sent to Pamir, his home region, as a member of the newly-established Emergency Military-Political Troika,⁵⁰¹ where he made his reputation as an outstanding local representative for the Soviet regime.⁵⁰² Within a year he took over leadership of the troika. When the troika was replaced with the RevCom of Pamir in 1923, Shotemur became the Chair of the Committee,⁵⁰³ which means that he was responsible for curating the establishment of a permanent, Soviet system of government in this troublesome region of Turkestan ASSR.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid., 79.

⁴⁹⁷ Makashov and Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur*, 14.

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., 22.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁰⁰ Qurbon Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," in *Sirinshoh Shohtemur*, ed. Qurbon Alamshoev (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2009), 247. See also Makashov and Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur*, 6.

⁵⁰¹ The function of the troika was to establish a Soviet system of governance in the Pamir region.

⁵⁰² Makashov, *Partiinaiia organizatsiia Tazhikistana v 1924-1926 godakh: Bor'ba partiinnoi organizatsii Tazhikistana za likvidatsiiu basmacheskoi kontrrevoliutsii i ukreplenie sovetskoi vlasti v respublike*, 64n1.

⁵⁰³ Makashov and Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur*, 7.

Moreover, Shotemur was also closely engaged with minority politics toward the Tajiks in Turkestan ASSR. His first professional encounter with Tajik ethnic issues took place suddenly, upon the request of the Bolshevik leadership. So, in 1923, Shotemur was called from Pamir to Tashkent, where he was appointed as an Instructor at the National Minorities Subcommittee of the Agitation-Propaganda Division of the CEC of the Turkestan CP. One Tajik scholar has described this entity as “the first political structure in the centuries-old history of the Tajiks.”⁵⁰⁴ Shotemur was tasked with creating and developing the Tajik section of the party.⁵⁰⁵

Shotemur did not take part in the work of the national committees on territorial delimitation. However, as a Tajik instructor of the Propaganda Division of the CP of Turkestan ASSR, he indirectly influenced public debates on NTD. In particular, Shotemur was behind the establishment of *Ovozi Tojik*, a Tajik-language newspaper, which was quite nationalist in terms of its editorial policy. The first issue of the weekly newspaper was published in late August 1924, when debate surrounding NTD had entered its final phase. In his report to the Agitation and Propaganda Division of the CC of the Russian CP, Shotemur stated that, “even though the Tajiks make up a large part of the population of Central Asia, they do not have access to print.”⁵⁰⁶ In the same report, he requested financial support to turn the newspaper into a daily publication. This support was to be achieved by means of including the paper’s expenditure within the state budget during the fiscal year of 1924-25.⁵⁰⁷ Through articles in this paper, the Tajik intelligentsia started to air their concerns about the fairness of NTD for the Tajiks.⁵⁰⁸ The newspaper had played an immense role in the rise of national self-consciousness among the Tajiks.⁵⁰⁹ He invited Sadriddin Aini, another Hero of Tajikistan, to contribute to *Ovozi Tojik* with his articles.⁵¹⁰ Reportedly, in December 1924, when Uzbek leadership attempted to block the publication of the newspaper, Shotemur, together with Aini and other Tajik intellectuals, decided to convert the publication into the official newspaper of the Uzbek CP’s Organizational Bureau in Tajikistan, which was acting, temporarily, as the Tajik CP.⁵¹¹

According to Tajik scholar, Qurboni Alamshoh, Shotemur has always been conscious of his Tajik identity. He refers to an entry in Shotemur’s resume (*anketa*); in answering a question about his

⁵⁰⁴ Kurbonidin Alamshoev, "Shirinsho Shotemur: Obshestvenno-politicheskii i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'" (Autoreferat of the thesis for the Candidacy to PhD, Institute of Social Sciences named after B.I.Iskandarov, Academy of Science of Tajikistan, 2013), 10.

⁵⁰⁵ Makashov and Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur*, 7.

⁵⁰⁶ See See Mirzoali Dzhuraev, "Rol' gazety "Ovozi todzhih" v osvesheniie problem natsional'nogo samosoznaniia" (Autoreferat of the dissertation, National University of Tajikistan, 2011), 8.

⁵⁰⁷ See Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 358.

⁵⁰⁸ Dzhuraev, "Rol' gazety "Ovozi todzhih" v osvesheniie problem natsional'nogo samosoznaniia," 10. For a list of some related news articles, see Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 356.

⁵⁰⁹ Dzhuraev, "Rol' gazety "Ovozi todzhih" v osvesheniie problem natsional'nogo samosoznaniia," 10-14.

⁵¹⁰ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 353.

⁵¹¹ See *ibid.*, 358-59.

desired workplace, Shotemur wrote “[ready for] a service to the party, anywhere among Tajiks.”⁵¹² Another popular story depicts Shotemur as a Tajik nationalist in the Uzbek-dominated government of Turkestan ASSR:

Once upon a time, in Tashkent, while visiting the Council of the Education of the National Minorities of Turkestan ASSR, Shirinsho looked for a Tajik section and could not find it. [When] he asked the staff member about the responsible person for the section, and the reason why there were no books in the [Tajik] language, he was told: “For whom it needs to be kept, as nobody asks for [it]. The Tajiks do not exist.” Shirinsho, controlling his emotions, proclaimed: “I am the Tajik!”⁵¹³

There is evidence that Shotemur was dissatisfied with the decisions of the Special Committee on NTD. He believed that the Tajiks should, at least, have an autonomous republic instead of a province within Uzbekistan. On September 2, 1924, Shotemur reportedly met with the communists of Samarkand city, where he expressed his ideas about an autonomous republic:

The pan-Turkists attempt to prove that there are no Tajiks in Central Asia, other than those in mountains of Badakhshan. It can, therefore, be thought that they are being generous by providing the Tajiks with an autonomous province. [They] assume that the sons of [our] nation belong to other nations. It is quite difficult to solve this issue in the current context, where the pan-Turkists are dominant. On top of this, unfortunately, some bright-minded Tajiks have fallen under the influence of this terrible misery and have lost their minds. People’s fates should not be decided based upon the ideas of weak individuals. The Tajik people have the right their own autonomous republic, and the current situation requires that this right is realised. We will achieve this.⁵¹⁴

Shotemur became more active in his struggle to improve the socio-political conditions of the Tajiks, especially those who lived in Uzbekistan, once he joined the Tajik RevCom and began acting as a permanent representative of Tajik autonomy in the Uzbek government. According to Alamshoev, as soon as he was appointed a Tajik representative in late 1926, Shotemur demanded that he be given a decisive voice in cabinet discussions. Up until that point, the Tajik representative had only had an advisory role in the Uzbek government.⁵¹⁵ Furthermore, Shotemur demanded that the Uzbek government provide financial independence to the autonomous Tajik Republic. His demand was based on the complaint that loans taken out by the Tajik government from the All-Union Cooperative Bank (*VseKoBank*⁵¹⁶) were given initially to the Uzbek government, which then did not pass the whole amount on to the Tajik side.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹² See Qurboni Alamshoh, *Kuzhoe bosham, bo tozhikon bosham* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 1999), 24.

⁵¹³ Shoakova, "Shirinsho Shotemur. Pervyi grazhdanin Tadjikistana."

⁵¹⁴ As quoted in Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 361.

⁵¹⁵ Alamshoev, "Shirinsho Shotemur: Obshestvenno-politicheskii i gosudarstvenniy deiatel'," 18.

⁵¹⁶ *VseKoBank* was a government-owned bank in the Soviet Union, which was founded in 1923 for the purpose of financing the infrastructure development within the Union.

⁵¹⁷ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 377-78.

Several letters from Shotemur addressed to the Communist leadership in Moscow show that he was concerned about the implications of NTD on the Tajik population in Uzbekistan. One of his letters, written in 1926, has become famous in Tajik academia. Titled “On the Cultural and Socio-Economic Condition of the Tajiks in the Territory of the Uzbek Republic,” it is a letter of complaint about the conditions of Tajiks living in Uzbekistan. In it, Shotemur complained that as many as 800 thousand Tajiks were being oppressed in Uzbekistan. He blamed the Uzbek government for purposefully ignoring the rights of Tajiks to receive education and information in their native language and forced them to learn the Uzbek language. Accusing the Uzbek leadership of taking anti-party action, he called for the Communist leadership in Moscow to take serious measures in this regard.⁵¹⁸ Although he did not make direct territorial claims in this letter, Shotemur emphasized that the “ [culturally superior] and organized part of the Tajik population (the urban population, which is employed in trade, industry, and craftsmanship, as well as [...] intelligentsia) remains in the territory of the Uzbek republic.”⁵¹⁹ According to him, “exactly this part of the Tajik masses is subject to being Uzbekified (*obuzbechit'*), with all kinds of wild measures being taken, including extreme administrative pressure and chauvinistic tyranny.”⁵²⁰ According to Alamshoev, most of the regions of Uzbekistan that Shotemur mentioned as places where Tajiks were being oppressed were given to Tajikistan when it became independent of Uzbekistan in 1929.⁵²¹ Recently, a Tajik scholar claimed to have discovered one more, previously unknown, letter of Shotemur's in the archives. This letter was titled “The Political Reasoning of the Ongoing Uzbekification of the Tajik Population in the Territory of Uzbek SSR.”⁵²² Apparently, this letter was thematically similar to the one written in 1926.

Another letter written by Shotemur, dated March 1929, was addressed to Maxim Ammosov, an instructor of the CC of the CP of the USSR. This letter attracted Moscow's attention, directing the CP to examine the ever-growing tension between the Uzbek state and the Tajik autonomy. Reporting on the economic and political situation in the Tajik ASSR, Shotemur complains about the lack of proper attention paid by the Uzbek CP to Tajik issues. He also complains about the mistreatment of issues of Tajik autonomy by the Uzbek government, particularly in relation to economic and financial issues.⁵²³ As one of the solutions to the dire economic situation in Tajik ASSR, Shotemur proposed taking away the Uzbek SSR's newly-formed Khujand province⁵²⁴ and

⁵¹⁸ See Makashov and Rudnitskii, *Shirinsho Shotemur*, 9-10. Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 72-77.

⁵¹⁹ As quoted in *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 74.

⁵²⁰ As quoted in *ibid*.

⁵²¹ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 390.

⁵²² see Alamshoev, "Shirinsho Shotemur: Obshestvenno-politicheskii i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'," 19.

⁵²³ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 399.

⁵²⁴ The Uzbek government established the Khujand province in 1927 by uniting the several Tajik-dominated regions of Samarkand (Khujand city) and Ferghana (Isfara and Konibodom cities and Asht district). See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 83. See also Sergei Abashin, "Natsional'noie razmezhevanii v Ferganskoi doline: Kak vsio nachinalos'," *Islam v Sodruzhestve Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv*, 7, no. 2, 16 August 2012.

adding it to the Tajik ASSR. He argued that this move would be “completely economically and politically beneficial for Tajikistan and the [Khujand] province.”⁵²⁵ Ammosov found that “Tajikistan was rightly complaining that Uzbekistan was ignoring it.”⁵²⁶ A few days later, the CP of the Uzbek SSR held its fourth convention, 25 percent of which, according to Alamshoev, was devoted to the “issues of Tajiks.”⁵²⁷ During this assembly Isaac Zelenskii, the Secretary of the Central Asian Bureau of the CP of the USSR, heavily criticized the Uzbek government.⁵²⁸ The Tajik delegation present during the meeting also joined in with criticisms of the Uzbek government.⁵²⁹

The Uzbek side “relatively quickly” agreed to the demands of the Tajik side in relation to the Khujand province.⁵³⁰ It should be noted that due to the involvement of the Central Asian Bureau, as well as surfacing facts about the engagement of Uzbek leadership in clandestine nationalist and anti-Soviet groups (i.e., *Milli Istiqlol*), the Uzbek government was under significant pressure. On 31 March 1929, the CC of the CP of Uzbekistan proclaimed that:

Considering that the majority of the population of the Khujand district consists of Tajiks, the territorial attachment of the Khujand district to the Tajik ASSR, the economic inclination of the Ura-Tiube province of the Tajik ASSR to the Khujand district ..., acknowledge the necessity of transferring the Khujand district to the Tajik ASSR.⁵³¹

On 3 April 1929, the Congress of the Soviets of the Khujand province “expressed a wish” to join the Tajik ASSR.⁵³² The 2nd Congress of the Soviets of Tajik ASSR, which convened on 21-29 April 1929, approved this wish of the Khujand District Congress and brought it to the attention of the forthcoming Congress of the Soviets of the Uzbek SSR.⁵³³ The Uzbek side finalized the bureaucratic process by “approving” the wish in the 3rd Congress of the Soviets of the Uzbek SSR in May 1929.⁵³⁴ After the transfer of Khujand, the Uzbek government apparently attempted to downplay the increasing number of accusations regarding violations of the social and economic rights of Tajiks. However, the situation was too serious to ignore, hence the following remark, which was made by Akmal Ikramov, First Secretary of the CP of Uzbekistan:

⁵²⁵ See Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 399.

⁵²⁶ As quoted in Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 82.

⁵²⁷ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 400.

⁵²⁸ During the interrogation process after his arrest, Zelenskii informed that he criticized Akmal Ikramov, the First Secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party, in the 4th convention and proposed to dismiss him from his position. Zelenskii's motivation, as he admitted, was the fact that Ikramov's reputation was badly damaged at that time due to his alleged involvement in the nationalist movement in Uzbekistan entitled "Milli Istiqlol". So, Zelenskii attacked Ikramov to demonstrate himself as the true communist, whereas in fact he was waging his own anti-Soviet actions during this time. See *Sudebnyi otchiot po delu anti-sovetskogo "pravo-trotskogo bloka"*, 322.

⁵²⁹ "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 400.

⁵³⁰ Abashin, "Natsional'noie razmezhevanie v Ferganskoi doline: Kak vsio nachinalos'."

⁵³¹ As quoted in Tamara Kashirina, *Tretii Chrezvychainyi Vsetadzhikskii S'ezd Sovetov* (Dushanbe: Donish, 1989), 5.

⁵³² Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istorii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 179.

⁵³³ Ibid.

⁵³⁴ See Kalinycheva et al., *Siezdy Sovetov v Dokumentakh*, VII, 189.

Let me say a few things about the Tajiks, who are our most powerful national minority. Before the national [territorial] delimitation of the former Turkestan and Bukhara republics, [and] during the establishment of the Republic of Uzbekistan, we were under the heavy influence of pan-Turkist ideology. We even had Great-Uzbekistani chauvinism in relation to the minor nationalities. [...] In our relationship with Tajikistan there has been a range of distortions on the behalf of our Soviet bodies. It has pretty much to do with this Great-Uzbek chauvinism. We are struggling against [this chauvinism], though our efforts leave much to be desired.⁵³⁵

This situation was favourable for the Tajik leadership, thus they increased their demands. Tajik party officials wrote a letter, addressed to the Political Bureau and the Central Asian Bureau of the CP of the USSR as well as to the CC of the Uzbek CP, demanding that the Tajiks be allowed to secede from Uzbekistan. They argued that “currently, a favourable time has come to transfer the Tajik regions, which were left in Uzbekistan, to the [Tajik ASSR]. The construction of the state of the Tajik nation should take place under the same conditions as the construction of other Central Asia republics (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).”⁵³⁶ The Soviet government in Moscow had long discussions over this issue with both Uzbek and Tajik representatives. On 2 June 1929, Khojibaev, who was heading the Tajik delegation, reported to Shotemur that the issue was complicated. However, he informed Shotemur about the 2-hour meeting that had been had with Stalin, who expressed his support for Tajikistan becoming a separate Soviet republic.⁵³⁷ On 12 June 1929, the Presidium of the CEC of the USSR issued a decree calling for the secession of the Tajik autonomous republic from the Uzbek SSR and its accession to the Soviet Union as a separate state:

Considering that due to economic, national and geographical features, the Tajik autonomous republic is an entity entirely separate from the Uzbek SSR, we acknowledge that it is timely, and important for increasing economic and cultural development within Tajikistan, to raise the question of the secession of the Tajik republic from the Uzbek SSR as well as Tajikistan’s accession to the Soviet Union as an independent union republic.⁵³⁸

This decree was “welcomed” by the Presidiums of the CECs of the Uzbek SSR and the Tajik ASSR on 13 July and 11 August 1929 respectively.⁵³⁹ The Uzbek and Tajik governments signed a document regarding the transfer of the Khujand district to the Tajik ASSR on 4 September 1929.⁵⁴⁰ However, the Tajik side demanded the transfer of a few more territories, namely several districts of the Samarkand province, including Samarkand city, some districts of the Bukhara province, including Bukhara city, as well as some territories of the Surkhandaryo province. According to Masov, the Tajik side’s demands were actively vocalized, not only by Makhsum and

⁵³⁵ As quoted in Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 81.

⁵³⁶ As quoted in *ibid.*, 83.

⁵³⁷ See Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 406-07.

⁵³⁸ As quoted in Kashirina, *Tretii Chrezvychainyi Vsetadzhiskii S'iezd Sovetov*, 7.

⁵³⁹ Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istarii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 183.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

Shotemur, but also by Abdullo Rahimbaev, Chinor Imomov, and Abdulrahim Khojibaev, who “had previously made huge mistakes by agreeing with the establishment of not only the [Tajik] autonomous republic, but also the autonomous province”.⁵⁴¹ The Uzbek side refused the Tajik side’s demands. The Commission on the territorial delimitation of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, which had been established to discuss each side’s territorial claims, endorsed all of the demands made by the Tajik side.⁵⁴² Nevertheless, the Tajik republic was established without the transferral of the provinces that had been demanded. As the Declaration of the Reformation of the Tajik ASSR into the Tajik SSR, adopted by the 3rd extraordinary Congress of the Soviets of the Tajik ASSR (15-19 October 1929), shows the Tajik SSR received only the Khujand province:

Fulfilling the high will of the Tajik nation and other nationalities that live alongside it, the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic is reformed into a Soviet Socialistic Republic of the Union, comprising of an autonomous province [*oblast'*] of Gorno-Badakhshan and the districts [*okrug*] of Khozhand, Gissar, Ura-Tiube, Panzhikent, Kuliab, Kurgan-Tiube, and Garm.⁵⁴³

In a bureaucratic process, decisions made at the 3rd Congress of The Soviets of Tajikistan received the “approval” of the CEC of Uzbek SSR on 6 November 1929.⁵⁴⁴ The CP of Tajikistan was established by the decree of the CC of the CP of the USSR.⁵⁴⁵ With the decree of the CEC of the USSR, the Tajik SSR joined the Soviet Union.⁵⁴⁶ However, the Tajik government did not give up on its attempts to take Samarkand, Bukhara and Surkhondaryo provinces of Uzbekistan. In November 1929, to review Tajikistan’s demands, the Presidium of the CEC established a commission. Alamshoev argues that the Tajik side was represented mostly by Khojibaev, who regularly sent minutes of the meetings of the commission to Shotemur. The latter, in his turn, kept studying these minutes and in mid-December 1929, wrote a letter to the Soviet leadership in Moscow titled “On the Political Evidence for the Process of the Uzbekification of Tajiks Living in the Uzbek SSR”.⁵⁴⁷ In late December 1929, the commission organized a meeting of the Uzbek and Tajik delegations, where Shotemur had a fierce debate with his Uzbek colleagues over the territories in issue.⁵⁴⁸ The commission concluded that Bukhara and Samarkand should stay in Uzbekistan, while the case of Surkhondaryo required further study. The Presidium of the CEC of the USSR convened on 3 February 1930 to discuss the commission’s work and issued a statement about keeping Bukhara and Samarkand within Uzbekistan, and transferring the Sukhandaryo province to Tajikistan. However, on 13 February 1930, the Presidium re-convened upon the

⁵⁴¹ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 88-89.

⁵⁴² See *ibid.*, 95-98.

⁵⁴³ As quoted in Kashirina, *Tretii Chrezvychainyi Vsetadzhiskii S'ezd Sovetov*, 14-15.

⁵⁴⁴ Irkaev, Nikolaev, and Sharapov, *Ocherk Istarii Sovetskogo Tazhikistana (1917-1957 gg.)*, 185.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

⁵⁴⁷ Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 416.

⁵⁴⁸ See *ibid.*, 411-12.

request of the Uzbek government and decided to stop the transfer of the Surkhandaryo province to Tajikistan.⁵⁴⁹

Overall, Shotemur's letters played an important role in informing Moscow about the discriminatory attitude of Uzbekistan towards Tajik autonomy and the Tajik minority living in Uzbek territories. Due to the active role played by Shotemur, Tajikistan became independent of Uzbekistan. Along with other Tajik leaders, Shotemur was the part of the team that negotiated with the Uzbek side about the borders of the new Tajik republic and the territories that were to be included within those borders. One of his contemporaries remembered Shotemur saying that "In 999, the independent Tajik state of the Samanids collapsed because of the nomads. Today, after 930 years, despite opposition from the descendants of those Turkic nomads, with the help of the Central Committee of [the CP of the USSR] historical justice will be had, and in our motherland we will build the Soviet Socialistic Republic of Tajikistan."⁵⁵⁰

2. Remembering the "lost territories": the narratives of "the genocide against the Tajiks" and the "Great Uzbek chauvinism/pan-Turkism"

In Tajikistan, texts about national identity depict the NTD of the 1920s as a national tragedy. This assumption is based on two grand narratives. First, the Tajiks became victims of a "genocide" organized by the Uzbeks, since the Uzbek intelligentsia ignored the existence of Tajiks in the 1920s, while Uzbek leadership actively decreased the total number of the Tajik population in official documents. Second, during the NTD of the 1920s, the Tajiks "lost" their land to the Uzbeks. Both of these "atrocities" were committed by "Uzbek chauvinists/pan-Turkists" with the assistance of "cosmopolitan" Tajiks. Tajik texts concerned with national identity claim that the joint efforts of these forces brought the Tajik nation to the brink of extinction. This will be discussed later in this chapter. While the scholarly works of Tajik historians serve as the main source of such knowledge, the mass media, official narratives and social media also reproduce it.

Since the late 1980s, Rahim Masov, a Tajik historian, has played a large role in establishing the events of the 1920s as a national tragedy. *Tajikistan: Istoriia Natsional'noi Tragedii* [Tajikistan: The History of National Tragedy], his three-volume work, sets the nationalistic tone of Tajik historiography. These volumes consist of *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia* (1991) [*The History of Axe-Line Delimitation*], *Istoriia pod Grifom 'Sovershenno Sekretno'* (1995) [*The History Stamped*

⁵⁴⁹ Alamshoh, *Kuzhoe bosham, bo tozhikon bosham*, 138.

⁵⁵⁰ As quoted in Alamshoev, "Shohtemur - nomusi millat," 409. The vocabulary and the tone of the quote replicates the narrative dominant in Tajikistan in 1980s. No evidence that Shotemur has ever argued about "nomad Turkic" tribes or the Samanids as a Tajik state.

as 'Top Secret'], and *Tadzhiki: Vytesneniie i Assimilliatsiia* (2008) [*Tajiks: Extrusion and Assimilation*].⁵⁵¹ As Masov himself states, the three-volume book is used as "a course reading material in higher education institutions and as served as a guideline for [writing] the school textbooks on history."⁵⁵² This is not surprising considering that Masov had institutional power. From 1988 till 2015, he was Director of the Institute of History, Archaeology, and Ethnography of the Academy of Science of Tajikistan, the highest authority dealing with the Tajik historiography. One of the results of his leadership was a 6-volume compendium, titled *Istoriia Tadzhikskogo Naroda* (1990) [*The History of the Tajik Nation*], which is, according to some observers, comparable to B. Ghafurov's similarly titled 3-volumed *magnum opus* published in 1963-65.⁵⁵³ Masov's 17-year career as the Chief Historian of the nation is a sign of his good relations with the Tajik government. He was the recipient of the order of "The Star of the President of Tajikistan" for "his outstanding services in the development of history [sic], preparation of the scholarly potential [*nauchnyi potentsial*], and the development of socio-historical culture."⁵⁵⁴

The main argument of Masov's *Tajikistan: Istoriia Natsional'noi Tragedii*, as well as his numerous articles and interviews, is that the 1920s were a national catastrophe for the Tajiks, as they suffered a "genocide" and "territorial loss" caused by Uzbek leadership and the unpatriotic Tajik elite. Masov argues that "[a]s a result of national-territorial delimitation, the main, ancient centers of Tajik culture – the cities of Bukhara, Samarkand and Khujand – remained within [...] Uzbekistan."⁵⁵⁵ The Tajik ASSR, according to him, was formed in "the most desolated, backward outskirts of the Bukharan and Turkestani republics."⁵⁵⁶ He viewed it as nothing less than the process of "herding Tajiks into a special autonomous reservation."⁵⁵⁷ These fundamental arguments were supported and reproduced by, to borrow Horak's words, "the group of scholars gathered around Masov." Such arguments have become a matter of contestation between Tajik and Uzbek historians.⁵⁵⁸

As far as the Tajik government is concerned, even though there were no direct accusations of the Uzbeks depriving the Tajiks of their native territories, as will be shown below in this chapter,

⁵⁵¹ Liudmila Dubinina, "Rahim Masov Rasskazhet Istoriu Natsional'noi Tragedii," *Khovar*, 17 October 2008.

⁵⁵² See Anna Lotshikhina, "Rahim Masov: Kirillitsa Prinesla Vseobshuiu Gramotnost' Tazhikskomu Narodu," *Fond Russkii Mir*, 10 September 2013.

⁵⁵³ See Saiohat Ibragimova, "Prezentatsiia 6-tomnoi knigi 'Istoriia Tazhikskogo Naroda'," *Akademiia Nauk Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 17 February 2014. Ra'no Nusratulloeva, "V Svet Vyshla Kniga 'Istoriia Tazhikskogo Naroda'," *Khovar*, 10 February 2014.

⁵⁵⁴ Nargis Boiahmedova, "E.Rahmon Nagradil Tazhikskogo Istorika," *Khovar*, 16 November 2014.

⁵⁵⁵ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 104.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵⁵⁸ For a review of the debate between the Tajik and Uzbek historians, see Horák, "In Search of the History of Tajikistan: What Are Tajik and Uzbek Historians Arguing About?."

official rhetoric concerning the 1920s is mixed; it contains both celebratory messages regarding the establishment of the Tajik nation-state and lamentations about the tribulations the Tajiks had to endure. In fact, the last time the Tajik government raised the issue of “territorial loss” was in February 1930, when the Presidium of the CEC of the USSR postponed any actions regarding the territorial claims of Tajikistan to the Uzbek side.⁵⁵⁹ Even though, in 2009, a Russian author leaked information during a closed meeting with the Tajik journalists in Moscow, President Rahmon of Tajikistan reportedly claimed that Tajikistan “will take back Samarkand and Bukhara” from Uzbekistan,⁵⁶⁰ there has not been any official confirmation or rejection.

According to Tajik texts about national identity, the Tajiks are either first-comers or indigenous to Central Asia, whereas the Turkic nations, including Uzbeks, are late-comers (invaders, barbarians, and conquerors). A common argument among Tajik scholars is that the Uzbek nation emerged “before history’s very eyes” [*na glazakh istorii*], implying the comparatively ancient nature of the Tajik nation. This assertion was coined by Ivan Zarubin,⁵⁶¹ a Russian scholar of the Tajik and Pamiri languages, and was later quoted by Rahmat Rahimov,⁵⁶² a Tajik anthropologist, before being widely used by Masov.⁵⁶³ In 2005 it became the title of his book.⁵⁶⁴ Also, in 2013, Masov published an article titled ‘*Uzbekistan – Rodivshisii na Glazakh Istorii*’ [*Uzbekistan – Born Before History’s Very Eyes*]. As a result, this term (and the meaning associated with it) was further proliferated in Tajik scholarly discourse. A young Tajik scholar, Manuchehr Alimardonov, for instance, used the phrase as if it were already established knowledge in his academic article:

The borders of Tajik nation, which is the most ancient aboriginal population of the Central Asia, are within the “Tajik Autonomous Province”. This area includes the mountain peaks of Matcha, Karategin and Darvaz. Conversely, the nomad “nations”, which were born *before history’s eyes* took possession of valleys and plains.⁵⁶⁵

The notion of the ancientness of the Tajiks vis-à-vis the “newcomer” Uzbeks has also made its way into official political discourses. President Rahmon, for instance, believes that “[t]he Tajiks are one of the oldest peoples on earth. They are the descendants of the Aryans who, in time immemorial, spread through Central Asia”.⁵⁶⁶ This argument uncompromisingly turns other nations in Central Asia into “newcomers”. Rahmon openly implies that all of the other ethnic

⁵⁵⁹ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 100.: 100

⁵⁶⁰ Arkadiĭ Dubnov, "'My voz'mem Samarkand i Bukharu' - Tadzhiĭskii prezident rasskazal o sokrovennom," *Vremia novostei*, no. 228, 10 December 2009.

⁵⁶¹ See Ivan Zarubin, "Spisok Narodnostei Turkestanskogo Kraia," *Trudy Komissii po Izucheniiu Plemennogo Sostava Naseleniia Rossii i Sopredel'nikh Stran* 9(1925): 4.

⁵⁶² See Rahmat Rahimov, "Ivan Ivanovich Zarubin," *Soviet Ethnography* 1, no. 1 (1989): 117.

⁵⁶³ See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 10.

⁵⁶⁴ See *Rozhdennyie Na Glazakh Istorii* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2005).

⁵⁶⁵ Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana.", emphasis added

⁵⁶⁶ Emomali Rahmonov, *Tadzhiĭ v zerkale istorii: ot ariitsev do samanidov*, vol. I (Guernsey: London River Editions Ltd., 2001), 101.

groups of Central Asia are actually “guests” of Tajiks. In his words, “Uzbeks, Kirgizs, Kazakhs, and Turkmens have all settled in welcoming Tajik lands.”⁵⁶⁷

Second, the Tajiks lost their territories because the Uzbek leadership forced them to assimilate with the Uzbeks. The Tajik scholars use the term “genocide” to define this process and argue that it started in the Emirate of Bukhara. The Emirate was “a nidus [*ochag*] of obscurantism, wild feudal despotism and a source of tragic life for Tajik people.”⁵⁶⁸ The Tajik people were discriminated against by the “Manghit-Uzbek oppressors.”⁵⁶⁹ The horrific life of the Tajiks continued in Turkestan ASSR⁵⁷⁰ and in Bukhara PSR.⁵⁷¹ Furthermore, the national-territorial delimitation process was indicative of a “complete ignorance of the existence of the Tajiks nation and of the forceful assimilation (Uzbekification) of the real (aboriginal) people of Central Asia – the Tajiks.”⁵⁷² Thus, NTD was “an open, undisguised anti-Tajik genocide.”⁵⁷³ With the establishment of the Tajik ASSR, “the expansionist territorial pretensions of the Turkic-speaking tribes cooled down” and “the existence of the most ancient people of Central Asia [...] was verified.”⁵⁷⁴ As far as the Tajiks left in Uzbekistan were concerned, the “genocide” being perpetrated against them continued. To put it in Masov’s words, “the process of assimilating the Tajiks, which was implemented by the Uzbeks in Tajik cities and regions, which were then directly included in the Uzbek SSR became very dangerous, [...]. It was an undisguised genocide.”⁵⁷⁵ According to Masov, “the Tajiks of Tajikistan” would be completely assimilated by Uzbeks, if Tajikistan remained further within Uzbekistan as an autonomy.⁵⁷⁶

Similar narratives about the “genocide of the Tajiks” can also be observed in official narratives. For instance, Rahmon argues that “several times the Tajik nation was on the brink of extinction,” when “bloodthirsty conquerors” and “nationalist and racist [...] aliens” wanted to “wipe the Tajik nation from the surface of earth.”⁵⁷⁷ Especially, “during the establishment of the Tajik Autonomous Republic, nationalist circles made significant efforts to decry the distinctiveness of the culture and history of Tajik nation.”⁵⁷⁸ Because, “[t]he aim of such a chauvinistic politics was

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., 95.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibron Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti* (Dushanbe: Donish, 2013), 33.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 116.

⁵⁷⁰ See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 6-18.

⁵⁷¹ See *ibid.*, 19-27.

⁵⁷² The decree of the PolitBureau from 12 June 1924, as quoted in *ibid.*, 135n37. See also Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 43.

⁵⁷³ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 135n37. See also Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 43.

⁵⁷⁴ *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 64.

⁵⁷⁵ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 77.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁵⁷⁷ Emomali Rahmonov, "Rech Prezidenta Respubliki Tadzhiqistan E.Sh.Rahmonova na Torzhestvennom Zasedanii, Posviashionnom 15-letiiu Gosudarstvennoi Nezavisimosti Respubliki Tadzhiqistan, i Prazdnovaniuu Goda Ariiskoi Tsivilizatsii," *Informatsionnyi Biulleten' MID* 16(2006): 8-12.

⁵⁷⁸ "Vystupleniie Prezidenta Respubliki Tazhikistan Emomali Rahmonova na Vstreche s Predstaviteliami Intelligentsii Strany," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 20 March 2007.

primarily to eradicate the national distinctiveness of the Tajiks, and to then further deny the existence of the Tajik nation."⁵⁷⁹ Overall, the Tajik texts concerning national identity imply that a "genocide" took place both before and after national-territorial delimitation. This tragedy "will not be wiped from the national memory."⁵⁸⁰

3. National heroism versus national treason: comparing the founding-fathers and "cosmopolitan" Tajik leaders

Tajik scholars hail Makhsum and Shotemur as the main force behind the establishment of Tajikistan as a safe-haven for the Tajiks. According to them, without this safe-haven, the Tajiks would not have survived the "genocide" carried out by the Uzbeks. As far as "loss of territories" is concerned, Tajik specialists hold particular Tajik leaders from the 1920s responsible. These leaders, as a result of their cooperation with Uzbeks and ignorance of the surrounding assimilation, are now remembered as national traitors. Remembering both heroes and anti-heroes is equally important for national identity. President Rahmon believes that "[d]iscussing and studying the edifying fates of our ancestors as well as recognising our Motherland's history, no matter how bitter and tragic it is, makes it possible to learn lessons from the mistakes of the past."⁵⁸¹

Tajik historiography is full of narratives about how and why the "bad" Tajiks were as dangerous as the Uzbeks in causing national tragedy. The commonly made argument is that "the Tajik nation paid a high cost due to the connivance of Uzbekified [*uzbekofitsirovannye*] Tajiks". This high cost came in the form of loss of language, followed by loss of a chance to establish a state in culturally Tajik cities.⁵⁸² These "national traitors" were as dangerous as the pan-Turkist Uzbek elite.⁵⁸³ One Tajik scholar mentions two types of "traitors"; firstly, there are the "Uzbekified" Tajiks, those who identified as Uzbeks; secondly, there are the Tajik leaders who agreed with the arguments of the Uzbeks during NTD in the 1920s.⁵⁸⁴ The first group included Faizulla Khojaev, Abdurauf Fitrat, A. Rahimbaev, and S. Islamov. The second group included Chinor Imomov, A.Khojibaev, and M.Saidjanov. The first type of traitors were guilty of forgetting their roots:

These cosmopolitan "Tajiks" demonstrated themselves as passionate, merciless, consistent and conscious conductors of pan-Turkist policies regarding the Tajiks, the people, to which, unfortunately, they belonged.

⁵⁷⁹ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁵⁸⁰ Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 17.

⁵⁸¹ Rahmonov, "Vystupleniie Prezidenta Respubliki Tazhikistan Emomali Rahmonova na Vstreche s Predstaviteliimi Intelligentsii Strany."

⁵⁸² Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 27.

⁵⁸³ Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁵⁸⁴ Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 35.

Anthropologically they belonged to the Tajiks, but politically, they were ardent pan-Turkists, detached from their national roots. They had forgotten that they [...] belonged to the Tajik nation [...].⁵⁸⁵

The second-type of traitor was so heavily influenced by the Uzbeks that they could not understand they were causing a national tragedy. Their obedience to the Uzbeks, by some accounts, astonished even some of the Russian and Kazakh leaders during that period.⁵⁸⁶ Even Joseph Stalin, a ruthless Soviet leader, admitted that it was not the leadership in Moscow that failed to give the Tajiks a state in 1924, but was rather the Tajik national leaders themselves, who did not want to have a state for their nation.⁵⁸⁷ If they had wanted to do so, Uzbekified Tajiks and indecisive Tajik leaders could have changed the course of Tajik history, since they were the Tajiks who held positions of power:

Rahimbaev A. R., a Tajik, was the Chair of the Commission on National-Territorial Delimitation in Central Asia, F. Khojaev, originally Tajik, was the Chair of the Government of Bukhara People's Soviet Republic, A. Fitrat, originally Tajik, was the Minister of Education, Islamov S., a Turkicized (Uzbekified) Tajik, was The Chair of the Uzbek Commission on National-Territorial Delimitation, Ch. Imamov, A. Khodzhibaev, and M. Saidzhanov, originally Tajiks, were the members of Tajik Sub-Commission [on NTD].⁵⁸⁸

However, these individuals caused the Tajik nation to lose everything to the Uzbeks:

Tajiks themselves, traitorously, voluntarily, and obligingly offered the Uzbeks [what were] originally, historically and factually Tajik territories, cities, and provinces, thus, betraying the interests and priorities of their people. This "service" led to a national catastrophe. Tajiks, despite having all the necessary features – national, economic, political, and moral-legal bases – lost not only any real opportunity to establish an independent national Soviet republic, but also their original territories. They were then forcefully oppressed and assimilated [...].⁵⁸⁹

Such hatred toward those Tajiks is also emergent in official narratives. President Rahmon complained that along with the "chauvinists", i.e., the Uzbeks, "there were also some Tajik representatives, who wanted to cast doubt on the existence of their own ancient nation."⁵⁹⁰ It is noteworthy that the incumbent Head of State uses the same keywords that frequently appear in the arguments of Tajik historians:

Analysis of existing documents and sources shows that during that fateful historical period the then-governors and a handful of *mercenary* personalities, together with the *unconscious* and *cosmopolitan* people, crushed the

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., 16.

⁵⁸⁶ See Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 45.

⁵⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, 25.

⁵⁸⁸ Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 15.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁰ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

historical justice, harmed the national and socio-economic interests of Tajiks, and refused to acknowledge Tajiks and their outnumbering presence.⁵⁹¹

In contrast to these anti-heroes, Makhsum and Shotemur struggled to preserve statehood, territory, unity and identity. According to a Tajik historian, "[a]mong the Tajik politicians of that difficult period, only very few, such as N[usratullo] Makhsum, were not infected with the pan-Turkist disease."⁵⁹² "Such heroes as Shirinsho Shotemur and Nusratullo Makhsum fought for national unity and preservation of originally [Tajik] territories [so that] Tajiks would not lose their original territories and be destroyed by time or other forces."⁵⁹³ President Rahmon also hails these leaders for prioritising the interests of their nation. In his words, "[w]hat makes these political activists great is that they, due to their audacity, could, in this comparatively short historical period, use the opportunities presented by the first phase of the consolidation of the Soviet state for the interests of their own nation."⁵⁹⁴

According to Alimardonov, Makhsum had "a full understanding of the geopolitical situation in the region."⁵⁹⁵ He is credited for influencing Moscow's decision to present the Tajiks with the right to form an autonomous republic instead of the province, which had been earlier planned.⁵⁹⁶ His letter, addressed to Stalin and mentioned in the previous section of this dissertation, is viewed as the most significant effort in this regard. As the text of the letter shows, Makhsum was not only dissatisfied with the territories allocated to Tajiks, but also demanded that the Tajik territorial entity be given a status similar to that of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Tajik historians believe that even though his demands for an independent state were not met, the Tajiks were allowed to establish an autonomous republic instead of an autonomous province due to his activism. As Tajik observer believes, "Modern-day Tajikistan is a political heritage, which Nusratullo Makhsum left to the next generations, and it is the biggest asset of the Tajiks."⁵⁹⁷

As far as Shotemur is concerned, his services before the nation are not limited to the achievement of independence. Shotemur tried to accomplish "the consolidation of the independent state of Tajiks".⁵⁹⁸ He expended significant effort upon state-building after independence was achieved. For instance, according to Qurboni Alamshoev, Shotemur is remembered as the constructor of Dushanbe city, the capital of Tajikistan.⁵⁹⁹ Shotemur was the

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., emphases added

⁵⁹² Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁵⁹³ Shoakova, "Shirinsho Shotemur. Pervyi grazhdanin Tazhikistana."

⁵⁹⁴ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁵⁹⁵ Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁵⁹⁶ Masov, *Istoriia Topornogo Razdeleniia*, 51. Alimardonov, "Nusratullo Makhsum i Obrazovaniie Tazhikistana."

⁵⁹⁷ Abdullo, "On stroil nezavisimiy Tazhikistan."

⁵⁹⁸ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁵⁹⁹ See "Shirinsho Shotemur - Geroi Tazhikistana."

author of the constitution of the Tajik SSR of 1937.⁶⁰⁰ In President Rahmon's words, "[b]eing the Head of the Commission on the Creation and Adoption of the Constitution and State Emblem [of the Tajik SSR], Shirinsho Shotemur stood on the outset of the formation of the legislature of the Republic and adeptly participated in writing the [Constitution] of Republic of Tajikistan and other relevant documents."⁶⁰¹

He also tried to generate feelings of national pride among the Tajiks. As President Rahmon put it, "[t]his person, the fighter with a strong will, who was not afraid of pressures and threats from cosmopolites, or the internal and external enemies of the Tajik nation, courageously defended the interests of his people."⁶⁰² According to official narratives, Shotemur stood behind the public events organized in the 1930s that were aimed at the "propagation of the high ideals of national self-realization and distinctiveness, patriotism and the unprecedented heroism of our merited ancestors."⁶⁰³ He was also a defender of the rights of the Tajiks. As official discourses put it, in times when enemies prevented the Tajiks from having their own newspapers, magazines and textbooks, Shotemur and his brother-in-arms succeeded in "defending the historic right of the Tajiks to form a national state."⁶⁰⁴ The Tajik President further states that:

In that challenging and inauspicious atmosphere, Shirinsho Shotemur referred to the then-Soviet leadership with a letter titled "On the Cultural, Social and Economic Conditions of Tajiks." Though, initially, this patriotic move was ignored, eventually the Central Asian Bureau of the Party of Bolsheviks approved the reasonable opinions and thoughts expressed in Shirinsho Shotemur's letter. In that difficult and complicated period, when nationalistic movements were gaining momentum in all spheres of life, openly and courageously raising his voice for the interest of Tajik nation was, in itself, an act of heroism performed by Shirinsho Shotemur.⁶⁰⁵

Both Makhsum and Shotemur became victims of the Stalinist purge during the late 1930s. As Tajik historians believe, in the early 1930s both of them started to complain about the increasingly repressive role of Soviet security services. For instance, Makhsum has reportedly accused security and police services of losing their ties with the working class and peasants and of forgetting about their primary duties.⁶⁰⁶ Some of his policies did not fit into the class-struggle principles of communist ideology; he refused to nationalize the properties and wealth of rich peasants, if he believed that they had earned that wealth via their own labour, and did not exploit the poor.⁶⁰⁷ Moreover, his application to free the prisoners in Khujand angered

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid.; Shoakova, "Shirinsho Shotemur. Pervyi grazhdanin Tadjikistana."

⁶⁰¹ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁶⁰² Ibid.

⁶⁰³ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁶ Masov and Sultanov, "Nustarullo Makhsum."

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 24.

“chauvinists who wore the mask of communists.”⁶⁰⁸ Some Tajik historians argue that Makhsum was removed from his post upon the request of the Uzbek CP.⁶⁰⁹

As far as Shotemur is concerned, he was also of a negative opinion about the politicization and securitization of agriculture in the republic. As Alamshoev puts it, “Shotemur was against the increasingly dominant role of the party and the loss of the Soviets’ real role at grass-roots level, [and] that the uniformed services started to gain control over the government.”⁶¹⁰ In early September of 1937, the Party, together with the NKVD, started “cleaning” the government in Tajikistan. Along with Makhsum (who was in Moscow) and Shotemur, a dozen of other Tajik leaders were arrested in September 1937. A newspaper article by V. Verkhovskii titled “The Enemies of the Tajik Nation” published by *Pravda* on 10 September 1937 was devoted to them. A. Andreev, the Secretary of the CC of the CP of the USSR, who travelled to Tajikistan upon Stalin’s instruction, in his telegram to the latter, dated October 1937, wrote that “[a]pparently, the enemies worked here very thoroughly and felt themselves quite on the loose”.⁶¹¹ Another newspaper article published in *Tojikistoni Surkh* accused Makhsum, among others, for aiming to build a “Greater Tajikistan” by taking away several provinces of Uzbekistan.⁶¹² A resolution of the CC of the Tajik CP, made on 4 October 1937, described the writers of these articles as “enemies of the Tajik nation – bourgeois nationalists, rightist-Trotskyists” and even accused them of cooperating with the foreign intelligence services.⁶¹³ Makhsum and Shotemur were sentenced to death in October 1937.

4. Conclusion

In contemporary, official discourses of nationhood, Makhsum and Shotemur are “heroes”, whereas many other Tajik leaders are “villains”. The heroes halted the further assimilation of the Tajiks into Uzbekistan and ended the territorial occupation of Tajik territory by the Uzbeks. Conversely, the “villains” were infected by “pan-Uzbekism”. The youth of Tajikistan are encouraged to learn from the “heroes” and to hate the “villains.” President Rahmon is “absolutely confident” that these heroes “will remain in the hearts of the people for

⁶⁰⁸ Abdunazar Mahmudov and Sulaimon Zavqi, “Sarnavisht: Ba iftikhori 125-solagii Nusratullo Makhsum,” *Sadoi Mardum* 2006.

⁶⁰⁹ R. Abulhaev, H.Do'stov, and A. Ghafurov, “Nusratullo Makhsum yake az poiaguzoroni davlati milli bud,” *Jumhuriyat*, 1 November 2007. However, according to the Soviet historians, it was the Communist Party of Russia that requested his resignation. See Tumanov, “Velikaia Oktiabrskaiia Sotsialisticheskaia Revoliutsiia i bor'ba za ustanovleniie i uprocheniie sovetsoi vlasti v Tadzhiikistane,” 66-67.

⁶¹⁰ Alamshoev, “Shirinsho Shotemur: Obshchestvenno-politicheskii i gosudarstvennyi deiatel',” 24.

⁶¹¹ Nikita Petrov, “Kak unichtozhali vragov naroda v Tadzhiikistane,” ed. Kurbon Alamshoev (Dushanbe: Asia-Plus, 2012).

⁶¹² See Alamshoev, “Shohtemur - nomusi millat,” 284.

⁶¹³ Petrov, “Kak unichtozhali vragov naroda v Tadzhiikistane.”

centuries".⁶¹⁴ For the people of Tajikistan, Shotemur represents "the highest embodiment of selflessness and an edifying creed of patriotism and love for the nation."⁶¹⁵ As far as N. Makhsum is concerned, Rahmon says, "let his name and valiant struggle for the interests of people serve as a bright example for the future generation."⁶¹⁶

President Rahmon also believes that "[i]n the current conditions of our country, each citizen, who thinks himself a patriot, following the example of the mentioned activists, should make the interests of state and nation a priority and struggle for the prosperity of Tajikistan, so that his descendants may be proud of his deeds."⁶¹⁷ What this means is that the current generation of Tajiks are expected to respect their founding fathers, learn from them, serve for interests of the state they have built, and defend the Tajik nation from Uzbek threat. President Rahmon believes that people like N. Makhsum and Sh. Shotemur dreamt of "sovereignty, territorial unity, obeisance to a national language, state emblems, respect to national culture and high values of world civilization," and that there is good reason to be proud that these dreams are coming true.⁶¹⁸

Along with the discursive construction of the images of Sh. Shotemur and N. Makhsum as the prototypes of an acceptable "Tajikness" in contrast to the unacceptable, "cosmopolitan" and pro-Uzbek Tajikness, the Tajik state has been established as "sacred." Furthermore, Tajikistan is "a symbol of the motherland of suffered generations of Tajiks".⁶¹⁹ Letting further "suffering" of the Tajiks occur is unacceptable. Therefore, preventing the reoccurrence of the "national tragedy" of the Tajiks "should be the foundation of all activities of the national state, become the flesh and blood [sic] of the political line of the state in the mobilization of the real potential and opportunities of the nation [...]."⁶²⁰

As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6, the discursive construction of these "heroes" as "model Tajiks," who fought against the Uzbeks, places the politics of national identity and ongoing, uneasy relations with Uzbekistan in one context. Knowing the "history of national tragedy" and the identities of the "villains" provides us with an "explanatory tool". This tool is useful for interpreting the current, uneasy relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It "shows" that Uzbekistan is continuing to commit "atrocities" against the Tajiks. In this light,

⁶¹⁴ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

⁶¹⁶ Emomali Rahmonov, "Rech Prezidenta Respubliki Tazhikistan Emomali Rahmonova na Prazdnovanii Dnia Natsional'nogo ledinstva," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 27 June 2006.

⁶¹⁷ Emomali Rahmonov, "Rech Prezidenta Respubliki Tazhikistan Emomali Rahmonova na Prazdnovanii Dnia Natsional'nogo ledinstva," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 27 June 2006

⁶¹⁸ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

⁶¹⁹ Sharipov, *Stanovleniie Tazhikskoi gosudarstvennosti*, 39.: 39

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 23-24.: 23-4

President Rahmon, as the only currently living national hero, appears to be carrying on the missions of Shotemur and Makhsum and defending Tajikistan against Uzbekistan. The official narratives try to emphasize the link between Rahmon and the above-mentioned national heroes.

Chapter 4. The Linguistic Foundations of Tajik National Identity and the Role of Sadriddin Aini

1. Aini's activities in the Emirate of Bukhara in the 1910s-20s and his marginalization from politics

1.1. Aini as a progressive mullah and gradual reformist

Sadriddin Aini was at the forefront of the reformist movement in Bukhara in the 1910s. His main concern was the reform of education system, rather than the political system; Aini believed that the former would inevitably lead to the latter. One of Aini's first innovations was the establishment of so-called "new method" schools in cooperation with Abdulvohid Munzim in the late 1900s.⁶²¹ These schools relied on a different approach to education than traditional madrasahs. In 1910, Aini joined a clandestine society called *Tarbiiai Atfol* (Education of the Children) established by the Young Bukharans. The Young Bukharans found his gradualist approach to reforms of state and society in Bukhara through education outdated. It is often overlooked that Aini was against any revolutionary change in society. However, in the latter stages of his life he represented himself as pro-revolutionary, and national identity discourses in Tajikistan recognize him as such. His disbelief in violent methods of political struggles is among the many reasons why Aini was sidelined from politics in Bukhara. His clash with the younger generation of Jadids later pushed him towards becoming a pro-Tajik activist.

In April 1917, the Emir of Bukhara issued a decree promising political reform. Most Jadids of Bukhara gathered in one household to discuss how to respond to the decree. The left wing of the Jadid movement, led by Faizulla Khojaev, which had long advocated for this change, decided to organize a mass demonstration on this occasion. Their aim was to bring the proposed political reform to the attention of the masses.⁶²² Also, they wanted to test the prospects of a revolution against the rule of the Emir.⁶²³ Sadriddin Aini, as he points out in his biography, was skeptical about the Emir's pro-reforms decree, so he was against any demonstrations.⁶²⁴ He was sure that the Emir was bluffing and planning to use any demonstrations to arrest the opposition.⁶²⁵ The monarch's expectation was to organize the clash of the reformists and the conservative religious

⁶²¹ Shizuo Shimada and Sharifa Tosheva, eds., *Kirish, Sadr al-Din Aini, Bukhara Inqilabi Ta'rikhi* (Tokyo: Department of Islamic Area Studies, Center for Evolving Humanities, The University of Tokyo, 2010).

⁶²² F. Khodzhaev, "Bukhoro inqilobining tarikhiga materiallar," in *Faizulla Kho'zhaevning haioti va faoliyati haqida yangi mulohazalar*, ed. A. Asqarov, et al. (Tashkent: Fan, 1997), 88.

⁶²³ Ibid.

⁶²⁴ S. Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai Kholi Khudam [My Concise Autobiography]* (Stalinobod: Nashriioti Davlatii Tozhikiston, 1958), 81.

⁶²⁵ S. Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai Kholi Khudam [My Concise Autobiography]* (Stalinobod: Nashriioti Davlatii Tozhikiston, 1958), 81

leadership, which was very influential among the population.⁶²⁶ As his memories show, Aini felt an apathy toward newly emerging political activism. He had never been in the meeting of the CC of Young Bukharans since then, while other gradualist-reformists left the organization at a later stage. That meeting marked the beginning of the radicalization of the reformist movement in Bukhara and the marginalization of proponents of progressive reform.

Aini personally suffered from the decision of the Young Bukharans to go ahead with the demonstrations. As Aini predicted, the Emir cracked down on the demonstration, as a result of which, almost all of the leaders of the Jadids fled Bukhara. Aini was captured and punished with 75 lashes. Aini wrote later that he almost died from the punishment. The Russian armed forces located in Kagan interfered and saved him, along with other prisoners. After two months of treatment in Kagan City, Aini permanently moved to Samarkand.

Another event that distanced Aini from the Jadids of Bukhara was a failed coup by The Young Bukharans, in cooperation with the armed forces of Turkestan, which was led by Fedor Kolesov in March 1918.⁶²⁷ As a result of this event, known as the Kolesov campaign, the reformists of Bukhara were either killed by the Emir or forced to flee from Bukhara. In his book, *Bukhoro Inqilobining Ta'rikhi*, Aini wrote that before "the Kolesov event" he had told one of the Young Bukharans that he did not "advise an attack without thorough preparation."⁶²⁸ In his *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta'rikhi* and *Mukhtasari Tarzhimani Kholi Khudam*, Aini implies that Kolesov's decision to use military force against the Emir was a miscalculation and immature, and that The Young Bukharans made a mistake by encouraging Kolesov to confront the Emir:

[One of the leaders of the Jadids of Bukhara]⁶²⁹, on the one hand, hid the Emir's level of readiness from the Soviet government of Turkestan, and on the other hand, convinced Kolesov, the Chair of The Soviet commissars of Turkestan, that he had "30 thousand armed men undercover", and that the Emir would surrender if Kolesov made a slight effort.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁶ S. Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai Kholi Khudam [My Concise Autobiography]* (Stalinobod: Nashriioti Davlatii Tozhikiston, 1958), 81

⁶²⁷ For a detailed account of the event, see Seymour Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 207-10., and Adeeb Khalid, "Society and Politics in Bukhara, 1868-1920," *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 3-4 (2000): 389-90.

⁶²⁸ As quoted in Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xix.

⁶²⁹ By "one of the leaders of Jadids of Bukhara" Aini meant Faizulla Khojaev. Because regarding this "leader" Aini also noted that he "used to have a karakul shop in Moscow". It is known that family of Khojaev has made a fortune due to the trade of karakul.

⁶³⁰ Sadridin Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam* (Stalinobod: Nashriioti Davlatii Tozhikiston, 1958), 101.

Aini believed that it was too early to be thinking about a revolution overthrowing the Emir.⁶³¹ The miscalculation and failure of the Jadids, once more, had personal implications for Aini, who lost his brother during this failed campaign:

As a result of this provocative move, people in Bukhara and its provinces, who were suspected of being Bolsheviks, revolutionaries, or who were maligned as being linked to these groups, were killed by the Emir in a terrible manner. My brother Sirojiddin was also captured [by Emir] in my uncle's village, where he came to hide, and was taken to jail [*obkhona*] where I have also been. He was killed there after 15 days of painful tortures.⁶³²

Aini openly blamed Faizulla Khojaev, one of the leaders of the Young Bukharan movement, for the failure:

Faizullakhoja is the son of late Ubaydullakhoja. Although he was young (approximately 20 years old) he had developed excellent skills in trade. Risking his wealth and life, he always stood at the frontline of Bukhara's revolutionary and reformist movement. Unfortunately, due to his adolescence and inexperience, he has made big mistakes and caused the total liquidation and dissemination [of the Jadid movement]. If he learns from these tragedies and redirects his activities onto the actual path of wisdom and logic, he can expect to achieve success, otherwise, he will cause a new tragedy every day.⁶³³

This excerpt is available in the original manuscript of *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta'rikhi*, but was removed from the published versions of the book.⁶³⁴ For his personal security, Aini moved from Samarkand to Tashkent in April-October 1918, as the Emir was encouraged by the victory and increased his influence in the eastern parts of Turkestan.⁶³⁵ Aini's negative attitude toward the Jadids of Bukhara never improved. For Aini, they were merely self-proclaimed "revolutionaries of Bukhara."⁶³⁶

1.2. Aini's ideological drifts in the late 1910s and early 1920s

Aini welcomed the Russian revolution of 1918 with a poem called "Marshi Hurriyat" (The March of Freedom), which is claimed to be written in the motif of the French Marseillaise:

Hey, the oppressed, the enslaved,
It is high time for our freedom!
I have good news for you, comrades,
It is the dawn of joy all around the world.
How long will we suffer?
Be happy from now on!

⁶³¹ In his *Bukhoro Inqilobining Ta'rikhi*, Aini devoted four chapters to the analysis of the Kolesov event, however, they can be found on the original manuscript only as they were omitted from the 1926 and following publications of the book.

⁶³² Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 101-02.

⁶³³ As quoted in Uzbek language in Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xvi.

⁶³⁴ See *ibid.*, xv-xvi.

⁶³⁵ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 102.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, 104.

Enough of the injustice, enough of the oppression,
Hey, justice, why don't you rule the world?
Revenge, revenge, my comrades,
Let the world be taken over by
Independence, justice, and equality!
(Laborer, peasant, shoulder by shoulder)

[Ĕĩ sitamdidagon, ĕĩ asiron,
Vaqtĩ ozodii mo rasid!
Muzhdagonĩ dihed, ĕĩ faqiron,
Dar jaħon subħi shodĩ damid,
To ba kaĩ ghussa khurdan ba hasrat,
Ba'd az in shodmonĩ namo!
Bas jafo, bas sitam, ĕĩ adolat,
Dar jaħon ĥukmronĩ namo!
Intiqom, intiqom, ĕĩ rafiqon,
Ĕĩ jafodidagon, ĕĩ shafiqon!
Ba'd az in dar jaħon ĥukmron bod
Ĥurriat, adolat, musovot!
(Ranjbar, barzgar, botifoq)]⁶³⁷

Nevertheless, as is shown above, Aini was sure that organizing a similar revolution in Bukhara was impossible. As a former madrasah student and teacher in Bukhara city, Aini was aware of the conservative nature of society in Bukhara. Based on an analysis of Aini's *Ta'rikhi Inqilobi Fikri dar Bukhoro*, a manuscript which was discovered and published by his son, Kamoliddin Aini, in 2003 in Tehran, Shimada and Tosheva argue that "in September 1920 a revolution took place in Bukhara that was not desired by Aini as it was premature and externally supported."⁶³⁸ In the book, which was originally written in 1918, Aini reportedly argued for the importance of education and freedom of press in shaping a free society that can gradually pressure the government regarding political reforms.⁶³⁹

Aini was critical about the absoluteness of the Emir's rule and the moral deterioration of the *ulema* in Bukhara. However, he never advocated the overthrowing of the monarch. In his *Bukhoro Inqilobining Ta'rikhi*, Aini provided rather nostalgic accounts of the periods in the history of Bukhara when the *ulema* were in a position to keep the royal family accountable.⁶⁴⁰ He believed that the coalition of Young Bukharans and the Communists were not forces that could take over the task of checking and balancing the power of the Emir. The coalition, according to him, was dysfunctional due to fundamental differences between the parties:

In Tashkent and Samarkand, along with the Jadid entities that used to call themselves "the revolutionaries of Bukhara," an organization of the communists of Bukhara was established. The members of the Communist

⁶³⁷ Isfandiĕri Odina, "Ainĩ va sabki nav dar she"ri forsĩ," *BBC Persian*, 15 April 2009. See also A. Rozenfel'd, "Sadriiddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia"," in *Vospominaniia*, ed. Sadriiddin Aini (Moscow and Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960), 961.

⁶³⁸ Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xv.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, xvi.

organization of Bukhara were the workers and the former soldiers. However, the leaders of the “Revolutionaries of Bukhara” were the rich and small traders of Bukhara, and some of the members were the sons of mullahs (*mullozodagon*) and religious clerics (*makhдум*).⁶⁴¹

Furthermore, the socio-political situation during the civil war in Turkestan in 1918 that followed the Russian revolution was deteriorating. The nationalities policy of the Communists of Turkestan was not appealing to Aini. It is well-known that after leaving Bukhara, Sadriddin Aini started to identify himself and the people around him (for instance, his readers) as “Turkestanis.”⁶⁴² The idea of forging the “Turkestani” identity, which he and some other intellectuals preferred, was not on the agenda of the Communists of Turkestan. The government of Turkestan ASSR rather sought to promote ethnic division of the population. For them, the majority of the population of Turkestan were Turks/Uzbeks, whereas Tajiks, Afghans, and Iranians were all known as Persians (*Fors*); such a division was institutionalized in May 1919, when the CP of Turkestan ASSR established the so-called “Persian Section” within the Commissariat for National Affairs.⁶⁴³ At that time, Aini used to work for both Tajik and Uzbek newspapers in Samarkand (i.e., *Shu’lai Inqilob* and *Mehnatkashlar Tovushi*).⁶⁴⁴ At that stage, he would not want to see similar socio-political issues happen in Bukhara.

Instead of communism, Aini probed an alternative ideology that sought to keep Turkestan undivided and even independent from Russia. During the political turmoil in Turkestan, the clandestine movements that sought independence mushroomed. For a short time, Aini himself was seriously dragged into an anti-communist and nationalist movement. At that time he wrote poems calling for the people of Turan⁶⁴⁵ to wake up. For instance, on 1 October 1919 the *Mehnatkashlar Tovushi* newspaper published Aini’s poem, titled “Turon marshi” [The March of Turan]:

Wake up! The people of Turan, wake up!
The whole world is in upheaval!
It is a new era,
Different epoch, different age!
Don’t sleep, come on, enjoy the world!
Will you oversleep this, you benighted, dullard?

[U’ighon! Turon eli, u’ighon!
Tulqinlandi butun jahon!
Boshqalashdi butun davron,
Boshqa davron, boshqa zamon!
Ukhlama, tur, sa’ira jahon!

⁶⁴¹ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 104.

⁶⁴² Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, 24.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶⁴⁴ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 103.

⁶⁴⁵ The term was used in the Central Asian and Persian literature as a reference to the Central Asian region.

It is interesting to note that the revolution had already happened when this poem was written. Furthermore, the theme of the poem is about the awakening of the people of Turan, rather than about poor and oppressed people. So, the theme of the poem might be about national revival, rather than a revolt.

In 1920, Aini was involved in a group involved with works of nationalist movements in Turkestan. The group was led by Bashkir Ahmed Zaki Validi Togan and sought to establish an independent, federated republic in Central Asia. Furthermore, the group had close ties with the Basmachi leaders. In his memoirs, Togan noted that the Jadids of Bukhara and Turkestan came together in the late 1910s to secretly work on a project concerning the future government of Turkestan.⁶⁴⁷ The proposed government was planned to be run by members of three parties such as *Erk*, *Tarakki Parvarlar*, and *Alash Orda*. A disagreement between the Bukharans and Turkestanis surfaced while selecting the leader of the central governing body of the proposed government, which Validi called the President of the Joint Committee. The group could not choose between one of two candidates for the presidency, namely Sadriddin Aini, representing the Jadids of Bukhara, and Munavvar Qori, a Jadid from Tashkent.

In Togan's words, "the primary reason was a sort of competition between the Bukharans and the Taskentians, as well as a distrust shown by the Bukharans and Taskentians toward the Kazaks [sic]."⁶⁴⁸ The Bukharans "did not even wish to hear" about the candidacy of the Tashkentians. At the same time, Aini was not acceptable to Tashkent; "those who supported him were very few in number."⁶⁴⁹ Moreover, if selected, Aini refused to go underground no matter what happened to the organization. Eventually, after the official representative of the government of Turkey, who was present at the meeting, interfered and "spoke with the competing Uzbek [sic] and Tajik representatives," the issue was resolved and Togan was selected as President.⁶⁵⁰ There is no evidence about the participation of Sadriddin Aini in any other congresses following the first one. However, the fact that Aini was among the leaders of a national movement, which aimed to establish an independent Federative Republic of Turkistan, means that he had seriously

⁶⁴⁶ Ozod Sharafidinov, "20-30 yillarda zhadid adabiyoti," *e-adabiyot.uz*, 1996.

⁶⁴⁷ Zeki Velidi Togan, *Memoirs: National Existence and Cultural Struggle of Turkistan and Other Muslim Eastern Turks*, trans. Hasan Paksoy (North Charleston, SC: Create Space, 2012), 294.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.* Turkistan National Union was established as a result. In the sixth congress of the Turkistan National Union, that took place in Samarkand the flag of Turkestan was worked out. *Ibid.*, 300. Eventually, the organization started to collapse as Bukharans led by Khojaev chose to side with the communists.

considered adopting a “Turkestani” identity at some point in his life. His Tajik identity emerged much later.

With the consolidation of power in the hands of the Bolsheviks in Turkestan, the people within Aini’s circle eventually chose to go one of the three ways. They either joined the Basmachis to struggle against the communists openly, went into exile to continue political opposition from abroad, or aligned with the communists to establish new states in the region. Aini chose none of these paths. He instead distanced himself from political affairs and for some time found refuge in literature, linguistic studies, journalism and teaching.

1.3. The rise of the former Jadids to power and the marginalization of Aini from politics

After the revolution in September 1920 in Bukhara and the collapse of the monarchy, the government of the newly established Bukhara PSR was mostly comprised of leftist Young Bukharans, who were allied with the communists. It was unrealistic to expect Aini to be involved with the government, since he had split apart from the leftists earlier. Aini himself gave a different explanation for his absence from the political scene of Bukhara; “I did not want to participate in the work of the government of Bukhara PSR directly, because there were some suspicious people among its leadership.”⁶⁵¹ According to Aini’s explanation, the government of Bukhara PSR released the man who killed Aini’s brother even though he had been sentenced to death and then had this sentence altered to 10 years of imprisonment. When the killer, who is also believed to be a Basmachi, was seen in a teahouse (*choikhona*) and entering the house of “the brother of one of the government officials of Bukhara,” Aini talked to Muinjon Aminov, the Chairman of the CEC of Bukhara PSR, about this case. The latter warned Aini that he might be charged for defamation.⁶⁵² Aini claimed that this was the reason why he was not a government official in Bukhara:

Of course in these circumstances, I could not stay in Bukhara, and I could feel it in the days of the formation of the Bukhara Socialist People’s Republic. Therefore, by getting a house in Samarkand, I left all the difficulties of that time there [sic], and did not go to Bukhara to become a “commissar.”⁶⁵³

The contacts of the leadership of Bukhara with the Basmachi movement cannot be the reason for Aini’s alienation⁶⁵⁴ because Aini himself had a record of indirect contact with the Basmachis.

⁶⁵¹ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 105.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 108.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁴ The government of Bukhara was indeed in good relations with the Basmachi leaders and even signed a secret treaty on August 21, 1921, the copy of which is reportedly kept in the archive of the President’s Office of

For instance, Aini was involved in the work of the Turkestan National Union⁶⁵⁵ and was even viewed as a candidate for the chairmanship of the organization. It is noteworthy that the Union had well-established ties with the Basmachis.⁶⁵⁶ Moreover, though Aini was never been a part of the central government of Bukhara, for five years he worked in official government positions in the newly established state; in 1921-23 he was a consultant to the Consulate of Bukhara in Samarkand,⁶⁵⁷ and in 1924-1925 he was the head of the Samarkand branch of the *Bukhgostorg*.⁶⁵⁸ So, contrary to his claims that he did not want to have any dealings with the “suspicious” government of Bukhara, Aini readily worked for that government. However, apparently, a diplomatic-trade representative position away from the capital was all that he could get in these political circumstances. Aini had poor relations with Faizulla Khojaev, Usman Khojaev and Abdurauf Fitrat due to the disagreements that had occurred between them in the past. Aini had never approved of anything these young Jadids did:

After the February Revolution [people] like Fitrat and Usmonkho'ja came to the top of the reformist movement [in Bukhara]. After their return from studying in Turkey, they used to promote pan-Turkism. They used to converse in the Ottoman Turkish language, not only among themselves but also with the people of Bukhara city, who did not know [even] the Uzbek language better than them.⁶⁵⁹

These issues with regard to personal relations and the mismatch of positions affected Aini's scholarly and literary activities, too. Within 1920-1922 Aini had made three failed attempts to publish historical and literary works devoted to socio-political events in Bukhara, with the State Publishing House of Bukhara PSR. In 1920, his *Bukhoro Jallodlari* was accepted for publication but was reported “lost” when the author demanded the unpublished manuscript back.⁶⁶⁰ Similarly, in 1921, the publishing house accepted Aini's *Bukhoro inqilobi ta'rikhiga oid materiallar*, but it never went to press.⁶⁶¹ *Ta'rikhi amironi manghitiia Bukhoro* had a similar fate in 1922, though later the same publishing house helped Aini to get his work published in Tashkent, but not in Bukhara.⁶⁶²

The analyses of the reformist movement in Bukhara that Aini had included in these works was not favoured by the political establishment of Bukhara PSR. For instance, one of the books,

Uzbekistan. For more information, see K. Razhabov, "Faizulla Kho'zhaev va millii istiqlool harakati," in *Faizulla Kho'zhaevning haioti va faoliyati haqida yangi mulohazalar*, ed. A. Asqarov, et al. (Tashkent: Fan, 1997), 49-50.

⁶⁵⁵ For more information, see footnote 30.

⁶⁵⁶ Togan, *Memoirs: National Existence and Cultural Struggle of Turkistan and Other Muslim Eastern Turks*, 295.

⁶⁵⁷ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 109.

⁶⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 110. *Bukhgostrog*, an abbreviation of *Bukharskaia Gosudarstvennaia Torgovlia* (Bukhara State Trade), was a state entity that had a monopoly to oversee the external trade operations of Bukhara.

⁶⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 80.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁶⁶¹ It was later published in Moscow in 1926 by a different publisher. See *ibid.*

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, 109-10.

Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta'rikhi, was written upon the request of the Minister of Education of Bukhara PSR Yo'ldosh Po'latov.⁶⁶³ However, reportedly, Faizulla Khojaev blocked the publication of the book in Bukhara.⁶⁶⁴ As Shimada and Tosheva observed, Aini omitted Khojaev every time he analysed the activities of Young Bukharans.⁶⁶⁵ These scholars believe that, unhappy with Aini's account of events, Faizulla Khojaev wrote his own version of the history of the revolutionary and reformist movements in Bukhara, in which he assessed Aini's opinions as "incorrect."⁶⁶⁶ For example, the very second sentence in Faizulla Khojaev's *Bukhoro Inqilobining Tarikhiga Materiallar* mentioned Aini's book.⁶⁶⁷ Khojaev acknowledged Aini as "one of the leaders and founders" of the Jadid movement and noted that his book "included valuable materials that depicted some periods of the Jadid movement."⁶⁶⁸ However, Khojaev blamed Aini for attempting to "show Jadidism as a phenomenon that was firmly linked to and indivisible from Bolshevism."⁶⁶⁹ Moreover, Khojaev criticized Aini's book for failing to cover the "internal dynamics within Jadidism" as well as mistakenly mixing Young Bukharans and Jadids.⁶⁷⁰ Thus, Khojaev provided an account of the political struggle in the Emirate that was an alternative to Aini's version.

When the Bukhara PSR was dissolved, and the Uzbek SSR was established, the political elite of Bukhara moved to support the government of Uzbekistan en masse. However, Aini was kept at a distance. He was reappointed to the position he had previously occupied, i.e., the Director of the Branch of the *Bukhgostorg* in Samarkand.⁶⁷¹ With the former Young Bukharans on top of the government, there was no hope for Aini to be in politics or publish his works uncensored. Therefore, he completely distanced himself from the government of Uzbekistan. As Aini put it, "after the national territorial delimitation in Central Asia, *Bukhgostorg* in Samarkand was transferred to Uzbekistan, and I was again appointed as the director of it. However, I wrote a resignation letter to the *Obkom*⁶⁷² and left this job to completely devote myself to the service of the literature."⁶⁷³

When the state publishing house of Tajik ASSR, *Tajikgosizdat*, was established in Samarkand in 1925, Aini started to work there. This job helped Aini to establish contacts within the emerging

⁶⁶³ For Aini's own account on this, see "Zhavobi man," in *Kulliot*, ed. Sadriddin Aini (Dushanbe: Nashrioti Davlati Tozhikiston, 1963).

⁶⁶⁴ Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xiv.

⁶⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁷ Aini's *Bukhoro Inqilobining Ta'rikhi*, which was not published in Bukhara, was eventually published in Moscow in 1926. Khojaev refers to that publication.

⁶⁶⁸ Khodzhaev, "Bukhoro inqilobining tarikhiga materiallar," 61.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁶⁷¹ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 110-11.

⁶⁷² *Obkom*, an abbreviation for *Oblastnoi Komitet*, was a regional committee of the national communist party.

⁶⁷³ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 110-11.

Tajik political elite. In his memoirs, Aini writes that “in spring of 1925 after the establishment of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Republic, I signed a contract with its government, started writing *Namunai Adabiioti Tojik* and finished it the same year.”⁶⁷⁴ As it will be discussed below, this work became Aini’s biggest contribution to the defence of the Tajik side’s position in the debates with Uzbek officials and nationalists concerning Tajik identity and territoriality. This made Tajik scholars believe that the establishment of a separate Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic instead of the establishment of autonomy within Uzbekistan in 1929 was “Aini’s lifetime dream.”⁶⁷⁵

In 1929, when Tajikistan became independent of Uzbekistan, Aini was elected a member of the CEC of the Tajik SSR. A few years later, Aini received the title of *Honoured Scientist of Tajikistan*. He also worked as a member of the local legislative assembly (*Soviet*) in Dushanbe city. Eventually he moved from Samarkand to Dushanbe and was appointed as Head of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan in 1951.⁶⁷⁶ He emerged as the icon of the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic. As some Tajik writers used to argue, “Tajikistan is known as the ‘country of Aini’ abroad, [especially] in Asian and African countries.”⁶⁷⁷

2. Aini as a defender of the Tajik language and identity

2.1. The marginalization of the Tajik language/identity in Uzbekistan and Aini’s reaction

The debates of Uzbek and Tajik nationalists about language and identity have been one of the most important factors in the formation of the “self” and “other” dichotomy in Tajik-Uzbek relations. The attack on Tajik language by Uzbek nationalists has been going on since early 1920s. For instance, an article in the *Turkestan* newspaper in 1920 stated that “wanting to use the Tajik language is only moving further away from the modern world, using a language which has become rare and superfluous. It is vital that Tajiks revert immediately to the Uzbek language and stop using the specific Tajik language, for the Socialist movement has settled its fate.”⁶⁷⁸ Another often-quoted excerpt of an article published in 1924 argued that “any inclination to use this language [Tajik] indicates a desire to distance one’s self from life, because life and the flow of history are against it. Secondly, accepting the Tajik language is to accept, not a useful, but a useless and superfluous language.”⁶⁷⁹

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁵ Iusuf Akobirov and Shavkat Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1968), 80.

⁶⁷⁶ Ghafurov appointed Aini to this post. See Salimi Aibuzod, *Tajikon dar qarni bistum: sad rangi sad sol* (Prague: Post Scriptum Imprimatur, 2002), 183.

⁶⁷⁷ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 140.

⁶⁷⁸ As quoted in Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, 18.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

In the second half of the 1920s, the rebuttals and counter-attacks started to sound from the Tajik side, too. Aini had been part of this debate from the Tajik camp. One of the reasons Aini is remembered in Tajikistan is due to his weighty contribution to this debate. The importance of a national language in the formation of the “self” is widely accepted. Language “must be treated as part of a cultural ensemble that serves to create intimacy and communion between members of a population, as well as a sense of difference from those outside.”⁶⁸⁰ Along with boosting national cohesion, language also plays a role in “othering”. In other words, “[a] common vernacular [...] establishes effective boundaries between ‘ingroups’ and ‘outgroups’.”⁶⁸¹ Thus, language is an “ethnic marker.”⁶⁸² Aini played a significant role in the “demarcation” of the Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” through his contributions to debates on language and identity.

Aini was bilingual and used the Uzbek language comfortably. For instance, in November 1920, in a meeting in Bukhara that was chaired by Kuibyshev, Aini gave a lengthy comment in the “Turkic” language about the foreign trade and economic situation in Bukhara.⁶⁸³ He wrote his *Bukhoro Jallodlarining O‘z Aro Musohabalari* (1922) and *Qiz bola yohud Kholida* (1924) in the Uzbek language.⁶⁸⁴ However, when the local press in Uzbekistan became an arena for fierce debate between Tajik and Uzbek nationalists on issues of national language, identity, territoriality, and history, Aini stood in the defence of the Tajik language. Presumably, he was not ready to choose between the languages, because he continued to create in the Uzbek language in the late 1920s and early 1930s. For example, his essay, *Qulbobo yoki ikki ozod* (1928), as well as its novel version *Qullar* (1934), were both written in Uzbek.⁶⁸⁵ Aini himself has translated all his works written in the Tajik language into Uzbek, except for two – *Dokhunda* and *Mukhtasari tarjimai kholi khudam*.⁶⁸⁶ Nevertheless, discussions in the press about language and identity became increasingly offensive and chauvinistic, and Aini was dragged into them. In 1928 Abduqodir Muhiddinov wrote the following passage:

Uzbeks, Kyrgyzs, Kazakhs, Turkmen, and other ethnic groups, which belong to the Mongol race, but are viewed nowadays as separate nations, are indeed the branches of one nation. The Tajik-speaker people of Bukhara are, in fact, also Turks, who under the influence of the literature and culture of Iran, have

⁶⁸⁰ Anthony Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 83.

⁶⁸¹ Schmid, *The Politics of Language: Conflict, Identity, and Cultural Pluralism in Comparative Perspective*, 9.

⁶⁸² Tomasz Kamusella, *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 10.

⁶⁸³ For the Tajik translation of the archival evidence of this, see Zh. Ikromi, "Huzhzhati Nav dar borai Ustod Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1966), 138.

⁶⁸⁴ Zh. Azizqulov, "Merosi Adabii S.Aini va intishori on," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1963), 201.

⁶⁸⁵ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 78.

⁶⁸⁶ Azizqulov, "Merosi Adabii S.Aini va intishori on," 201.

lost their own language and nationality. We need to make them Turks again, and create one big Turkic nation, and establish one great Turkic state.⁶⁸⁷

In response to this an article by Abbas Aliev stated that:

The government of the Emirate [of Bukhara] knew well that the majority of the population of the country, especially of Bukhara city, were Tajiks. The Manghit Emirs knew that the Persians [*pors'ho*] had long fought against the Turks and Arabs and shed their blood in defence of the independence of their languages and literature. Therefore, the government of Emir would use the local language – the Tajik language – so that the local population did not alienate and attack them; the government adopted Tajik as a state language in order to establish good ties with the people.⁶⁸⁸

Aini took part in these debates. He stated, in defence of the Tajik language:

If "some scholars" believe that the Persian language is simple and convenient, then the Tajik language, which developed throughout the millennia, formed by whole generations, is in practice simple, sounds musical and rich in the shades of colours. Yes, it is true that sometimes we used Iranian-Turkish words. It means that we seldom visit the mountainous villages and do not bother ourselves to learn the truly national Tajik language, and often in the editorial boards and publishing houses we have recourse to expressions borrowed from neighbours. Now, everything is up to the writers and linguists. Their efforts should make the Tajik language wonderful, resonant, and melodious. We have to struggle for the cleanness of our language and the self-sustainability of our literature. If we look at the neighbouring Iranian language, we can see that Iranian writers have the same tasks pending; making it closer to the primeval language of people and cleaning it from the foreign words. Working on the language's expressions and phrases is necessary. That will be a simple Persian language, which is spiritually closer to the Tajik language.⁶⁸⁹

Later in the same media statement Aini wrote that:

If we take a keen interest in the Persian language and forget our own, then we will leave the populations of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (Tajiks) illiterate. It is not a secret that the people, despite how we write, will continue speaking and writing in their own native language, and our efforts will be not only vain but also harmful for our literature. An artificial intervention into the development process of the tongue cannot lead to positive results. On the contrary, only learning and following the principles of the development of the language will bring our literature closer to the people and will make it the property and treasure of the people. If we artificially infuse unintelligible words of Arabic and Turkish origin, we will look like a person that keeps his family hungry and makes donations in the street.⁶⁹⁰

A dominant narrative in Soviet and post-Soviet Tajikistan is that Aini won the debate with the Uzbek/pan-Turkists by writing his *Namunai Adabiyoti Tojik* (The Specimen of Tajik Literature),

⁶⁸⁷ Abduqodir Muhiddinov, "Mardumi shahr va atrofi Bukhoro tojikand yo uzbek?," *Rahbari Donish*, no. 8-9 (1928): 17.

⁶⁸⁸ Abbas Aliev, "Mas'alai milli dar Bukhoro va atrofi on," *Rahbari Donish*, no. 11-12 (1928).

⁶⁸⁹ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 82.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

which proved that Tajiks have centuries-old literary traditions and that their language is richer and more powerful than many pan-Turkists/Uzbeks assumed. The book is a collection of the names and characteristics of the exemplary works of more than 400 poets who wrote in the Tajik-Persian language.⁶⁹¹ The first part of the book includes information about 80 poets;⁶⁹² the second part covers 132 poets,⁶⁹³ and the last part mentions 200 poets.⁶⁹⁴ It is a compilation of “the best examples of what the nation has preserved during its thousands of years of development.”⁶⁹⁵ Aini believed that by writing this book he shut the mouths of the anti-Tajik provocateurs:

In its times this work has played a major role for the benefit of the nationalities policy of the party. Because, back then the pan-Turkists used to sow provocations against the national territorial delimitation and viewed this nationalities policy of the Party as an attempt to “divide Turks.” Whereas, regarding the establishment of the Soviet Tajik Republic, they were more provocative and would say that ‘There is no a nation called Tajiks in Central Asia; they are all Uzbeks, that under the influence of Iran and the madrasa, lost their native language.’ This work, i.e., *Namunai Adabiioti Tojik*, with its historical facts tore the curtain off those provocations and put the seal of silence to the mouths of the provocateurs.⁶⁹⁶

Aini narrowly avoided reprisal from the Soviet government for this publication, though. The reason was a poem included in the book that was written by Rudaki, a Tajik poet. The poem hailed the Samanid Emir of Bukhara.⁶⁹⁷ Aini believed that the government of Uzbekistan organized a campaign against his book. According to him, “in Uzbekistan after the speech of [Akmal] Ikromov in the Party plenum they [i.e., the Uzbek officials] demanded the banning of the book.”⁶⁹⁸ As criticism of the book grew, Nikolai Bukharin, one of the Communist leaders in Moscow, requested the copies of the book be recalled from the shelves of bookstores for being “harmful.”⁶⁹⁹ Aini believed that it was the Uzbek government who organized the ban. In his words, “through their personnel in the Tajikistan Publishing House, they banned it in 1930 and

⁶⁹¹ For a detailed analysis of this book, see T. Qoraev and R. Vohidov, “Sadriiddin Aini va Shoiri Bukhoro,” in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978).

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, 39.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁹⁵ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriiddin Aini*, 81.

⁶⁹⁶ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 111.

⁶⁹⁷ Alamshoev, “Shohtemur - nomusi millat,” 380-81. According to Alamshoev, it was recalled in 1933.

⁶⁹⁸ As quoted in Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriiddin Aini*, 81.

⁶⁹⁹ Aiubzod, *Tojikon dar qarni bistum: sad rangi sad sol*, 125.

condemned this valuable book to be recycled like waste.”⁷⁰⁰ Tajik scholars viewed this as an attack by pan-Turkic Jadids against the Tajik nation’s language and culture.⁷⁰¹

Aini wrote *Namunai adabiioti Tojik* upon the request of the Tajik RevCom.⁷⁰² As was discussed above, Aini himself acknowledged that the government of the newly established Tajik ASSR requested him to take over this task and he “accepted it.”⁷⁰³ Aini’s close connections with the Tajik ASSR, especially with Shirinsho Shotemur, who was in Samarkand as the Representative of the Tajik govnrment in Uzbekistan, is well-documented. For instance, Shotemur wrote a letter in July 1935 to the government of Tajikistan requesting financial support for Aini when the latter was ill.⁷⁰⁴ Reportedly, Aini saw a draft of Shotemur’s famous 1926 letter.⁷⁰⁵

In Tajikistan, the book is hailed as a weighty argument against the Uzbek nationalists:

[*Namunai Adabiioti Tojik*] includes the best examples of poetry, starting from Rudaki up until the 20th century [sic]. The Jadids/pan-Turkists ignored the history of the Tajik nation and [thus] denigrated the rights of the Tajiks to be counted as a nation. With this anthology, Sadriddin Aini proved the existence of the Tajik nation, its history, and its right to have its own republic.⁷⁰⁶

Aini provided complete and reliable information about the centuries-old literary tradition of Bukhara. Qoraev and Vohidov believe that no one had ever done this before Aini.⁷⁰⁷ According to Lahuti, “to find out a certain manuscript of a Tajik poet, Aini had to roam in the streets of Bukhara for many days, going from one house to another, until he finally found it.”⁷⁰⁸ It is believed that thanks to this book, the Tajik people were able to become familiar with their literary heritage.⁷⁰⁹ Abdusalom Dehoti, a Soviet Tajik poet, goes as far as to state that people in Tajikistan were not aware of the word “literature” [*adabiiot*] before Aini’s *Namunai Adabiioti Tojik* was published. They “used to divide everything written into two categories: first, prose, and all the rest was either known as *ghazal* or poetry.”⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁰ Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 111-12. Aini had defended himself by arguing that “[t]he progressive trends in this literature [...] are not the results of the epoch of particular tsars or emirs.” They rather “originates from the people” and it is because of these ordinary people the Tajik literature blossomed during the rule of Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Ashtarkhanids, and Manghits. As quoted in M. Iakubov, “Esteticheskaia kontseptsiia Sadriddina Aini,” in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978), 59.

⁷⁰¹ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 81.

⁷⁰² Alamshoev, “Shohtemur - nomusi millat,” 379.

⁷⁰³ For more details on this order, see R. Hodizoda, “Oid ba Ahamiati Ta’rikhii “Namunai Adabiioti Tojik,”” in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1966), 17.

⁷⁰⁴ For the text of the letter, see Alamshoev, “Shohtemur - nomusi millat,” 381.

⁷⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 382.

⁷⁰⁶ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 87.

⁷⁰⁷ Qoraev and Vohidov, “Sadriddin Aini va Shoironi Bukhoro,” 36.

⁷⁰⁸ As quoted in Rozenfel’d, “Sadriddin Aini i iego “Vospominaniia,”” 960-61.

⁷⁰⁹ Hodizoda, “Oid ba Ahamiati Ta’rikhii “Namunai Adabiioti Tojik,”” 17. E. Mulloqandov, “Ustod Aini - Adabiiotshinos,” in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978), 93, 94, 85.

⁷¹⁰ A. Dehoti, “Hikoiahoi doir ba muloqothoi man bo ustod S.Aini,” in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1963), 207.

2.2. Aini as a Reformer of the Tajik Language

Sadriddin Aini, similarly to Dante Alighieri, who created a “Standard Italian” based on his native Tuscan language,⁷¹¹ founded a standardized Tajik language by successfully integrating traditional written Tajik with elements of spoken Tajik in Bukhara. This contribution of Aini to the formation of Tajik identity cannot be overestimated. A shared and commonly understood language is “a powerful instrument for promoting internal cohesion and providing an ethnic or national identity. It contributes to values, identity, and a sense of peoplehood.”⁷¹² The more standardized the language is, the more potent it is in its function of “imagining” the nation. “As the standard emerges, the myth arises that it is the one, true, original form of the language – the language proper. All the other dialects, formerly on a par with it, are now taken to be variants of the standard, regional ways of using it, or decadent misuses.”⁷¹³ “Standardization is more easily achieved in writing than in the speech.”⁷¹⁴ This passage of Kamusella’s succinctly summarizes the importance of the written language:

[The written form of language] detaches language from the human agent and allows preserving and transferring messages as objects. In this manner, the previously limited face-to-face situation in communication can be broadened to involve larger groups of people, who will never meet most of their fellow-nationals. As a consequence, written language became the principal tool for creating national cohesion.⁷¹⁵

Aini’s literary works are known for fulfilling exactly the same function for the Tajik nation. What makes Aini’s prose valuable to Tajik readers is the fluency and accessibility of the language used. Before Aini, Tajik literature was dominated by poetry, as a result of which the literary Tajik language consisted of elements (fluid sentence structures, vocabulary rich in foreign and archaic words) that made it suitable and creative enough for poems. For these reasons, the literary language was seen as superior to the ordinary, spoken language. In her afterword to the Russian translation of Aini’s memories, Rosenfeld masterfully depicted the features of the Tajik language:

The prosaic writers used to automatically utilise linguistic and stylistic means borrowed from the arsenal of the poetry, without considering the characteristics of the narrative form. It explains the extraordinary complexity of the Tajik and Persian languages and their inappropriate obstruction with the archaic lexicon and Arabisms. Many prosaic works of the XIX and early XX centuries, which get published nowadays, can hardly be understood by a

⁷¹¹ For more information, see Joseph, *Language and Politics*, 30.

⁷¹² Schmid, *The Politics of Language: Conflict, Identity, and Cultural Pluralism in Comparative Perspective*, 9.

⁷¹³ Joseph, *Language and Politics*, 29.

⁷¹⁴ Anthony Lodge, *French: From Dialect to Standard* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 24.

⁷¹⁵ Kamusella, *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe*, 18.

contemporary Tajik reader, thus are usually annotated with the lexicographic commentaries.⁷¹⁶

Along with introducing the realist genre to Tajik prose, Aini recalibrated the Tajik language so that it met the requirements of realist prose. This meant the incorporation of significant elements of the spoken language into the literary language, which Aini did impressively well.⁷¹⁷ The dialect that Aini relied on was the spoken language of his community in Bukhara, whereas the literary language that he utilized was the Tajik language that was deemed the literary Tajik language of the Samanid period.⁷¹⁸ It is claimed that the Tajik language of the Samanid Empire was comprehensible for ordinary people and had a fluid sentence structure.⁷¹⁹ Therefore, some characters in Aini's writings "speak" in the literary Tajik language rather than in their local vernacular, even though most of the characters in his works are the people of Bukhara.⁷²⁰

As one Soviet Tajik scholar put it, Aini "could differentiate the positive aspects of the everyday spoken language (slang) and the language of the past periods from their negativities, and as a result, could masterfully employ the positive dimensions of the classic language and the patois of the Tajiks."⁷²¹ In this regard, Aini "invented" a qualitatively new literary Tajik language, which could be observed already in his *Odina*. The fluency and simplicity of the language in Aini's first Tajik novel, *Odina*, impressed Tajik readers and encouraged young Tajik writers. Sotim Ulughzoda, a Tajik Soviet writer, received the following impression from the novel:

When I started reading it, it immediately absorbed me; its language was simply fascinating. I have never heard or read such wonderful words. They are so good, beautiful and fluent that it is as if you are listening to pleasant music! It seems to me that there is nothing more beautiful and pleasant than the Tajik language.⁷²²

Aini had a personal passion for the reformation of the Tajik language and could get overwhelmingly emotional during discussions of reforming the Tajik language. Braginskiĭ provided two episodes from Aini's life confirming how sensitive Aini was to language reform. In one instance, Aini is remembered to have said in a conference in Tashkent in 1928, devoted to the new Tajik alphabet, that he could not be calm when discussing such things. He further apologized for being sharp in his statements and for looking as if he were going to engage in a

⁷¹⁶ Rozenfel'd, "Sadridin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia", " 964.

⁷¹⁷ M. Mirzoev, "Unsurhoi Zaboni Guftuguii Mardumi Bukhoro dar Asarhoi S. Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978), 31.

⁷¹⁸ N. Behbudi, "S.Aini va ba'ze mas'alahoi zaboni adabii tozhik," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1966), 38. Mirzoev, "Unsurhoi Zaboni Guftuguii Mardumi Bukhoro dar Asarhoi S. Aini," 31.

⁷¹⁹ Behbudi, "S.Aini va ba'ze mas'alahoi zaboni adabii tozhik," 38.

⁷²⁰ Mirzoev, "Unsurhoi Zaboni Guftuguii Mardumi Bukhoro dar Asarhoi S. Aini," 31.

⁷²¹ Behbudi, "S.Aini va ba'ze mas'alahoi zaboni adabii tozhik," 39-40.

⁷²² As quoted in Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadridin Aini*, 86.

physical fight.⁷²³ Another example is Braginskii's own communication with Aini, during which Aini got angry about Braginskii's proposal to reform of the isaphet *-ro* by replacing it with *-ia* in the Tajik language (the former construction is usually used in written poetic Tajik language, whereas the latter belongs to the local slang in Bukhara).⁷²⁴ Though Aini did not always favour the radical reforms, he could himself easily use a particular word from the spoken language of Tajiks of Bukhara, which looked like a new word for the most people in Tajikistan. It gave some scholars reason to argue that Aini had coined new Tajik words.⁷²⁵ Back in late 1970, a Soviet Tajik scholar argued that the elements of local languages in Aini's writings are so plentiful and colourful that there was a necessity to create a dictionary listing them.⁷²⁶

Overall, Aini was a dominant figure in the reformation of the Tajik language in the 1920s-1950s. He masterfully invented a qualitatively new Tajik literary language that is understandable to a lay reader. His solid education in Bukhara city allowed him to read the classic texts, while his provincial background was very useful in terms of interpreting them in simple terms. As an experienced educational reformist, Aini was in a position to understand that the classical texts were not accessible for ordinary people, including young students. In his literary works, Aini used a language that is as rich as the classic literary Tajik language in the way it carries meaning, but is also as fluent and straightforward as a daily, spoken language. For this, Aini has become known as the founder of the modern Tajik language. In the context of the Uzbek-Tajik standoff, Aini proved that the Tajik language was not merely a slang version the Persian language, but rather has along classic history and rich spoken slangs. Through the standardization of the language he also helped to establish a more effective "imagination" of the Tajik community.

3. The Tajik nation and its oppressors in Aini's writings

3.1. An analysis of Aini's literary works

The main theme of Aini's writings is the struggle for justice and change. This leitmotif was acceptable for the Soviet government as it fit into narratives about the struggle of classes. The characters in Aini's prose are positive or negative depending on their relation to the revolution; anyone who opposed the revolution or did anything in the past that was not in line with the revolutionary ideology was a bad character, whereas those, who benefited from revolution and participated in it are by default positive personages.⁷²⁷ As a rule, a personage on the good side

⁷²³ I. Braginskii, "Dvadsat' Piat' Vstrech s Sadriddinom Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971), 310.

⁷²⁴ For more details of the debate, see *ibid.*, 300-01.

⁷²⁵ For a review of these words, and other contributions of Aini to Tajik morphology, see R. Ghafforov, "Zabon va Uslubi Ocherki "Qahramoni Khalqi Tozhik Temurmaliq"," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971).

⁷²⁶ Mirzoev, "Unsurhoi Zaboni Guftuguii Mardumi Bukhoro dar Asarhoi S. Aini," 35.

⁷²⁷ S. Aminova, "Obraz'hoi Tazod dar Asarhoi Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978).

of the fence was a representative of the Tajik nation. Braginskiĭ notes that “the themes of his novels are taken, as a rule, from the life of the Tajik people.”⁷²⁸ According to a Tajik scholar, “Aini’s best writings [...] expressed the very essence of great changes in the life and self-consciousness of the Tajik people that marched out of the feudal Middle Ages toward the bright path of socialism.”⁷²⁹ There is an argument that Aini was preoccupied with the fate of the Tajik nation before the revolution and, as his literary works kept emerging, Aini voiced his concerns more loudly:

Aini’s creative works concentrate on the issues of the historical fate of his own nation. It has always been so, from the onset of his career as a writer. For instance, [we can take] Aini’s earlier, still naïve work called “Khonavodai khushbakht” or “Oilai Khushbakht” [Happy Household/Family] written in 1916. Cannot one already feel in this work an anxiety for the fate of his nation? [...] one can hear, as if the heart of the young writer beats alarmingly concerning the fate of his people: will they be literate or will they remain illiterate? This holy [sic] feeling of anxiety about the plight of the Tajik nation can be felt more in a mature, classic work of Aini such as “Yoddoshtho” [Memoirs]. [...] In all his writings, one can hear his voice saying, “Where are you going, my nation?”⁷³⁰

The emotional narratives about the oppressions and atrocities that the Tajiks faced can be observed in Aini’s literary works. For instance, through the words of Odina, a positive character in an eponymous novel, Aini revealed the harsh conditions the Tajiks lived in:

Brother! Poor Tajiks, whose bones rest in the dirty and stinky well, are the ones to blame [for their condition]? Their biggest guilt is ignorance and backwardness. They do not understand anything. Words like “faith” and “motherland” are sacred to them. It is unforgivable for workers. They preferred to die like sheep, ingratiatingly looking at the eyes of the murderer. It was the same in the past. However, with this challenge, it is time to see who our enemy is and who our friend is.⁷³¹

In essence, Aini’s writings are about the struggle of the oppressed Tajik people against the atrocities of the Manghit rulers. For instance, his *Slaves* depicts “how the Tajiks spent the last century in slavery and how they eradicated it to start a new, more deserving life”⁷³² and culminates with the announcement of the Tajik Soviet Republic.⁷³³ As Rosenfeld noted, the novel

⁷²⁸ I. Braginskiĭ, "O natsional'nom i internatsional'nom v tvorchestve S.Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1963), 8.

⁷²⁹ Iakubov, "Esteticheskaia kontsepsiia Sadridina Aini," 58.

⁷³⁰ Braginskiĭ, "O natsional'nom i internatsional'nom v tvorchestve S.Aini," 9-10.

⁷³¹ Aini’s character Odina as quoted in Zh. Baqozoda, "Realizm S.Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971), 25-26.

⁷³² Aini as quoted in Rozenfel'd, "Sadridin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia"," 966-67.

⁷³³ See also L. Demidchik, "O printsipe istoritsizma v proze S.Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971), 88.

is about “the struggle of the Tajik toilers against the oppressors.”⁷³⁴ Therefore, the positive characters in Aini’s literary works are deemed to represent the best qualities of the Tajik nation:

In the essays and novels of Aini, the positive and negative characters differ from one another in their deeds, views, social affiliation, and class. The representatives of the workers, despite all humiliations and difficulties, bear in themselves the best and progressive rudiments that the Tajik nation has accumulated. It is them – Odina, Gulbibibi (from the essay “Odina”), Yodgor, Gulnor (“Dokhunda”), Ergash, Fotima (“Slaves”), Saidmurod, Ustoamak (“Memoirs”) – that are the true bearers of the best national characteristics. They are drawn by a soft and expressive brush and immediately deserve the sympathy of a reader. The representatives of the exploiter classes [sic], from Klych khalifa, Arbob Kamol to Kutbiia, represent inhumaneness, insidiousness, spiritual bankruptcy. The writer [Aini] did not spare bright colours when creating the images of the enemies. [...] The personality of the heroes gets revealed in the extreme dramatic situations and collisions [between the positive and negative characters]. Through the disclosure of their moral image, the objective historical movement of the society, the destruction of the foundations of the feudal Bukharan Emirate gets exposed.⁷³⁵

The oppressors of the Tajiks are either the Manghit monarchs of Bukhara or the officials, religious clerics and the wealthy that thrived under their rule. In Aini’s narration, the history of the Manghit rulers of Bukhara appears as, to use the words of a Tajik analyst, “a chain of uninterrupted dreadful villainy, and violation of the principles of goodness and humanity.”⁷³⁶ For instance, Aini’s *Jallodoni Bukhoro* was about the “brutality of Emir and his officials.”⁷³⁷ Another work, *Ta’rikhi Mukhtasari Harakati Inqilobi dar Bukhoro* (Short History of Revolutionary Movement in Bukhara), was known as an “important and valuable source” concerning the history of late XIX and the early 20th century due to the facts within it regarding popular opposition to the atrocities of the Manghit rulers and the political and spiritual elite.⁷³⁸ In general, it is believed that Aini attempted to explain to readers that “bloodshed and moral decadence were the inherited sins of the Manghit dynasty.”⁷³⁹

While in the Soviet period, Tajik versus Manghit narratives of Aini were mostly understood in terms of the struggle of the classes. In the post-Soviet times, this Marxist explanation of history is replaced by a nationalist interpretation. In this regard, the Manghit dynasty of Bukhara appears in Tajik scholarly narratives synonymous with Uzbek oppression. Through his literary and analytical works, Aini has crystallized knowledge concerning the successful struggle of the

⁷³⁴ Rozenfel'd, "Sadriiddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia", " 965.

⁷³⁵ Baqozoda, "Realizm S.Aini," 28-29.

⁷³⁶ Demidchik, "O printsipe istoritsizma v proze S.Aini," 76.

⁷³⁷ A. Saifulloev, "Kori Ezhodii Ustod Aini dar Ta'lifi povesti "Zhallodoni Bukhoro", " in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971), 91.

⁷³⁸ A. Maniiozov, "Mulohizaho doir ba tashakkuli nasri S.Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1963), 35-36.

⁷³⁹ Demidchik, "O printsipe istoritsizma v proze S.Aini," 76.

Tajiks against their brutal oppressors. Thus, he has created grounds for nationalistic interpretations.

3.2. Aini the historian

Along with facilitating the “imagination” of the Tajik nation through setting standards for a nationally acceptable and intelligible literary language via his writings, Aini laid the ground for another important aspect of Tajik national identity – national historiography. Aini was aware of the strategic importance of historiography; he argued that “history can have a meaning only when it becomes a weapon in the hands of people for a struggle to create a future.”⁷⁴⁰ As will be discussed in the next chapter, it is Bobojon Ghafurov, who has dominated national historiography in Tajikistan. However, as Rahim Masov, a nationalist Tajik historian, puts it, the non-historians, who were the actual participants in socio-political events and the establishment of the Soviet regime, were on the forefront of the first period of the historiography of the Tajik nation.⁷⁴¹ Without any exaggeration, Aini can be viewed as the single most important “non-historian” from that period. His personal life and writings are known in Tajikistan as the primary sources of Tajik national history for the first two decades of 20th century. Because he has been a participant and a victim of political events of that period, his narratives are accepted as the ultimate truth. There are three main textual sources of “the truth”; first, Aini’s memoirs (i.e., *Tarjimai Kholi Mukhtasari Khudam* and *Yoddoshtho*); second, analytical, descriptive works (e.g., *Ta’rikhi Inqilobi Fikri dar Bukhoro* [The History of ideational revolution in Bukhara], *Ta’rikhi amironi manghitiia Bukhoro* [The History of Mangit Emirs of Bukhara] and *Ta’rikhi Inqilobi Bukhoro* [The history of revolution of Bukhara]); and third, Aini’s works of literary fiction.

During the Soviet period Aini’s accounts of the history of the Emirate of Bukhara were viewed as unquestionably authentic sources of Tajik national history. One prominent Tajik historian, Zarif Rajabov, wrote a book reviewing the historiographic importance of Aini’s literary works.⁷⁴² Among the reasons for such claims is the belief that Aini lived through everything he tells to his readers.⁷⁴³ To use the words of Rosenfeld, who translated Aini’s memoirs from Tajik into Russian, “what the writer himself lived through [and] observed in the fates of his fellow countrymen and contemporaries allowed him to create his literary works with profound content, fully corresponding to vital truth.”⁷⁴⁴ Drawing parallels between Aini’s life and that of the whole Tajik nation, Akobirov and Kharisov argue that “[i]ndeed the life of S. Aini and his

⁷⁴⁰ Rozenfel'd, "Sadridin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia", 966-67. Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadridin Aini*, 99, 117.

⁷⁴¹ Rahim Masov, *Istoriografiia Sovetskogo Tadzhikistana (1917-1975)* (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978), 3..

⁷⁴² See Zarif Rajabov, *Sadridin Aini - istorik tadzhikskogo naroda* (Stalinabad: Tadzhikgosizdat, 1951).

⁷⁴³ For instance, see Baqozoda, "Realizm S.Aini," 24.

⁷⁴⁴ Rozenfel'd, "Sadridin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia", 969.

works are the life of the Tajik nation [sic], they represent an epoch in the development of the nation. One cannot be dealt with separately from another."⁷⁴⁵ Mirzo Tursunzoda said the following about these links:

It happens that the life of an entire nation, all stages of its development are incarnate in the life of one personality. The fate of Sadriddin Aini merrily combines all the phases of the struggle and development of his nation. Aini's life path, stemming from the dark kingdom of ignorance and lawlessness, tightly intertwined with the life of its people, develops and reaches today's bright, happy days.⁷⁴⁶

Aini presented his works as "the truth". Regarding the first version of his *Jalldoni Bukhoro*, published in the Uzbek language with the title of *Bukhoro Jalldolarining O'z Aro Musohabalari*, he said the following, "It is a true story, written about the catastrophes that took place in Bukhara in 1918".⁷⁴⁷ Aini was confident that he was uniquely positioned to be able to describe Tajik society and the history of Bukhara better than anyone else. In the early 1930s, when one Russian literary practitioner asked Aini whether any of the young Tajik writers could have written *Dokhunda*, Aini replied that to be able to write it the young person first had to be punished with 75 slashes from the Emir of Bukhara.⁷⁴⁸ On another occasion, Aini said the following:

I am not in need of diagrams, statistics or numbers to be able to write about what the Soviet government did to this people and this country. It will suffice, merely, to write about my personal life within two thirty-year periods, and this account will be more persuasive than any statistics.⁷⁴⁹

Nevertheless, Aini made plenty of errors in providing the correct dates of his own early publications.⁷⁵⁰ However, Aini had so an unstained reputation as a writer and the literary master that a Tajik author argued that "if there are one or two mistakes in the works of Aini, I guess, they have occurred because of editors and proof-readers."⁷⁵¹ According to another Tajik scholar:

Much evidence could be brought to prove the authenticity of the "Memoirs" [of Aini], but there is no need to do so, for alive are those people, who were the eyewitnesses, if not of the events depicted [in the book], then of the whole order of life in the Emirate of Bukhara.⁷⁵²

⁷⁴⁵ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 6.

⁷⁴⁶ Mirzo Tursunzoda as quoted in *ibid.*, 5.

⁷⁴⁷ S. Aini, "Bukhoro Zhallodlarining O'z Aro Musohabalari," *Inqilob*, no. 6 (1922): 30.

⁷⁴⁸ A. Dehoti, "Hikoiatho oid ba muloqoti man bo ustod Sadriddin Aini," *Sharqi Surkh*, no. 4 (1962): 116.; See also "Hikoiahoi doir ba muloqothoi man bo ustod S.Aini," 210. This story is remembered as an anecdotal event in most books on Aini. During this conversation Aini refused the translator's service and attempted to answer the question himself and instead of *poluchit' palkoi* (receive the lash) he said *palka kushat* (eat the lash). It was the result of an incorrect translation of the Tajik expression of *tayoq khurdan* (receive the lash), as *khurdan* as a separate word means *to eat*.

⁷⁴⁹ Aini as quoted in Rozenfel'd, "Sadriddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia"," 970.

⁷⁵⁰ See Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xii.

⁷⁵¹ Mulloqandov, "Ustod Aini - Adabiotshinos," 104.

⁷⁵² Rozenfel'd, "Sadriddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia"," 977.

Similarly, a Russian biographer of Aini states that “[t]he most important peculiarity of his “Memoirs” (“Yoddoshtho”) is their historical authenticity: the actions and events described in [his memoirs] are real facts; the people about whom the author writes are his contemporaries, whom he happened to meet in life.”⁷⁵³ While the “eyewitnesses” never challenged Aini’s role as a “true historian” of the Tajik nation, “a new generation of Tajik and Uzbek nationals grew up, who were brought up with an entirely different spirit, and for whom most of what [Aini] wrote in the “Memoirs”, was already incomprehensible.”⁷⁵⁴ For them, Aini’s narratives were nothing less than established knowledge and historical truth. For non-Tajik and non-Uzbek readers, Aini’s texts are the sources of introduction to previously unknown facts about social life in the Emirate of Bukhara.⁷⁵⁵

Along with his literary works, Aini also authored some analytical-descriptive studies of the political and social history of Bukhara. In February 1918, Aini wrote a book titled *Ta’rikhi Inqilobi Fikri dar Bukhoro* (The History of the Ideational Revolution in Bukhara). A significantly edited version of this work was written in the Uzbek language in 1920-21, and given the title *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta’rikhi*. As Aini himself remembered, the latter was the translation of the former, which was done upon the request of Yo’ldosh Po’latov, Minister of Education of Bukhara PSR.⁷⁵⁶ Indeed, on 24 September 1920, the Ministry of Education of the Bukhara PSR established a special commission assigned with writing the history of the revolution in Bukhara. Aini was among the scholars who took over this task.⁷⁵⁷ On 16 November 1920, Aini visited Bukhara as a correspondent for *Shula’i Inqilob*. There, he met with the Minister of Education, Yo’ldosh Po’latov. It is assumed that Aini discussed the proposal to write his *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta’rikhi* during this meeting.⁷⁵⁸ However, as is mentioned above, the publishing house in Bukhara refused to publish it.

Analyzing the only available manuscript of this book in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Science of Uzbekistan, Shimada and Tosheva found out that Aini started *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta’rikhi* on 21 December, 1920, and finished on 23 March, 1921. They also discovered that all 8 chapters of Part 1, as well as Chapter 1 of Part 2, of the book were actually written as separate newspaper articles and published in the *Mehnatkashlar Tovushi* between 1 September 1920 and 5 February 1921 under the rubric of “Bukhorodagi inqilobii harakatning qisqacha

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁴ A. Semenov, "K Proshlomu Bukhary," in *Vospominaniia*, ed. Sadriddin Aini (Moscow and Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1960), 981.

⁷⁵⁵ Rozenfel'd, "Sadriddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia", " 979.

⁷⁵⁶ Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xii. In his memoirs Aini mentions this book with a slightly different title – *Bukhoro Inqilobi Ta’rikhiga oid Materiallar*. See Aini, *Mukhtasari Tarzhimai kholi khudam*, 109.

⁷⁵⁷ Shimada and Tosheva, *Kirish*, xi.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid., xii.

ta'rikhi" (A Concise History of the Revolutionary Movement in Bukhara).⁷⁵⁹ Therefore, it can be stated that Aini started writing his Uzbek texts about revolutionary movements in Bukhara before the government of Bukhara requested him to do so. The book project that was offered by the government of Bukhara to Aini just coincidentally aligned with his plans, which meant that Aini's own explanation of the situation was misinformation. As mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, Aini's vision of the history of the reformist and revolutionary movements in Bukhara was not approved by the government in Bukhara; thus the book was not published in Bukhara. Only in 1926 was a heavily edited and censored Russian translation of it published in Moscow. This edition was later translated into the Tajik language and was used as a source of Tajik national history during the 1910s and 1920s.

Another important work that established Aini's reputation as an historian is *Ta'rikhi amironi manghitiiai Bukhoro* (The History of Manghit Emirs of Bukhara). As Soviet Tajik narratives put it, this work held the "key to understanding the history of the Emirate of Bukhara."⁷⁶⁰ It was deemed to be nothing less than an "authentic annal of the Tajik nation."⁷⁶¹ Unlike Aini's previous book, this one covered a relatively wide time span of the history of Bukhara, i.e., the period from mid-18th century till 1920. Also, unlike the previous book, it was an attempt at a scholarly work. Aini not only relied on his observations but also made reference to published sources about the monarchs and their rule.⁷⁶² However, considering that the bulk of the book is devoted to the last two Emirs of Bukhara, most of the information is based on the author's personal observations.⁷⁶³

Last, but not least, Aini's literary works were also viewed as a powerful depiction of historical processes. It is argued that his scholarly works have served as the "primary documental basis" for his literary works such as *Odina*, *Dokhunda*, *Qori Ishkamba*, as well as *Yoddoshtho*.⁷⁶⁴ In particular, his scholarly texts acting as "the documentary basis for his literary works" can be observed in the influence that *Ta'rikhi amironi manghitiiai Bukhoro* had on Aini's famous novel, titled *Qullar*.⁷⁶⁵ Some Tajik scholars believe that Aini's writings are "realist" (and he is praised as the founder of the realist genre) mainly because they are documentaries.⁷⁶⁶ For instance, *Dokhunda* is "an enormous historical canvas of the periods of the fall of the Emirate and the civil war in Tajikistan, the history of the formation of the personality [sic]."⁷⁶⁷ It also provides the

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁰ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 93.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid., 96.

⁷⁶² For the full list of sources that Aini referred to, see Demidchik, "O printsipe istoritsizma v proze S.Aini," 74.

⁷⁶³ R. Hoshim, "'Ta'rikhi Amironi Maghitiia Bukhoro" va Uslubi Nigorishi On," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1971), 110.

⁷⁶⁴ Demidchik, "O printsipe istoritsizma v proze S.Aini," 77-78.

⁷⁶⁵ Ibid., 73.

⁷⁶⁶ R. Amonov, "Geografiiai osori badeii Ustod Aini," in *Zhashnnomai Aini*, ed. K. Aini, et al. (Dushanbe: Donish, 1978), 22.

⁷⁶⁷ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 80.

history of the earliest years of Soviet rule in Dushanbe city.⁷⁶⁸ In general, each literary work written by Aini covers a historically significant event or epoch in the life of the Tajik nation. As Akobirov and Kharisov stated, “the historians, critics, scholars, and specialists in the study of literature will keep referring to Aini’s writings as true annals of historical events during the periods of revolution and the civil war.”⁷⁶⁹

4. Remembering Sadriddin Aini in Tajikistan: academic narratives and official rhetoric

Official narratives in Soviet Tajikistan label Aini the founder of the realist genre in Tajik literature.⁷⁷⁰ He is also compared to the Russian poet Pushkin; “whatever Pushkin [...] did for the Russian language has been done by Aini for the Tajik language.”⁷⁷¹ The following argument summarizes predominant opinions about the important changes that Aini brought about in Tajik literature: “[Before Aini] Tajik literature was not familiar with the genre of the literary realistic prose. Poetry predominated for many centuries, just as in Persian literature. Prose was focused on scholarly works, travel diaries, historical chronicles, memoirs, business paperwork, personal correspondence.”⁷⁷² The first work of prose authored by Aini is “Khonadoni khushbakht”, an essay contained within a school textbook.⁷⁷³ Aini’s first ever novel in Tajik language was *Odina* (1924). Parts of it first appeared in newspaper *Ovozi Tojik* and it was published as a book in 1927.⁷⁷⁴

Since then, Aini has written dozen of novels that establish him as a prominent writer not only in Tajikistan but also throughout the Soviet Union. By 1963 Aini’s books were published in the Tajik language in more than 600 thousand copies in 88 editions. The top ones were *Yoddoshtho* (116,000 copies), *Odina* (62,000 copies), *Margi Sudkhur* (60,000 copies), *Maktabi Ko’hna* (59,100 copies), *Dokhunda* (55,000 copies), *Jalldoni Bukhoro* (48,000 copies), *Ahmadi Devband* (42,000 copies), *Ghulomon* (37,275 copies), *Yatim* (22,000 copies).⁷⁷⁵ The number of copies was significant, considering that the population of Tajikistan as of 1959 was 2 million. Therefore, the ratio was roughly one book of Aini for every three citizens of Tajikistan. Aini’s fame as a writer went beyond Tajikistan. During the same period, 1.7 million copies of Aini’s works, published in 72 different editions, were published in Russian language.⁷⁷⁶

⁷⁶⁸ Amonov, "Geografiiai osori badeii Ustad Aini," 18-19.

⁷⁶⁹ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 80.

⁷⁷⁰ See Baqozoda, "Realizm S.Aini."

⁷⁷¹ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 82.

⁷⁷² Rozenfel'd, "Sadriddin Aini i iego "Vospominaniia"," 962.

⁷⁷³ See S. Aini, "Khonadoni khushbakht," in *Tahzib-us-Sibion*, ed. S. Aini (Samarkand: 1917).

⁷⁷⁴ Azizqulov, "Merosi Adabii S.Aini va intishori on," 200.

⁷⁷⁵ See *ibid.*, 201.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 202.

Aini was hailed as the master who educated the next generation of Soviet Tajik writers and poets. For this accomplishment he is referred to nationally as *Ustod Aini*.⁷⁷⁷ Dozens of young Tajik writers and poets felt honoured to be his followers. As Akobirov and Kharisov put it, "almost all venerable and acknowledged contemporary writers of Tajikistan, such as Mirzo Tursunzoda, Sotim Ulughzoda, Mirsald Mirshakar, Jalol Ikromi, Rahim Jalil and others were students of the first Tajik academician, the first president of the Academy of Science of Tajikistan, Sadriddin Aini."⁷⁷⁸ Aini is known as "the flagman of Tajik literature."⁷⁷⁹ Aini used to maintain personal correspondence with almost all young Tajik writers and poets. In one such letter, addressed to Mirzo Tusunzoda, Aini suggested a comparison of his memoirs and literary works to see how personal observations could be converted into literary works by contributing to their "reality".⁷⁸⁰ Aini's first Tajik novel, *Odina*, was so impressive and ground-breaking that it set standards for the first generation of Tajik writers.⁷⁸¹

Overall, Sadriddin Aini was known in Tajik SSR as a writer who raised Tajik literature to a new level by founding a qualitatively new genre and educating, both personally and through his works, a generation of Tajik writers who then took over his task. His emergence as a prominent Tajik writer has not been smooth and straightforward; Aini was earlier one of the leaders of the educational reform movement in Bukhara and later a journalist in Samarkand. Two sets of factors paved Aini's way toward the engagement with the then newly established Tajik state; first, his ideational clash with the younger generation of reformists in Bukhara, who hijacked the reform movement and shifted it from its focus on education, and who later emerged as the political leaders of Bukhara and then Uzbekistan; second, the fierce debates in the media with Uzbek nationalists, who tended to ignore the decency of Tajik as a language and treated it as a relic of the Persian language.

In post-Soviet Tajikistan references to the personality and achievements of Sadriddin Aini can often be seen in the public speeches given by the President of Tajikistan. The typical argument is that "it is *ustod* Aini, who, with his patriotic, enlightening articles [...] gave a serious impulse to the awakening of the Tajik nation."⁷⁸² Aini is remembered as contributor to the independence of the nation; "when we look back on the history of our press, first of all, we recall the great services of *ustod* Sadriddin Aini, Hero of Tajikistan, rendered in the name of constructing the

⁷⁷⁷ The Tajik word *ustod* means teacher, master.

⁷⁷⁸ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 130-31.

⁷⁷⁹ Iakubov, "Esteticheskaia kontseptsia Sadriddina Aini," 58.

⁷⁸⁰ Akobirov and Kharisov, *Sadriddin Aini*, 105-06.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁷⁸² "Vystuplenie É.Rakhmona na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashchennom 100-letiiu tadjhikskoi pečati," *TopTJ.com*, 10.03.2012 2012.

basis of our independent state.”⁷⁸³ However, some references to Aini tend to distort the real meaning of his sayings, which originally have communist connotations. For instance:

In the conclusion of my address I would like to remember one more article of Master Sadriddin Aini. This article is called “Tajikistan is marching towards florescence.” Following the words of the master, I would like to say: yes, Tajikistan is prospering, the future of the independent Tajikistan is bright! We will certainly achieve our national and strategic goals in the name of development and progress of all spheres of life of the country, as well as increasing the standard and quality of life of our nation.⁷⁸⁴

In remembering Aini’s role in the establishment of the Tajik press, the President of Tajikistan drew the following conclusions about Aini’s affection towards the motherland:

Every reasonable person knows that Motherland is his mother, Motherland is his kinsfolk, Motherland is his honour and dignity, Motherland is everything that he has, his life! Therefore, every human being, who has not lost his humane qualities, loves his Motherland [as strongly] as his own mother [or] even more, defends and preserves it.⁷⁸⁵

In one of its publications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan depicted Aini among the people who founded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Tajik SSR. According to this publication, Aini cared about Tajikistan’s foreign policy:

the master cared about the fact that first of all the foreign relations of Tajikistan are not only a very honourable task, but also a difficult and highly responsible one. We think that this generation of diplomats should be proud of such history when such people are standing in the riverhead of the foreign policy of Tajikistan.⁷⁸⁶

5. Conclusion

Aini has convincingly demonstrated that the claims of the Uzbek nationalists regarding the unsuitability of Tajik to serve as a national language were groundless. He has made significant contributions by defending the Tajik side in debates in the media and through his publications. He collected specimens of Tajik literature in order to produce a stupendously important anthology, which demonstrated that the Tajik language is backed by a rich and ancient literary backdrop, thus reinforcing the literary heritage of the Tajiks. The official narratives of national identity depict him as a person who has spent all imaginable effort trying to establish the linguistic and literary foundations of Tajik identity. In post-Soviet Tajikistan, though, he is

⁷⁸³ *ibid.*

⁷⁸⁴ Rahmon, "Vystupleniie na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashionnom 100-letiiu Tazhikskoi pechati."

⁷⁸⁵ "Vystuplenie Ė.Rakhmona na torzhestvennom sobranii, posviashchĕnnom 100-letiiu tadjhikskoi pechati."

⁷⁸⁶ *Diplomatīia Tadjhikistana*, (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan: Dushanbe, 1994). 3.

remembered as the person, who strengthened Tajik national identity by struggling against Uzbek nationalists.

Furthermore, Aini's historical accounts about events in the 1920s are "true" and valuable sources that provide evidence of the oppressions and atrocities that the Tajiks lived through from the collapse of the Samanid state until they regained national statehood in 1929. Although the national historiography of Tajikistan has taken these arguments to new horizons, Aini's accounts remain important as "first-hand" information about both state and society in the 1920s. Overall, Aini played a pivotal role in the formation of Soviet Tajik identity, and therefore his image is being used in Tajikistan to construct post-Soviet Tajik national identity. For all the reasons mentioned above, Aini's figure is central to the politics of national identity in post-Soviet Tajikistan.

Chapter 5. Central Asia as the Homeland of Tajiks: The Historiographic Foundations of Tajik Nationalism and the Role of Bobojon Ghafurov

1. Bobojon Ghafurov and Tajik national historiography

1.1. Ghafurov – a Soviet anti-religious propagandist (1926-1941)

During the earliest stages of his career, Ghafurov worked for propaganda and media organizations. His first job was as a “the Cultural Propagandist” at the Komsomol⁷⁸⁷ organization of the Khujand region in 1926. He attempted a short-lived career as a lawyer at the People’s Commissariat⁷⁸⁸ of Justice for the Tajik Republic after attending Law Courses organized in Samarkand in 1928-29. In 1930, he was appointed Deputy Editor⁷⁸⁹ of *Qizil Tojikiston*, an Uzbek-language newspaper in Tajikistan. From 1931 till 1935 Ghafurov studied at the Communist Institute of Journalism in Moscow. Following his studies, he returned to *Qizil Tojikiston* to become the Editor-in-Chief. In 1936 he joined the CC of the CP of Tajikistan, where he spent the next twenty years of his career. He started as an Instructor (1936-37) and Chair (1937-39) of the Division of Press and Publishing Houses. During 1939-41 he was a Deputy Chair of the Division of Propaganda. This was followed by a stint as a Chair of the Sector of Culture and Education.

As a journalist and party propagandist, Ghafurov wrote a range of newspaper articles and brochures related to agitation and mobilization for the communist cause, as well as focusing on anti-feudal and anti-religious propaganda, including calls for women to remove their veils.⁷⁹⁰ Mostly, his articles attempted to demystify popular prejudices and beliefs in Tajik society, and link existing problems in daily life to dominant religious and feudal norms. As an analysis of the thematic focus of his publications shows, around this time he developed an interest in the Ismaili sect of Islam.⁷⁹¹ Led by this interest, in September 1940 Ghafurov joined the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, where he wrote his *kandidat nauk* dissertation on “The History of the Ismaili sect from the early 19th century to the First World War,” and received his degree in April 1941. The value of this work, at that time, did not reside in its contribution to Islamic or Historical studies, but rather in its relevance to anti-religious propaganda work. Similarly, Ghafurov’s monograph titled *Padenie Bukharskogo Emirata*, a historical account of the then-recent revolution in Bukhara, which was written by him in 1940 in co-authorship with N.

⁷⁸⁷ Komsomol is an abbreviation of Russian title for the Young Communist League, the youth division of the Communist Party of the USSR.

⁷⁸⁸ Equivalent of a Ministry.

⁷⁸⁹ Editor, according to some sources.

⁷⁹⁰ See E. Chelyshev, "Vostochnyi Mudrets," in *Bobodzhon Ghafurov: k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia*, ed. E. Chelyshev, et al. (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 2009), 158.

⁷⁹¹ For instance, in a Russian-language magazine *Bezbozhnik* his two-page article on Aga-Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismailis, was published. See *ibid*.

Prokhorov, was not research based on history *per se*; it was, rather, related to the propaganda that had driven revolutionary changes following the fall of the Emir. Overall, despite writing frequently on historical topics, Ghafurov was still a party propagandist rather than an emerging historian.

1.2. "Breaking the silence": the Tajik-Uzbek brawl over school history textbooks in Tajikistan (1936)

As a party official, Ghafurov was dragged into ongoing debates held by the Tajik government about how best to write the socialist history of the Tajik nation. In 1935, when he returned to Tajikistan from his studies in Moscow, the CC of the Tajik CP and the Tajik Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR were brainstorming the ideas about prospective history textbooks for schools. To discuss a range of proposals, in June 1936, the CC of the Tajik CP initiated a meeting of orientalists and historians from Stalinabad, Moscow, and Tashkent.⁷⁹² Their aim was to "work out the history of the Tajik nation from the ancient times to the October Revolution."⁷⁹³ One of the greatly debated textbook projects was proposed by Vasilii Yarotskii, the rector of the Central Asian State University in Tashkent, who headed the delegation of scholars from Uzbekistan in that meeting. Among other things, he proposed to limit the geography of Tajik history within the state borders of Tajikistan. Even though some scholars present at the meeting questioned the ideological appropriateness, there were not any substantial counter-argument by the Tajik scholars.⁷⁹⁴ It was only Ghafurov, according to discourses in post-Soviet Tajikistan, who saw the real problems with that project.

Thus, "getting acquainted with the documents of the meeting, Bobojon Ghafurov could not have missed this point."⁷⁹⁵ Referring to "numerous remarks on the margins of the conference materials and corrections he made," Pirumshoev, a Tajik historian, argues that Ghafurov "expressed his negative attitude toward the prejudiced position of Yarotskii and his associates."⁷⁹⁶ As evidence, Pirumshoev refers to the "correction" of the word "Tajikistan" to the "Tajik people," as well as to a comment by Ghafurov on the margins of the document that reads, "such a completely incorrect and politically harmful concept is present in the works of many contemporary historians."⁷⁹⁷ It was, what one Tajik journalist called, "breaking the

⁷⁹² H. Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki," *Centrasia.ru*, 23 April 2009.

⁷⁹³ N. Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," in *Bobodzhan Ghafurov: k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia*, ed. E. Chelyshev, et al. (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 2009), 104.

⁷⁹⁴ See Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki.", and Sh. Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?," *Pressa.tj*, 31 December 2014.

⁷⁹⁵ Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki."

⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

silence.⁷⁹⁸ Ghafurov was not satisfied by mere corrections and notes in the margins and even went as far as writing a report addressed to the Minister of Education of the Tajik SSR.⁷⁹⁹ The document called the Ministry to reject Yarotskii's proposal.⁸⁰⁰ The report, among other things, made a proposal to "write the history of Tajik nation, not the [history of the] territory where it has currently established its state entity on."⁸⁰¹ To fulfill this task, the author of the document proposed the creation of a history section in the Tajik Branch of the Academy of Science of the USSR and invited scholars from all over the Soviet Union to work there. This particular case encouraged Ghafurov to take the lead in creating the history textbooks of the Tajik nation.⁸⁰²

1.3. Wartime propaganda and its implications for Tajik historiography

1.3.1. *Ghafurov's texts on the history of the heroic struggle of the Tajiks against the occupants*

In 1941, Ghafurov became the chief propagandist in Tajikistan; he was appointed Secretary of the CC of the Tajik CP and made responsible for curating propaganda and agitation. This post provided him with the necessary power to follow up on his plans about history books. Simultaneously, from 1942 till 1954, Ghafurov served as the Chair of the History Division of the Institute of History, Language and Literature of Tajikistan.⁸⁰³ Moreover, under his leadership, the CC of the Tajik CP and the Council of People's Commissars⁸⁰⁴ adopted a plan to publish a two-volume *History of Tajiks and Tajikistan* within 1941-1943.⁸⁰⁵ Ghafurov personally wrote letters to some leading scholars, inviting them to Tajikistan to get involved in this project.⁸⁰⁶ As will be shown later in this chapter, Ghafurov eventually gathered a group of prominent scholars to write a multi-volume history of Tajikistan. However, that did not happen in 1941-43 as proposed originally, but rather took place in 1963-65, as the Second World War changed Ghafurov's plans. Furthermore, the history textbook that was debated in 1936 was only prepared in 1959.⁸⁰⁷

The Second World War served as the first opportunity for Ghafurov to unite his propaganda duties with his emerging interest in history. During the war, the Soviet government called upon the practitioners of culture and art to narrate the heroic deeds of historical figures from Russia's

⁷⁹⁸ Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

⁷⁹⁹ He mentions that the report is not signed by anyone, however, he tries to show some evidences to argue that it could have been written by Ghafurov only.

⁸⁰⁰ For the text of the report, see Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki."

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Ibid. See also Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 104.

⁸⁰³ "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 110. The Institute of History, Language and Literature of Tajikistan was a part of the so-called Tajik Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Tajikistan's own Academy of Sciences was established in 1951.

⁸⁰⁴ Equivalent of the Cabinet of Ministers.

⁸⁰⁵ See the letter in Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 104.

⁸⁰⁶ For an example of his invitation letters, see *ibid.*

⁸⁰⁷ Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

past and from the past of other nations within the Soviet Union. Following the tide of works aiming at raising the “heroic spirit” of the Soviet nation, Ghafurov together with N. Prokhorov, wrote a propaganda work titled *Bor’ba Tadjikskogo Naroda Protiv Chuzhezemnykh Zakhvatchikov i Porabotiteley (Struggles of the Tajik People against Foreign Invaders and Enslavers)* in 1942. This work was published as a chapter in an edited book. Being a Chief Propaganda and Agitation Official in Tajikistan, Ghafurov called his subordinates to follow his example:

The current task is to concentrate the attention of our agitators to the nodal issues of mass agitation work. First of all, in a bright and figurative way, we have to tell about the heroic deeds of the Red Army and its brave fighters, heroes of the rear, best Stakhanovites, great patriots of our Motherland that are helping the Red Army selflessly and closely. The image of great predecessors of the Russian nation is encouraging all brotherly people of our country, including the Tajiks, to fight with the fascist barbarians mercilessly. *The Tajik nation has a rich history full of endless struggle against the foreign occupants and enslavers. The names of the glorious heroes of that struggle are alive in the memories of the people. These examples from the past of the Tajik nation should be used for the revolutionary and patriotic education of the masses.*⁸⁰⁸ [emphasis added]

The authors decided to expand the chapter into a monograph. After two- years of work, a book titled *Tadzhikskii Narod v Bor’be za Svobodu i Nezavisimost’ Svoei Rodiny: Ocherki iz Istorii Tadzhikov i Tadzhikistana (The Struggle of the Tajik Nation for Freedom and Independence of the Motherland: Essays from the History of the Tajiks and Tajikistan)* was published. Thematically, the publication was timely. The monograph was one of the many works published throughout the Soviet Union that aimed to raise the spirits of soldiers on the frontlines and workers in the rear. However, along with propaganda concerning heroism, the book makes two clear arguments; first, the earliest inhabitants of Central Asia were the direct ancestors of the Tajiks, which made the Tajiks the indigenous population of the region, and all other nations late-comers and occupants; second, territorially, the history of the Tajik people is not limited to Tajikistan, as the Tajik people and their historical states have historically been spread all over Central Asia. As will be shown elsewhere in this chapter, the coverage of such a narrow geographic and temporal span within the work triggered criticism by scholars from Uzbekistan.

As Pirumshoev observes, “though this book can hardly be called a complete analysis when examined against modern-day measures, it is the first scholarly achievement in [Tajik] historiography that defined the further direction of historical science in [Tajikistan]” and “served as the trial version for future fundamental works of Bobojon Ghafurov.”⁸⁰⁹ Similarly, I. Braginskii

⁸⁰⁸ B. Ghafurov, "Vse sily na razgrom vraga," *Kommunist Tadzhikistana*, 7 November 1942., quoted in Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 105.

⁸⁰⁹ Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki."

argues that “the 22 chapters of the book contained the core of future research.”⁸¹⁰ Closer to the end of the war, pre-war enthusiasm about writing the history of Tajik nation revived; in his speech, during one of the meetings at Tajik Branch of the Academy of Science of the USSR in 1944, Ghafurov called for serious scholarly attention to be paid to writing the history of the Tajik nation.⁸¹¹

1.3.2. *From propaganda to academia: the emergence of Ghafurov as an historian*

Long before he succeeded in gathering a group of scholars to write the history of Tajikistan, Ghafurov published his first scholarly research on the Tajik nation. This occurred in 1947 and the work was titled *Ta'rikhi Mukhtasari Khalqi Tojik (Jildi 1)* [A Concise History of the Tajik Nation (Volume 1)].⁸¹² As one Tajik scholar noted, “as a classical sample, it became a reference point [*orientir*] for all fundamental and composite research of scholars from neighboring states in the region.”⁸¹³ According to the Tajik President, President Rahmon, this work was “the first broadly researched work concerning the history of one of the most ancient nations in the world – the Tajik nation” and “has become a catalyst in the process of developing a national self-consciousness and reviving national pride.”⁸¹⁴ Furthermore, Rahmon claims that this book helped Tajik readers to find the answers to such questions as, “Who were our ancestors? Where did they come from? What kind of states did they establish and how did they rule there?”⁸¹⁵ He further argues that, considering that the book was written when “the idea of farfetched internationalism and thoughts about national self-determination were not tolerated, this kind of fundamental research by the first person of the republic [i.e., Ghafurov] was by itself an act of heroism.”⁸¹⁶ The Tajik President further claims that the book has been a good source of guidance for him. He states that he learned from the examples of real statesmanship imparted by the text, and that his “heart was in pain” due to the self-destructive atrocities committed by bad statesmen described in the book.⁸¹⁷

In 1949, a significantly revised and expanded version of the book was published in Russian. A Russian scholar, in his review of this Russian edition noted that the “[p]atriotism of the author,

⁸¹⁰ As quoted in Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 106.

⁸¹¹ For details, see B. Ghafurov, "Glubzhe izuchat' bogatoie istoricheskoe proshloie tadjhikskogo naroda," *Kommunist Tajikistana*, 10 May 1944.

⁸¹² No following volumes of the work were published.

⁸¹³ M. Ilolov, "B. G. Ghafuvor - vydaiushiisia uchionyi i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'," in *Bobodzhan Ghafurov: k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia*, ed. E. Chelyshev, et al. (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 2009), 56.

⁸¹⁴ Emomali Rahmon, "Velikii Syn Naroda," in *Bobodzhan Ghafurov: k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia*, ed. E. Chelyshev, et al. (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 2009), 31. See also "Sarchashmai Khudshinosii Milli (1998)," in *Tojikon: Ta'rikhi qadimtarin, qadim, asrhoi miiona va davrai nav*, ed. B. Ghafurov (Dushanbe: Donish, 2008), 4.

⁸¹⁵ "Sarchashmai Khudshinosii Milli (1998)," 4.

⁸¹⁶ "Velikii Syn Naroda," 31.

⁸¹⁷ "Sarchashmai Khudshinosii Milli (1998)," 4.

his deep love for his nation, his pride for its glorious past, run as a red thread through the book; such an emotional inclination undoubtedly, is transcendent enough to connect with a Soviet reader, who might be less familiar with, or completely unfamiliar with, the Tajik nation. It rouses in the Soviet reader the same feelings and moods experienced by the Tajiks."⁸¹⁸ The verdict was that this was "the first attempt to create the history of Tajiks."⁸¹⁹ As a result of the publication of the second Russian edition of this book, Ghafurov received his doctoral degree from the Institute of History of Material Culture, Academy of Science of the USSR in 1953. The success of the book encouraged Ghafurov to write a second volume. In order to do that, he decided to step down as a government official. His resignation letter read as follows:

As you know, my main field of specialty is history. In 1949, I prepared the first part of the book "A History of the Tajik Nation." Over the past several years, I have gathered data for the second volume of the history of Tajikistan (the Soviet period). The appearance of the Soviet era history of Tajikistan is important not only for the Soviet reader but also for the all democratic countries [sic]. I came to the decision that being in the post of Secretary [of the CC of the CP of Tajikistan] I cannot finish work on the second volume of this book. Therefore, I would like to ask you to allow me to work on writing the Soviet period history of the Tajik nation until the end of 1953. [Post-scriptum.] Obnosov, the Second Secretary, can be an acting First Secretary of the CC of CP of Tajikistan. In the case of my dismissal from my position, I think J. Rasulov, the Chair of the Council of Ministers of Tajikistan can be appointed as the First Secretary. To his post, N. Dodkhudoev, Chair of Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Tajik SSR, can be appointed.⁸²⁰

This letter did not result in his resignation. Thus, the second volume of the book was never written. Seven years later, Ghafurov was dismissed, but for an entirely different reason. In 1956, as a part of his campaign against the "cult of Stalin," N. Khrushchev, a Soviet leader, removed Ghafurov from the position of First Secretary of the Tajik CP.⁸²¹ Ghafurov was appointed as Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Science of the USSR. Under Ghafurov's leadership, the Institute of Oriental Studies acquired an international reputation as one of the most prominent centers of Oriental studies. His period of directorship is known as "Ghafurov's epoch" at the Institute.⁸²² As a place of cadre preparation and international cooperation, the Institute became a valuable asset for the USSR's foreign policy in the non-western world.

⁸¹⁸ N. Kisliakov, "B. G. Ghafurov. Istoriia Tadzhiiskogo Naroda v Kratkom Islozhenii. T.1. S Drevneishykh vremion do Velikoi Oktiabrskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Revoliutsii 1917 g. Pod redaktsiiei I. Braginskogo. Institut istorii, iazika i literatury Tadzhiiskogo Filiala Akademii Nauk SSSR, Gospolitizdat, 1949.," *Sovetskaia Etnografiia*, no. 3 (1950): 223.

⁸¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 221.

⁸²⁰ As provided in Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

⁸²¹ See N. Davlat, "Sovetskii ideolog, sovershivshii khadzhi," *Charkhi gardun*, 5 July 2012., S. Tursun, "Dukhovnyi lider," *Asia-Plus*, 16 January 2009.

⁸²² Chelyshev, "Vostochnyi Mudrets," 9.

Ghafurov made a significant contribution in this regard, but at the same time, he never stopped pursuing his academic interest in the history of Tajiks. For instance, right after his appointment, Ghafurov successfully organized the participation of a large Soviet delegation in the 26th International Congress of Orientalists, which took place in Munich in 1957. This is known as one of the most significant milestones in the international prominence of Soviet Oriental studies. The paper Ghafurov presented as head of the Soviet delegation was titled, "The Rise and Fall of the Samanids."⁸²³ Ghafurov did not use his new position to write the second volume of the book, for which he was willing to resign earlier. Nevertheless, as a Head of the Institute, he successfully gathered some well-established scholars to write the long-awaited multi-volume history of the Tajik nation.

A three-volume *Istoriia Tajikskogo Naroda* [The History of Tajik Nation] was published in 1963-1965.⁸²⁴ As one of the co-editors stated, it was detailed and strictly scholarly work on the history of Tajikistan and other nations within the region and was purely designed for the use of scholars.⁸²⁵ The books were "prepared under the initiative and with the direct involvement of Bobojon Ghafurov."⁸²⁶ A Tajik scholar confirms that they were written by a group of scholars from Moscow, Leningrad and Dushanbe "under the initiative and direct participation of academician B. G. Ghafurov."⁸²⁷ The fact that the project was based on Ghafurov's ideas was confirmed by one of the editors and contributors.⁸²⁸ For this work, Ghafurov received a state award.⁸²⁹ This publication was an important milestone in writing Tajik national history, for it was the first collective research and publication of its kind.

1.3.3. Ghafurov's magnum opus

In 1972, Ghafurov's most famous book – *Tadzhiki: Drevneishaia, Drevniaia i Srednevekovaia Istoriia* [Tajiks: Antic, Ancient, and Medieval History] – was published in Russian. This book, as one Tajik historian believes, became "Bobojon Ghafurov's business card in scholarly circles at an international level."⁸³⁰ Tajikistan's President Rahmon believes that this publication "put Ghafurov permanently in the rank of national geniuses."⁸³¹ Interestingly, in *Tadzhiki*, the author

⁸²³ For the Russian version of the paper, see B. Ghafurov, "O prichinakh vozvysheniia i padeniia Samanidov," *Sovetskoie Vostokovedniie*, no. 1 (1958).

⁸²⁴ The First Volume was published in 1963. The first and second books of the Second Volume – in 1964, and the first book of Third Volume – in 1964, and the second book of Third Volume – in 1965.

⁸²⁵ B. Litvinskii, "Bobodzhan Ghafurovich Ghafurov - osnovopolozhnik tadzhikskoi istoricheskoi nauki," in *Bobodzhan Ghafurov: k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia*, ed. E. Chelyshev, et al. (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura, 2009), 65.

⁸²⁶ Rahmon, "Velikii Syn Naroda," 33.

⁸²⁷ O. Karimov, *Vklad akademika B. Ghafurova v sozdaniie istorii tadzhikskogo naroda* (Khojand: Noshir, 2000), 84.

⁸²⁸ Litvinskii, "Bobodzhan Ghafurovich Ghafurov - osnovopolozhnik tadzhikskoi istoricheskoi nauki," 64. Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 111.

⁸²⁹ "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 111.

⁸³⁰ Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki."

⁸³¹ Rahmon, "Velikii Syn Naroda," 33.

does not make any arguments that have not appeared in his previous works. In fact, *Tadzhiki* is simply a significantly improved version of the latest edition of Ghafurov's *Istoriia Tadzhikskogo Naroda v Kratkom Izlozhenii*, published in 1955. B. Litvinskii, a Soviet scholar, who claims to have been involved in writing *Tadzhiki*, and whom Ghafurov acknowledged as the editor of the work, argues that Ghafurov once suggested that he improve *Istoriia tadzhikskogo naroda v kratkom islozhenii* by including the latest archaeological and numismatic discoveries.⁸³² Litvinskii's efforts to improve the work, so he claims, resulted in a qualitatively new book – *Tadzhiki*.⁸³³ The biggest and most easily visible difference between the two works is that *Tadzhiki* is written in a relatively more academic style and has many more references to original sources.

The title of the book is misleading in the sense that the book does not narrowly focus on the Tajiks. Instead, *Tadzhiki* has lengthy narrations about the origins of the Uzbeks and their place in the history of Central Asia. This has caused some scholars to argue that *Tadzhiki* has become “the basis of historical-cultural, ethnologic, economic research of not only the Tajiks but also of other nations of Central Asia.”⁸³⁴ However, in fact, this book, similarly to the previous ones, represents Central Asia as the Tajik homeland. No matter how accommodating this work is in dealing with other ethnic groups within Central Asia, the hidden message was that they were latecomers as compared to the indigenous Tajiks. Even though Ghafurov makes this point in his previous works, *Tadzhiki* does so in a bolder, less dogmatic, and more convincing manner. According to President Rahmon, the book is powerful and impartial:

In this way, academician Bobojon Ghafurov has devoted his life to researching and writing the history of his nation, and fortunately, has achieved his aim. By publishing his great masterpiece *Tojikon* [the title of the Tajik translation of the book] he has gladdened not only the Tajik nation but also the entire world of Persian speakers, fans, and admirers of Eastern civilization as well as the people of Central Asia with a source of valuable power [sic]. I have to emphasize that in writing this work, scholar Bobojon Ghafurov, to use master Aini's words, has followed one of the ‘most important principles of historiography – impartial discussion.’⁸³⁵

The importance of this work for the Tajik nation cannot be overstated. It “not only gave the Tajiks a wonderfully drawn picture of their history, but also showed other nations the role of the Tajiks in the history of humankind and the Tajik contribution to world civilization.”⁸³⁶ This book is the “passport” of Tajiks in “world civilization.”⁸³⁷ It is “a reference book for every Tajik.”⁸³⁸ One

⁸³² Litvinskii, "Bobodzhan Ghafurovich Ghafurov - osnovopolozhnik tadzhikskoi istoricheskoi nauki," 65-66.

⁸³³ *Ibid.*, 66-68.

⁸³⁴ Chelyshev, "Vostochnyi Mudrets," 9-10.

⁸³⁵ Rahmon, "Sarchashmai Khudshinosii Milli (1998)," 5.

⁸³⁶ Litvinskii, "Bobodzhan Ghafurovich Ghafurov - osnovopolozhnik tadzhikskoi istoricheskoi nauki," 68.

⁸³⁷ Tursun, "Dukhovnyi lider."

⁸³⁸ Chelyshev, "Vostochnyi Mudrets," 4.

Tajik scholar puts *Tadzhiki* on par with Avicenna's writings.⁸³⁹ The following passage summarizes common beliefs among the Tajik intelligentsia about this book:

Ask any citizen of our republic about which book they would like to own. You bet - the answer will be, "Tadzhiki." A book that is interesting to everyone; for a historian, it is a reference book; for a person far from scholarship – a book on the life of a most ancient nation; for a Tajik, whether he is a scholar or a peasant – [an object of] pride.⁸⁴⁰

"Tadzhiki" has truly given a serious impulse to the growth of the self-knowledge and self-consciousness of our Tajik nation. It is for this work that Bobojon [Ghafurov] was awarded in his motherland with the title of Hero of Tajikistan. "Tadzhiki" is an immortal scholarly masterpiece created by the scholar as a result of 30 years of work. This work really is a reference book for every Tajik – it is as essential as air and water for the further development of the historical mentality of our nation.⁸⁴¹

Even though Ghafurov's historical works serve the interests of the Tajik nation, there is an impression that rather than attempting to cultivate a feeling of national pride amongst the Tajiks, Ghafurov's main concerns were to educate decision-makers in Moscow, win the argument against his colleagues from Uzbekistan, and secure the support of as many scholars from Moscow and Leningrad as possible. It is impossible to otherwise explain the fact that, in Tajikistan, *Tadzhiki* was not translated to the Tajik language for 13 years after its original publication in Russian in 1972. The Tajik translation of the book was published in only in 1985. It is interesting to note that the book was first translated into Tajik and published in Tehran in 1983, followed by a Dari translation published in Kabul in 1984. It is also worth mentioning that before the Tajik version was released, the book was translated into Polish and Chinese.⁸⁴² Overall, this book was the best reflection of Ghafurov's vision of Tajik national history.

2. The Tajik "self" and the Uzbek "other" in Ghafurov's *Tadzhiki*

Compared to Ghafurov's previously published books, *Tajiki* is relatively bolder in its claims about the ancientness of the Tajik nation and its differences from the Persian people. Moreover, the work goes to unprecedented lengths to contest the origins of the Uzbeks and their interactions with the Tajik population of Central Asia. While the author believes that he has done a favour to Uzbeks by acknowledging their role in the history of Central Asia, in fact, what he has done is draw the most rigid border possible between the Tajik "self" and Uzbek "other".

⁸³⁹ Karimov, *Vklad akademika B. Ghafurova v sozdaniie istorii tadzhikskogo naroda*, 13.

⁸⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 96-97.

⁸⁴¹ Rahmon, "Velikii Syn Naroda," 33.

⁸⁴² Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 148. See also Litvinskii's part of the edited book.

2.1. Tajiks and their ancient ancestors

Similarly to Ghafurov's previous books, this one also did not provide any explanation for the origins of the Tajik ethnonym. He acknowledged that "Tajik" as an ethnonym has been used since early 11th century.⁸⁴³ However, he highlighted that there is no consensus about the origins of the term, which arguably could have been used in a variety of different forms earlier.⁸⁴⁴ However, what was certain for the author is that formation of the Tajiks as an ethnic group was completed during the Samanid period.⁸⁴⁵ The evidence for this, according to Ghafurov, is the fact that most of the classics of Tajik literature were created during and after the period of Samanid rule.⁸⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Ghafurov warned that one should not infer that the Tajiks emerged a couple of centuries before Arab conquest of Central Asia⁸⁴⁷ nor should one assume that the Persian-Tajik language appeared in an empty space. (Ghafurov, 2008)⁸⁴⁸ Ghafurov rather tried, right from the onset of the book, to establish links between the Tajiks and the most ancient population of Central Asia.

The book begins with the argument that already in the 7-6th centuries BC the Iranian people, including Sogdians, Bactrians, Margiani [*marghiyonih*], Khorazmians, Parthians, [and] the tribes belonging to the Sakas and others have resided in Central Asia.⁸⁴⁹ According to Ghafurov, Avesta has enough evidence to prove that the Central Asian territory, namely, Sogd, Margiana, Khorazm, Arya, and others, was inhabited by Iranian tribes.⁸⁵⁰ Thus, languages such as Sogdian, Bactrian, Khorazmian, Khotani, and Saka were Eastern Iranian languages spoken only in this part of the world.⁸⁵¹ Evidence of the Iranian languages' dominance in Central Asia is the fact that, during the Arab invasion, the locally proliferated languages were Sogdian, Khorazmian, Ferganian, and Hephthalitian.⁸⁵² As the modern-day offsprings of ancient Iranian languages, the author highlights Persian, Tajik, Kurdish, Baluch, Pushto, Ossetian, and Pamiri, all of which belong to the Iranian group of languages.⁸⁵³ Ultimately, the Iranian tribes such as the Bactrians, Sogdians, Khorazmians, Saka tribes, which lived in Central Asia in the 7-6th centuries BC, were

⁸⁴³ B. Ghafurov, *Tojikon: Ta'rikhi Qadimtarin, Qadim, Asrhoi Miiona va Davri Nav* (Dushanbe: Donish, 2008), 373.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 368.

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 373, 281.

⁸⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 380.

⁸⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 381.

⁸⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

⁸⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁸⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, 370.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, 34.

the direct ancestors of the Tajik people. To put it in Ghafurov's words, "based on these peoples, especially Bactrians and Sogdians, the Tajik people emerged in the early medieval period."⁸⁵⁴

However, there is one major contradiction in Ghafurov's theory. It is known that Tajik does not belong to the Eastern Iranian languages, however, the dead languages of Khorazmian, Sogdian, and Khotan-Sakas, and others, including the currently spoken Pamiri language, do.⁸⁵⁵ "The modern-day Tajik language belongs to the Western Iranian languages."⁸⁵⁶ As a Western Iranian language, Tajik expanded from south-western Persia "towards the north and north-east, assimilating many elements from the languages of groups in the north-west."⁸⁵⁷ Thus, by the 7-8th centuries, this language, which Ghafurov calls *zaboni Forsi* or *Farsiye-Dari* was dominant in the territories surrounding current Turkmenistan,⁸⁵⁸ northern Afghanistan, southern Central Asia and the south of Tajikistan.⁸⁵⁹ In Bukhara and Samarkand, this language prevailed only in the 9-10th centuries, gradually replacing the Sogdian language.⁸⁶⁰ However, the influence of local Eastern Iranian languages resulted in the emergence of various Persian dialects in Central Asia that differ from the western Iranian Persian dialects in terms of phonetics and vocabulary.⁸⁶¹ In places like Yaghnob, the Sogdian language has never been replaced by Western dialects.⁸⁶²

Ghafurov's book fails to explain how this language came from Persia to Central Asia. According to him, there is no scholarly explanation for the expansion of the *Forsi* to the mentioned region in order to replace local Eastern Iranian languages.⁸⁶³ He rather referred to two hypotheses, both of which exclude the possibility of the massive movement of a population from Persia to Central Asia. First, the Persian language might have come to the region relatively early, when the Manichean religion traveled to the area from Persia.⁸⁶⁴ Second, it might have been brought in by local converts from territories that had already been conquered by the Arabs, mainly, the Khorasanians (he notes that there is even a special term for those groups of people, *mawali*).⁸⁶⁵ In any case, in Ghafurov's theory, the Tajiks are not Iranians who might have come to Central Asia from Persia and spread the Persian language in the region by replacing previously dominant languages.

⁸⁵⁴ Ibid., 43. See also, *ibid.*, 60.

⁸⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, 53.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid., 370.

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid., 372.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid.

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ Ibid., 370.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid., 370-71.

⁸⁶⁵ Ibid., 371.

However, as far as the origins of the Western Iranian tribes are concerned, Ghafurov was sure that before appearing in Persia they resided in Central Asia and in the Black Sea region. One group of them settled in India, and another one moved to western Iran through Asia Minor in the mid-2nd millennia BC.⁸⁶⁶ Those tribes, according to him, were ancestors of the Persians and Medians,⁸⁶⁷ who replaced the non-Iranian tribes of western Iran such as Elamites, Luwians, Kassites, etc.⁸⁶⁸ In India, the Aryans from Central Asian replaced the people, who had resided there before and built the renowned Harappa culture.⁸⁶⁹ To summarize Ghafurov's theory, first, approximately in the 15th century BC the Iranian people expanded from Central Asia to Persia. Those Iranians who left Central Asia eventually became Western Iranians, while those who stayed in Central Asia were known as Eastern Iranians. Second, in the 7-10th century AD the language of the Western Iranians travelled back to Central Asia to completely replace the languages of the Eastern Iranians, however, the Western Iranians did not travel themselves. Third, the Tajiks are the descendants of the Eastern Iranians, who adopted the language of the Western Iranians.

2.2. Turkic tribes

According to Ghafurov, the first arrival of the Turkic tribes in Central Asia took place in the middle of the 6th century AD, when they clashed with the locally dominant Hephthalites.⁸⁷⁰ Before coming to Central Asia, the Turks established a huge empire that stretched from the Korean peninsula to the shores of the Black Sea.⁸⁷¹ In the 560s, the Turks defeated the Hephthalites and later clashed with the Sassanid dynasty of Iran,⁸⁷² even though the Iranian Shah was the ally of Turk Khakan in his campaign against the Hephthalites. These narratives imply two things. First, that the Turks came to Central Asia en masse as late as the mid-6th century, which supports the argument that Eastern Iranian tribes were the Aboriginal people of the region. Second, the Sassanid Shahs of Persia were hostile to Central Asian Iranians, considering that the Hephthalites were one of the Eastern Iranian groups.⁸⁷³ In short, for the Tajiks, who are claimed to be the direct ancestors of the Eastern Iranians, both the Turks and Western Iranians were hostile.

Regarding the general implications of the arrival of the Turks in Central Asia, Ghafurov says that "the Turkic tribes penetrated into the oases; some of them settled down, while others

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid., 39. See also, *ibid.*, 42.

⁸⁶⁷ Ibid., 39.

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid., 43.

⁸⁶⁹ Ibid., 41-42.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., 216.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid., 215.

⁸⁷² Ibid., 217.

⁸⁷³ Regarding his argument about the Iranian belonging of the Hephthalites, see *ibid.*, 210.

preoccupied themselves with cattle-breeding on the outskirts of the oases. Some Turks settled in the cities, too.”⁸⁷⁴ Political and military power was in their hands as “Turkic or Turkicized [local] rulers were still the heads of most provinces.”⁸⁷⁵ They have brought some positive changes in craftsmanship and military technology to the region.⁸⁷⁶ The 6-8th centuries witnessed the accelerated synthesis of the culture and traditions of the Iranian and Turkic-speaking population of Central Asia.⁸⁷⁷

Even though there were a significant number of settled Turkic people during the Samanid period, the author is confident that the Tajiks made up the majority of the peasant population of Central Asia.⁸⁷⁸ The number of the Turkic-speaking population started to grow significantly only during the Qarakhanid rule (840-1212 AD) as a result of the inflow of more Turkic people and the Turkicization of the Tajik population.⁸⁷⁹ The first millennia AD witnessed the Turkicization and Mongolization of local residents.⁸⁸⁰ Later, when the Mongols came to Central Asia, some of their tribes (Manghit, Jalair, and Barlas) were Turkicized rather than Tajikized, because the Mongols and Turks had links and there were significant numbers of Turks in Central Asia by this time.⁸⁸¹ As a result of the Turkicization of the settled Tajik local population of Khorazm, Tashkent, and Fergana, a new group of sedentary people known as “Sarts” emerged; this term was equally used to refer to both the Turkic-speaking and Tajik-speaking population.⁸⁸² Overall, the migration of the Turkic tribes caused a range of synthesis and assimilations between the Eastern Iranian groups including the Sogdian, Khorazmian, Farghanian, and Tokharian groups, in terms of language, culture, economy, lifestyle, as well as anthropological features.⁸⁸³ Ghafurov claimed that a new Central Asian race emerged as a result, which he dubs a Pamiri-Farghani.⁸⁸⁴ This race, according to him, comprises Tajiks and Uzbeks, “though the elements of the Mongolian group are quite visible in the features of the Uzbeks.”⁸⁸⁵

2.3. Uzbeks

Unlike any other previous publication, in *Tadzhiki* Ghafurov goes to lengths to describe the place of Uzbeks in Central Asia. To begin with, Ghafurov stated that the arrival of the nomadic Uzbeks,

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid., 222.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid., 223.

⁸⁷⁸ Ibid., 535-36.

⁸⁷⁹ Ibid., 536.

⁸⁸⁰ Ibid., 369.

⁸⁸¹ Ibid., 539.

⁸⁸² Ibid.

⁸⁸³ Ibid., 368-69.

⁸⁸⁴ For a detailed anthropological and physiological description of this race, see *ibid.*, 369.

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.

led by Shaybani, in Central Asia in the late 15th and early 16th centuries gave the Uzbek nation its ethnonym. However, this was not the most important event in the history of the Uzbek nation, because this even merely resulted in the establishment of the Uzbeks ethnonym. Shaybanids were of the same ethnic stock as the momads that previously invaded Central Asia and settled there.⁸⁸⁶ Regarding the ethnic composition of the Uzbeks, he stated that ancient Iranian elements played a major role in the formation of the Uzbek nation.⁸⁸⁷ According to Ghafurov, the Uzbek nation was formed on the basis of the Turkic-speaking people of Central Asia, which in their turn, emerged due to the assimilation of the Turkic tribes (which had started to come to Central Asia in the 6th century) by the local the Sogdian and Khorazmian groups, as well as the tribes of Sakas and Massagetae.⁸⁸⁸ During its formation, the Uzbek nation “enjoyed the cultural heritage of the ancient settled [people].”⁸⁸⁹ If the significant Turkic elements are not considered, the Uzbeks and the Tajiks are the result of a similar ethnic consolidation process. As far as the linguistic foundation of the Uzbek nation is concerned, Ghafurov believed that it started to emerge in the 11-12th centuries, when the old Uzbek language was formed.⁸⁹⁰

Since the Timurid period, the literature of the two neighboring peoples, the Tajiks and the Uzbeks, has become more integrated.⁸⁹¹ The friendship of Alisher Navoi and Abdurahman Jami was, according to Ghafurov, “the symbol of a marvelous friendship of two brotherly nations – the Tajiks and Uzbeks.”⁸⁹² The following passage outlines Ghafurov’s view about the positive relations between Tajiks and Uzbeks:

The Tajiks and the Uzbeks – the peoples, the formation of whose nationhood is based on common ancestry – are intimately related to each other. The Uzbeks have enjoyed the cultural heritage of the Tajiks, whereas the Tajiks have benefited from the unique culture of the Uzbek people. The characteristics of the material culture, customs, arts and craftsmanship of the Tajik and Uzbek people are so close to each other that it is not possible to distinguish one from another. The histories of these people in the pre-ancient, ancient, as well as the medieval period, were very similar and mostly identical; moreover, their development took place in the same territory. Nevertheless, two nations emerged, which currently have transformed into the Tajik and Uzbek socialistic nations.⁸⁹³

In the 14-15th centuries, the Tajiks were Uzbekified, and the Uzbeks were Tajikified, which, for Ghafurov, meant mere bilingualism.⁸⁹⁴ The culture and lifestyle of the Tajiks and Uzbeks became

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid., 539-40.

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid., 536.

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid., 535.

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid., 538.

⁸⁹¹ Ibid., 508.

⁸⁹² Ibid., 507.

⁸⁹³ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid., 540.

so similar that it was difficult to draw a borderline between them.⁸⁹⁵ Moreover, Ghafurov highlights the similarities in vocabulary and grammar in the Tajik and Uzbek languages.⁸⁹⁶ He also reminds the reader that the ethnic consolidations of both nations took place within the same political entities and that they had to fight common enemies in many cases.⁸⁹⁷ Disagreements, when they arose, were always been solved based via peaceful means.⁸⁹⁸ The author further insisted that the ethnical differences mentioned in the book should not be interpreted as any indication of the superiority of nation over the other.⁸⁹⁹

It can be observed that Ghafurov attempted to play down any possible friction his work might create between Tajiks and Uzbeks. For instance, he emphasized that quarrels between Binoi and Navoi, Tajik and Uzbek poets respectively, were nothing more than the gossip of the historians. In fact, as Ghafurov believes, Binoi held a positive opinion about Navoi and even wrote poems in Uzbek.⁹⁰⁰ Moreover, the literary works of Navoi were read in the madrasahs of Bukhara, which, according to Ghafurov, had a significant impact on introducing the languages of the two nations to each other.⁹⁰¹ The Uzbeks can claim a shared ownership of the history and culture of Central Asia.⁹⁰² In other words, the “Uzbeks have not only been the equal participants in the historical events that have occurred in Central Asia in the last four centuries, but were also equal participants in the very early periods.”⁹⁰³ Moreover, “[b]oth Iranian-speaking and Turkic-speaking nations have produced outstanding persons of science and culture, who are the pride of all the nations of Central Asia.”⁹⁰⁴ Thus, the core mass of the Uzbek people is the local indigenous population of Central Asia.⁹⁰⁵ Finally, Uzbeks, unlike Kyrgyzs and Kazakhs, belong to the “Europoid” race, as do Tajiks; but, unlike Tajiks, some Uzbeks have the imprints of the Mongoloid physiognomy.⁹⁰⁶

Nevertheless, Ghafurov openly blames the Uzbeks for several transgressions against the local Tajiks. For instance, “[b]y occupying the pastures, the Uzbek nomadic tribes that came to Central Asia have squeezed out not only local nomads but also the local settled population.”⁹⁰⁷ The practice of rewarding Uzbek royal family members and noble leaders led to the scarcity of

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid., 541.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid., 542.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid., 548.

⁹⁰¹ Ibid., 623, f.n. 223.

⁹⁰² Ibid., 536.

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid., 542.

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid., 541.

⁹⁰⁶ Ibid., 540.

⁹⁰⁷ Ibid., 521.

land.⁹⁰⁸ During the rule of the Uzbek dynasties, ancient Tajik provinces like Herat and Badakhshan were lost forever to Afghan emirs, as a result, many Tajiks lost contacts with their compatriots on the right shore of Amudarya.⁹⁰⁹ Consequently, a significant proportion of Tajik population was left out in Afghanistan.⁹¹⁰ Due to the weak strategic planning of the last Emirs of the Manghit dynasty, the Tajik cities of Khujand, Uroteppa, and Nau were conquered by the Russian Empire.⁹¹¹ The author kept highlighting the Uzbek identity of the feudal and ruling elites whenever mentioning their negative deeds and features.⁹¹² In general, despite his attempts to acknowledge the equally important place of the Uzbeks in the history of Central Asia, in *Tadzhiki*, Ghafurov narrated the Tajik-centric history of Central Asia. His explanations regarding the origins and role of the Uzbeks are not accepted by historians from Uzbekistan, even though as compared to the stance taken in his previous publications, in *Tadzhiki*, Ghafurov makes unprecedented “concessions” to fit the Uzbeks into the history of the Tajik nation.

3. The Tajik “self” and the Uzbek “other” in Ghafurov’s historiography: A view from post-Soviet Tajikistan

Tajik scholars are sure that Ghafurov designed his scholarly works as a response to the pan-Turkist discourses that undermine Tajik national identity. According to Ilolov, pan-Turkists believe that the “Tajiks were either migrants from Persia, or were Arabs that adopted the Persian language, whereas the Turkic-Mongol nomads were viewed as the ancient indigenous population of the region and the direct inheritors of those cultural values, which were indeed created by many generations of Tajiks.”⁹¹³ For Ilolov, these were “baseless, provocative ideas.” He believes that Ghafurov used his weight as a statesman for the “interests of historical science, which was for him a principal means of cultivating self-knowledge and national self-consciousness as a counterweight to opposing ideas of nationalist streams of panturkism.”⁹¹⁴ In particular, Ghafurov was a pioneer in “promptly and clearly” showing the non-Persian⁹¹⁵ and non-Turkic⁹¹⁶ origins of the Tajiks. In a similar way, another Tajik scholar, Pirumshoev, highlights Ghafurov’s “service in defining the origins of the Tajik nation [and] boldly standing against the baseless [and] biased opinion of a pan-Turkist stream regarding the allegedly Persian and Arabic origins [of Tajiks].”⁹¹⁷ According to Pirumshoev, during his 5-year-long education in Moscow at

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid., 526.

⁹⁰⁹ Ibid., 573.

⁹¹⁰ Ibid., 615, 18.

⁹¹¹ Ibid., 630.

⁹¹² Ibid., 555, 56, 59, 60, 61, 66.

⁹¹³ Ilolov, "B. G. Ghafurov - vydaiushiisia uchionyi i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'," 57.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid., 55.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid., 56.

⁹¹⁶ Ibid., 57-58.

⁹¹⁷ Pirumshoev, "Bobodzhan Ghafurov: Ot zhurnalistiki k istoricheskoi nauki."

the Institute of Journalism, Ghafurov obtained knowledge on the history of the region that helped him to understand the “mistakes” of NTD in Central Asia:

Bobojon Ghafurov started more often and confidently coming to the conclusion that only historical awareness can provide the required impulse for the development of national self-consciousness. Only this can make it possible to understand the unforgivable mistakes of those national traitors, who could not distance themselves from the infectious influence of pan-Turkism. [...] Even though they participated in the work of the Commission on national territorial delimitation (1924) in the region, they could not stand for their own legitimate rights to [get] those lands, where Tajiks lived compactly [...].⁹¹⁸

Hamdampur, a political commentator and editor-in-chief of a *Tojikiston* newspaper, states that “preservation of [Badakhshan and Yagnob] languages was sacrosanct for Bobojon Ghafurov,” because by doing so Ghafurov gave a serious “a blow against those, who tried hard to prove that the Tajiks were not the indigenous population [of Central Asia].”⁹¹⁹ In post-Soviet Tajikistan Ghafurov’s discourses about the Tajik-Uzbek mutuality and similarity are ignored and misinterpreted. For instance, according to Ilolov, “Multiple intersections of the path [of Tajik nation] with close neighboring nations, which are foreign in terms of racial-ethnic features, might have had some influences on Tajiks. However, [that influence] could not be a determining force in the formation of Tajik nationality [narodnost] or in the establishment of Tajikistan. It is the historical truth, which rests on the basis of the research of academician B. G. Ghafurov.”⁹²⁰

4. The reaction of scholars in Uzbekistan to Ghafurov’s Tajik-centred version of Central Asia’s history

Ghafurov’s main concern has been to write a history of the Tajiks as separate from the history of other nations in the region:

[T]here is still an opinion that there is no need to separately work out the history of Tajik and Tajikistan, Uzbeks and Uzbekistan, Turkmens and Turkmenistan, etc. and that it is more appropriate to write one history of Central Asia common for all Central Asian nations. Obviously, beyond peradventure such a view is absolutely incorrect.⁹²¹

However, the way that he represented the history of Tajiks triggered criticism from historians of neighboring Soviet republics, mainly from Uzbekistan. No matter how carefully Ghafurov chose his words in hailing the role of Uzbeks in the history of Tajiks and the Central Asian region, his position on the origins of Uzbeks proved unacceptable to the historians of Uzbekistan.

⁹¹⁸ See *ibid.*

⁹¹⁹ Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

⁹²⁰ Ilolov, "B. G. Ghafurov - vydaiushiisia uchionyi i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'," 57-58.

⁹²¹ B. Ghafurov and N. Prokhorov, *Tadzhikskii Narod v Bor'be za Svobodu i Nezavisimost' Svoiei Rodiny* (Stalinabad: Gosizdat pri SNK Tadzhikskoi SSR, 1944), 1.

Moreover, one of the concerns of the historians of Uzbekistan was to write the history of the Uzbek nation within the geographical boundaries of modern-day Uzbekistan, and they expected the historians of other nations to follow the same principle and refrain from going beyond their state borders and “penetrating” into the territories of neighboring countries. Ghafurov completely ignored this principle, as for him, the history of Tajiks and Tajikistan were not overlapping.

All of Ghafurov’s publications faced criticism and counter-arguments from historians who had studied the history of Uzbekistan and Central Asia. The ethnic background of those scholars was not necessarily Uzbek, and they were not necessarily based in Tashkent. When Ghafurov’s *Tadzhikskii narod v bor’be za svobodu i nezavisimost* (the previously mentioned book chapter co-authored with Prokhorov) was published, an Uzbek writer, Rahmon Nabiyev, wrote a similar book titled *O’zbekiston Xalqlarining Chet El Bosqinchilariga Qarshi Kurashi (Epizodlar)* [The Struggle of the People of Uzbekistan against the Foreign Invaders (Episodes)]. In a relatively short book, the Uzbek historian attempted to present the struggle of the local population in the territories of modern Uzbekistan against the invasions of Alexander of Macedonia, Arabs, Mongols, and Nazi Germans.⁹²² The two publications depicted the same events. However, Ghafurov and Prokhorov called the local populations Tajiks, while Nabiyev called them Uzbeks.

The same book chapter of Ghafurov’s faced criticism from S. Tolstov, who demanded to ban its publication, in particular.⁹²³ Tolstov, in his book, which was published a year before Ghafurov’s, represented the history of Central Asia as that of “the people [*narody*] of Uzbekistan.” According to him, “the people of Uzbekistan” were the descendants of all the ethnicities and nationalities that lived in the region, including Scythians, Khorazmians, Sogdians, Bactrians, etc.⁹²⁴ Back in the late 1930s and early 1940s, unlike Ghafurov, Tolstov was a famous scholar with extensive experience in archaeology and ethnography and was the author of an award-winning book – *Drevnii Khorezm [Ancient Khorazm]*.⁹²⁵ Tolstov’s position was a serious hurdle for Ghafurov. Nevertheless, Ghafurov’s chapter was published.

Following the criticism, the authors included the following statement in the foreword when they expanded their chapter into a monograph: “The editorial board of the History of Tajiks and

⁹²² See R. Nabiev, *O’zbekiston Xalqlarining Chet El Bosqinchilariga Qarshi Kurashi (Epizodlar)* (Tashkent: O’zFAN Nashriyoti, 1942).

⁹²³ Hamdampur, “Pochemu Babadzhon Ghafurov ushul s posta sekretaria?.”

⁹²⁴ See S. Tolstov, *Drevniia Kul’tura Uzbekistana*, Bibliotekha Boitsa (Tashkent: UzFAN, 1943). This book was also designed as a propaganda against the fascism, where the main argument was that contrary to the assertion of the fascist leadership, the non-Russian nations of the USSR have ties to world civilizations.

⁹²⁵ *Drevnii Khorezm* (Moscow: MGU, 1948). summarized the results of expedition that revealed the ancient civilization of Khorezm. For this work, the author received Stalin’s award. For more information, see T. Zhdanko and M. Itina, “Sergei Pavlovich Tolstov,” *Sovetskaia Etnografiia*, no. 2 (1972): 9.

Tajikistan, and the Institute of History, Language, and Literature of the Tajik Branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR hopes that these circumstances will not be evaluated as an underestimation of or dismissal of the rich history and cultural past of the other national of Central Asia.⁹²⁶ Ghafurov had his own counter-arguments to Tolstov's vision of ethnogenesis in Central Asia; "[...] Professor Tolstov makes a discovery in the history of the people of Central Asia. As if the Tajiks, who speak the Iranian languages [...] have no right to claim the past of the Iranians, whereas the Turkic-speaking nations of Central Asia – Uzbeks and Turkmens – do have such a right."⁹²⁷

The Russian translation of Ghafurov's *Ta'rikhi Mukhtasari Khalqi Tojik* was also received with some criticism. As one reviewer put it, the work overwhelmingly focused on the entire Central Asian region, leaving the territory of Tajikistan out of sight: "It seems to us that more space could be allocated to the depiction of the events that took place in the mountainous regions that currently make up most of the territory of the Tajik SSR. This criticism also applies to previous Tajik editions of the book."⁹²⁸ It was a call to limit the history of the Tajiks to the history of Tajikistan. For reasons discussed in the other parts of this chapter, it was not acceptable to Ghafurov to limit his historiography to events that occurred within the borders of Tajikistan. In the same year that this book was published historians from Uzbekistan started to publish a two-volume history of Uzbekistan.⁹²⁹ Those books not only touched upon the issues of Uzbek-Tajik ethnogenesis but also labelled the Tajik/Persian-centric historiography as pan-Iranism. Along with refuting the pan-Turkist agenda as having "nothing to do with historical science," A. Yakubovskii, in the foreword to the second volume of the book stated the following about pan-Iranism:

The reactionary pan-Iranists view the Iranian cultural world as historically united [sic]. Some argue that the center, from where the "Iranian" culture proliferated, was Iran (Persia), but some others [believe that it was] Afghanistan. This is a crude distortion of history. There is no single Iranian nation; there are different Iranian-speaking nations [...].⁹³⁰

Furthermore, according to Yakubovskii, it is extremely difficult to write separate histories of the Uzbeks and the Tajiks, because "historically Uzbeks and Tajiks are so intertwined (territorially,

⁹²⁶ Ghafurov and Prokhorov, *Tadzhikskii Narod v Bor'be za Svobodu i Nezavisimost' Svoiei Rodiny*, 1.

⁹²⁷ As quoted in Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

⁹²⁸ Kisliakov, "B. G. Ghafurov. Istoriia Tadzhikskogo Naroda v Kratkoi Izlozhenii. T.1. S Drevneishykh vremion do Velikoi Oktiabrskoi Sotsialisticheskoi Revoliutsii 1917 g. Pod redaktsiiei I. Braginskogo. Institut istorii, iazika i literatury Tadzhikskogo Filiala Akademii Nauk SSSR, Gospolitizdat, 1949.," 224.

⁹²⁹ S. Bakhrushin, V. Nepomnina, and V. Shishkin, eds., *Istoriia Narodov Uzbekistana: from the formation of the Shaybanid state till the Great October Socialist Revolution*, vol. 2 (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo AN UzSSR, 1947). and S. Tolstov and V. Zakhidova, eds., *Istoriia Narodov Uzbekistana: S Drevneishikh Vremion do Nachala XVI veka*, vol. 1 (Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo AN UzSSR, 1950). The planned third volume of the book was never published.

⁹³⁰ *Istoriia Narodov Uzbekistana: S Drevneishikh Vremion do Nachala XVI veka*, 12.

economically, politically, and culturally) that, at first glance, it might seem almost impossible to divide the history of one from that of the other."⁹³¹ He further argues that both nations are similarly ancient; "[...] the Tajiks existed and were cultured significantly earlier than they acquired their ethnonym. The same can be said about the Uzbeks, who received their ethnonym significantly later than Tajiks, even though they have been living in the very heart of Central Asia from deep ancient times."⁹³²

As far as the origins of Uzbeks is concerned, Yakuboskii believed that they emerged as a Turkic-speaking nation long before the nomad Uzbeks arrived in the 15-16th centuries.⁹³³ "Thus, the history of the Turkic-speaking population of Mawarannahr [as well as] the ancient history of Sogd, Khorazm, Farghana, Shash is the history of the Uzbek nation."⁹³⁴ It implies that even though the Turks established their first state in the region in the 6th century, "one can hardly find any serious historian who would doubt the existence of the Turkic-speaking population [in Central Asia] before the 6th century."⁹³⁵ Uyghurs were there long before the ethnonym Turk appeared. The last argument, and the most innovative argument so far, was that along with ancient indigenous and newly arrived Turkic tribes, Turkicized Sogdians and Khorazmians, there were Tajiks in the content of the conglomerate of the Uzbek proto-nation.⁹³⁶

For the Tajik side, this seemed like nothing more than an attempt to belittle the place of their nation and inflate the role of the Uzbeks in Central Asian history. As one Tajik historian noted, "[k]nowing the opinions and jealous attitudes [...] of some of his colleagues in the Central Asian region, [Ghafurov] defended his views with a surprising patience and persistence, expanding the range of the reliable sources, both archaeological and manuscriptal."⁹³⁷ However, Ghafurov's "self-defence" was not only about expanding the sources. He had used his political connections efficiently. It is well-known that Ghafurov enjoyed Stalin's support. In the capacity of the First Secretary, he reportedly met Stalin, where he had a chance to discuss Tajik national historiography with him. The following transcript of the 1948 meeting was published in an online newspaper in Tajikistan:

Ghafurov: Comrade Stalin, people have heard your speech during the reception of the participants of the [ten-day long celebration of] Tajik arts. Allow me to use it in my work.

Stalin: (after reading the speech from beginning to the end) Not bad, I will return it to you tomorrow.

⁹³¹ Ibid., 7.

⁹³² Ibid., 8.

⁹³³ Ibid.

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

⁹³⁵ Ibid., 9.

⁹³⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁹³⁷ Ilolov, "B. G. Ghafurov - vydaishiiia uchionyi i gosudarstvennyi deiatel'," 57.

Zhdanov: (to Stalin) Comrade Ghafurov is a historian, he is writing the history of the Tajik nation. (To Ghafurov) I guess, you finished working on it already?

Ghafurov: Yes, Andrei Aleksandrovich, I have finished the first volume. However, Joseph Vissarionovich, there are some contradictions.

Stalin: What kind of [contradictions]?

Ghafurov: There are two views in the science of history; one of them raises the history of Turks of Central Asia to the extremes, the other states that the former nations that inhabited Central Asia were Iranians. We stick to the second view. We are blamed as the racists for this. (Stalin and Zhdanov laughed).

Stalin: If this is correct from the scholarly point of view, then what is wrong with it? Prove that you are right.

Ghafurov: Joseph Vissarionovich, the Tajik people, know that our republic was formed under your direct supervision and upon the order of [CC of the Russian CP]. Though back then there were individuals among Tajiks, who [tried to] prove that there were no Tajiks in Central Asia. You have received a telegram from them about this.

Stalin: Yes, there was some Rahimbaev, who wanted to prove that there were no Tajiks in Central Asia. Not only they are there, but also they have, as you see, established their republic. It is a separate nation, different from Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs, and Turkmens. Turks, as it is known, settled in Central Asia in the 11-12th centuries AD, while the Iranians inhabited in these lands in the 5th century BC.

Ghafurov: Even in the 6th century [BC], comrade Stalin. I would like to ask for one more thing from you. May I raise this issue? The problem of national self-consciousness.

Stalin: Raise and prove it.⁹³⁸

Regarding this meeting, Ghafurov, in one of his letters to I. Orbeli, the Head of the Hermitage Museum, wrote the following:

You might have already been informed about my conversation with Comrade Stalin about the issues of the history of the Tajiks and Tajikistan. Joseph Vissarionovich highly evaluated the history of the Tajiks and put an urgent task before us – wider popularization of our rich past.

Upon the order of Comrade Stalin there shall be a meeting of the [CC of the CP of the Soviet Union], where it is expected that the issue of the history of the Tajiks and Tajikistan will be discussed.⁹³⁹

The three-volume book, *Istoriia Tadzhikskogo Naroda*, edited by Ghafurov was also criticized by a scholar from Uzbekistan for representing the Iranian-speaking people in Central Asia as the region's aboriginals and the Turkic-speaking population of the region as the newcomers. Again, A. Yakubovskii, leader of the Sogdian-Tajik archaeological expedition in Tajikistan, was on the forefront. In his review of this work of Ghafurov's he wrote:

Regarding the issue of ethnogenesis, we would like to bring one reproach to the author. He observes the Turkic element in Central Asia only from the 6th century onwards. Until this time, in his opinion, there were only the tribes and nations of the Iranian-speaking system [sic] in the Central Asian interfluvium. Was that the case? The author forgot one truth: that nations are older than

⁹³⁸ Hamdampur, "Pochemu Babadzhan Ghafurov ushol s posta sekretaria?."

⁹³⁹ See Ghafurova, "Otets - uchitel' i nastavnik," 118-19.

the names that they bear. Our historical science, particularly, archaeology, discovered the facts that allow to assert that there was the Turkic-speaking population in Sogd even before the 6th century. It may be assumed that the author will agree with the correctness of this point of view in the new edition and make appropriate changes in the text.⁹⁴⁰

Along with their criticism, Uzbek historians attempted to write their own versions of the history of Central Asia. Some of them addressed particular issues, such as the Shaybanid dynasty and its role in the formation of the Uzbek nation. B. Ahmedov, in his *Gosudarstvo Kochevykh Uzbekov* (The State of Nomad Uzbeks), states that even if the nomad Uzbeks of the Shaybanid tribe gave the Uzbek nation its ethnonym, after arrival in Central Asia, they dissolved in the masses of local inhabitants. Thus, Shaybanid tribes did not constitute the entire Uzbek population, but rather were only a small part of it.⁹⁴¹ Therefore, Ahmedov believed that it is not accurate to argue that the Uzbeks appeared in the 16th century. Uzbeks, according to him, are a 3000-year old nation and are one of the most ancient inhabitants of Central Asia.⁹⁴²

Others attempted to cover the entire history of Central Asia to allocate the central role to Uzbeks and Turkic tribes, and the secondary role to Iranian and Tajik groups. One example of such works is *Etnogenez i Formirovaniie Predkov Uzbekskogo Naroda* (Ethnogenesis and Formation of the Ancestors of the Uzbek Nation) written by M. Ermatov in 1968. In this book, Ermatov argues that “[t]he history of Uzbeks from the ancient times is linked to the territory of Central Asia, particularly, to regions of Central Asian interfluvium of Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya, Fergana Valley, Tashkent and Khorazm oases.”⁹⁴³ Thus, the ancient “Sakas, Massagetae, Yuezhi, Hephthalite, and others, as well as the settled aboriginal inhabitants of Khorazm, Sogd, Farghana, Uzkent, Sairam, Tashkent and other regions of Uzbekistan” are the ancient ancestors of the Uzbeks.⁹⁴⁴ Regarding the Uzbek ethnonym, the author argues that “no matter when the term “Uzbek” appeared, the people have [...] existed and developed into nation since ancient times.”⁹⁴⁵

As far as the Iranian tribes are concerned, the Uzbek historian argues that “some contemporary scholars do not want to accept reality and count the ancient inhabitants of Central Asia as Iranians, calling them Eastern Iranian tribes.”⁹⁴⁶ He further states that “[t]he ancient eposes narrate about the heroic struggle of the ancestors of the Uzbeks and other nations of Central Asia against their Iranian colonizers and later against Greek occupants.”⁹⁴⁷ Based on this, he implies that the Iranians were foreign occupiers and that their languages were brought into the

⁹⁴⁰ A. Yakubovskii, "B. G. Ghafurov, "Istoriia Tadjikskogo Naroda", " *Voprosy Istorii*, no. 7 (1950): 160.

⁹⁴¹ Bo'ribov Akhmedov, *Gosudarstvo kochevykh Uzbekov* (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 149.

⁹⁴² *Ibid.*

⁹⁴³ M. Ermatov, *Etnogenez i formirovaniie predkov Uzbekskogo naroda* (Tashkent: Uzbekistan, 1968), 5.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

region; “Iranian (Persian) ethnic groups in the territory of Sogdiana appeared in the beginning of the first millennia BC, not as an aboriginal people of the region, but as the occupants.”⁹⁴⁸ They were a minority compared to the settled and nomadic tribes of the “aboriginal Turkic-speaking population” of Central Asia, which was “the overwhelming majority.”⁹⁴⁹ Referring to a range of ancient European and Persian sources, the Uzbek historian attempts to prove that the Sakas have never belonged to Iranian tribes in linguistic and ethnic terms.⁹⁵⁰ According to him, the Sakas were a confederation of multiple tribes that conversed in dozens of languages. He has made similar arguments about the Massagetae.⁹⁵¹ Also, he argues that the Khorazmians belonged to the Saka-Massagetae tribes,⁹⁵² and that they were a mixture of Sakas, Massagetae, and Iranians.⁹⁵³ He also questions if the Sakas and Massagetae were Aryans:

If Sakas and Massagetae belonged to the Aryan (Iranian) ethnic groups of people, then why it was necessary to characterize them separately from the Aryans? It is interesting that the antic authors relate Sakas and Massagetae to the Scythian nations, whereas they do not relate Persians and other Iranian tribes to them. It clearly evidences the belonging of the above-mentioned local tribes and people to another, particularly to Turkic ethnolinguistic group.⁹⁵⁴

After asserting that the Iranians were a minority and conquerors, the author attempts to question the Iranian background of the Tajik nation. He notes that the Tajiks have the same ethnic origins as the Uzbeks. According to him, “the ethnogenesis of the Uzbek and Tajik nations, as well as the socio-economic and linguistic phenomena related to them, nations which both touch the vast basin of the Zarafshan, Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers, cannot be viewed separately from one another, [as] they are tightly intertwined between themselves.”⁹⁵⁵ Thus, claims regarding the pure Iranian origin of the Tajiks are deemed to be incorrect:

Some scholars relate Tajiks to the Eastern Iranian tribes of the 11-12th and the 13th centuries, whereas in reality [by that time] it has been long since nothing was left of the Iranian tribes in the most direct meaning of this word. Such assertions are nothing more than the repetition of the arguments of pre-Revolutionary bourgeoisie theoreticians in regards to the Aryan origins of the nations of Central Asia, in particular, the populations of Sogdiana and Khorazm, which according to them were pure Iranian tribes. It seems to us that the Tajiks have been around since antiquity, as were the ancestors of the

⁹⁴⁸ Ibid., 77.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid., 5.

⁹⁵⁰ Ibid., 28-48.

⁹⁵¹ Ibid., 50-53.

⁹⁵² Ibid., 54.

⁹⁵³ Ibid., 69-75.

⁹⁵⁴ Ibid., 15.

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid., 106.

Uzbeks. Both groups formed from the mixture and bundling of two nations – Persian-speaking and Turkic-speaking.”⁹⁵⁶

Last, but not least, Ermatov argues that the Tajiks, as a nation, were formed in the territories of Tajikistan. According to him, “the Tajiks have been formed in their native lands (the territory of contemporary Tajikistan) [...]”⁹⁵⁷ Overall, Ermatov’s version of Central Asian history appears to challenge Ghafurov’s representation of the regional history.

Along with general criticism, some fundamental analyses followed in Uzbekistan that challenged some of Ghafurov’s arguments. For instance, in 1968, the vice-President of the Academy of Science of Uzbekistan, Ibrohim Muminov, published a work titled *Amir Temurning O’rta Osiyo Tarixida Tutgan O’rni va Roli: Yozma Manbalar Ma’lumoti Asosida (The Place and Role of Amir Timur in Central Asian History: Based on Information From the Manuscripts)*. The image of Amir Timur in this book was a complete opposite of how Ghafurov described him in his works. First, according to Muminov, Amir Timur was the son of a Turk aristocrat,⁹⁵⁸ not a Turkicized Mongol as Ghafurov argued. Second, the Uzbek scholar claims that Timur had done unprecedented reconstruction works in Samarkand,⁹⁵⁹ whereas in Ghafurov’s representation, Timur’s deeds were all about destruction and atrocities. Muminov believed that there was a serious reason why Timur’s tomb was still painstakingly preserved: “The people of Central Asia respect Timur, who was a builder and admitted the value of culture, they have been preserving his tomb in Samarkand.”⁹⁶⁰ Finally, listing the ethnic groups living in Samarkand during Timur’s rule, Muminov mentions the Turks, Arabs, and others, but not the Tajiks.⁹⁶¹

Muminov was reportedly criticized for idealizing Timur by scholars and some CP officials in Moscow.⁹⁶² The pressure grew to be so great that the Uzbek CP considered punishing him, however, as one Uzbek scholar claims, this was a mere show as the Uzbek CP and leadership was involved in promoting Timur’s positive image.⁹⁶³ “Undoubtedly, it was impossible for the CC of the CP of Uzbekistan [and] its First Secretary Sharof Rashidov not to be aware of Ibrohim Muminov’s activities and the works he was doing, including, his publication and thoughts on

⁹⁵⁶ Ibid., 50. The author gave the similar explanation to the origins of Kirgiz, Kazakh, Karakalpak and Turkmen nations. See *ibid.*, 55.

⁹⁵⁷ Ibid., 77.

⁹⁵⁸ I. Mo’minov, *Amir Temurning O’rta Osiyo Tarixida Tutgan O’rni va Roli* (Tashkent: Fan, 1993), 19.

⁹⁵⁹ Ibid., 25.

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid., 55.

⁹⁶¹ See *ibid.*, 30.

⁹⁶² M. Khairullaev, "Ibrohim Mo'minovning Katta Ilmiy Jasorati," in *Amir Temurning O’rta Osiyo Tarixida Tutgan O’rni va Roli*, ed. I. Mo’minov (Tashkent: Fan, 1993), 9-10.

⁹⁶³ Ibid., 10.

Timur.”⁹⁶⁴ Rashidov knew Muminov personally from the 1940s, and assisted with his transfer from Samarkand State University to the Uzbek Academy of Science in Tashkent.⁹⁶⁵

Publication of Ghafurov’s *Tadzhiki* triggered a criticism of not only scholars but also the government of Uzbek SSR. Sharof Rashidov, the leader of Uzbekistan at that time, was unhappy with the work and sponsored a scholarly counter-attack, though it did not work.⁹⁶⁶ Reportedly, he personally wrote a letter of complaint to the CC of the CP of the Soviet Union, blaming Ghafurov for propagating nationalism and the cult of the Tajik nation.⁹⁶⁷ Moreover, according to Ikrami, the Uzbek side “hired” two scholars from Moscow and Leningrad to write negative reviews of *Tadzhiki*. He argues that Ghafurov himself said the following about the attacks by the Uzbeks: “Almost every day, a leading official of Uzbekistan, upon his or her visit to Moscow, calls me. When I answer the phone, he or she showers me with insulting words and hangs up.”⁹⁶⁸

5. Conclusion

Even though it was completely in line with the Soviet policies of nation-building and historical science, Ghafurov’s historiography posited fundamental challenges to the post-1924 political map of Central Asia. It assured that the Tajiks, as a nation of people, do not fit within the borders of Tajikistan. Consequently, it bothered the Uzbek side as it undermined the state borders of Uzbekistan. With his writing, Ghafurov empowered the Tajiks in the historical debate that they have long been having with the Uzbeks. Considering its consequences, the Uzbek government and historians attempted to challenge and moderate Ghafurov’s views. They criticized his position, wrote alternative histories and imposed political pressure.

The results were not what the Uzbek side expected, even though Ghafurov’s latest works seem relatively accommodating towards the Uzbeks, when compared to his earliest works. For the Tajik side, attempts to challenge Ghafurov’s historiography by scholars in Uzbekistan was nothing more than “another attempt” to deprive the Tajiks of their identity, history, and lands. Even though Ghafurov’s scholarly works did not result in a review of political borders that favoured the Tajiks, they became the sources from which the Tajik nation derived ontological security; Ghafurov’s books established the aboriginality of the Tajiks and thus, made a strong case for their ownership of the major areas of Central Asia. Furthermore, Ghafurov’s

⁹⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶⁶ Litvinskii, "Bobodzhan Ghafurovich Ghafurov - osnovopolozhnik tadzhikskoi istoricheskoi nauki," 66-67.

⁹⁶⁷ M. Yanovskaia, "Boris Litvinskii: My podarili tadzhikskomu narodu pervuiu polnotsennuiu istoriiu," *Centrasia.ru*, 17 March 2009.

⁹⁶⁸ As quoted in Zh. Ikrami, "Kto na samom dele napisal "Tadzhiki"?," *Centrasia.ru*, 16 April 2009.

publications clearly highlighted the main “other” of the Tajik nation and the source of ongoing ontological insecurity – the Uzbeks.

Chapter 6. Political and Economic Issues in Tajikistan's Relations with Uzbekistan: the Implications of Identity Politics

1. Overview

In terms of structure and contribution to the central argument of the thesis, this chapter has both similarities to and differences when compared the previous three chapters. It shows that Rahmon's heroism is similar to the previously discussed Heroes of Tajikistan. Unlike the previous heroes, Rahmon's heroism is in direct relations with the ongoing issues with Uzbekistan and its interpretation in Tajikistan. The chapter begins with reviewing two important issues in the recent history of Tajikistan – the civil war and the construction of Roghun dam – that have caused significant friction in bilateral relations with Uzbekistan. The emphasis will be made on demonstrating that Uzbekistan's involvement in both issues and its coverage in the texts of national identity have significantly deteriorated relations with Tajikistan, thus causing national resentment and triggering the national memories about the Uzbek "other", against which the National Heroes such as Aini, Shotemur, Makhsum and Ghafurov have struggled. In light of these memories, Rahmon, who is portrayed as successfully fighting against Uzbekistan to defend the Tajik nation, emerged as a National Hero who is continuing the deeds of the previous heroes. The chapter ends with the review of currently emerging texts of national identity that construct Rahmon's heroism, thus further exacerbating the self/other dichotomy in relation to Uzbeks and Uzbekistan. This reciprocal relation between the domestically dominant concepts of "self" and "other" and existing problematic relations with the neighbouring nation is exactly what the theoretical chapter of the thesis assumed. Thus, this chapter, along with building upon the previous chapters, brings the focus of the thesis to the themes related to the theoretical assumptions made in the second part of Chapter 1. Based on the findings of this chapter, the Conclusion of the thesis links the theoretical assumptions with the empirical investigation of the thesis.

2. The Tajik civil war and Uzbekistan's involvement

1.1. Social unrest in Tajikistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s

Influenced by *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union in the second half of the 1980s, Tajikistan experienced democratic changes followed by the spark of nationalism and the revival of Islam. Replicating these developments, various new political parties and movements entered the political arena; Rastokhez (1989), the DPT (1990), La'li Badakhshon (1991), as well as the

IRPT (1990).⁹⁶⁹ They were more or less linked to particular regions of Tajikistan. While Rastokhez and the DPT were formed by the nationalist and national-democratic groups of the capital territory, La'li Badaskhshon was a movement founded by the Pamiri elite, which was underrepresented within the political system of Tajikistan. IRPT was dominated by the Gharmis, the people of Gharm province of Tajikistan.

Democratization, the rise of nationalism and regionalism, as well as the revival of religion in the 1980s, served as channels of expression for people's dissatisfaction with the deteriorating economic situation in the Soviet Union. As Scarborough summarizes it, the "sharp and unprecedented collapse of the Tajik economy led to many Tajiks being forced onto the streets and rebelling against a social order, that by 1991, no longer fulfilled any of the guarantees it had long ago promised and made good upon."⁹⁷⁰ Ever-present disagreements between various groups living in Tajikistan began to turn into nationalistic clashes. For instance, in the 1980s, a quarrel between the Tajiks and Kyrgyzs in the Isfara region, over the use of agricultural lands, as well as a disagreement between the Tajik and Uzbek groups in the Ghonchi (Devashtich) region of Leninobod, turned into violent ethnic clashes.⁹⁷¹ Newly emerging nationalistic groups started becoming bold in the demands they were making to the Soviet government of Tajikistan. On 25 February 1989, there were demonstrations organized by forces in Dushanbe calling for the announcement of Tajik as the state's official language.

The first serious clash between the nationalist groups and the Soviet government took place in February 1990 when the Tajiks rallied against the Armenian refugees from the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict zone, who were rumoured to have decided upon finding accommodation in Dushanbe city. The demonstration turned violent after the government mobilized 6000 soldiers and a few tanks.⁹⁷² Along with chanting the mottos like "Tajikistan for the Tajiks!" the demonstrators soon turned their anger against the Soviet regime and the CP. Pressure from the first ever mass demonstration on the streets of Dushanbe forced the First Secretary of the Tajik CP, Qahhor Mahkamov, to resign. However, his resignation was not accepted by the CC of the Party.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, national independence and the redistribution of political power in Tajikistan became the main agenda of newly emergent nationalist and

⁹⁶⁹ See Nikolai Dobronravin, "Tadzhikistan: raspad i rastsvet natsional'nogo gosudarstva," in *SSSR posle raspada*, ed. Otar Marganiia (St.Petersburg: Ekonomicheskaiia Shkola GU VShE, 2007), 435.

⁹⁷⁰ Isaac Scarborough, "(Over)determining social disorder: Tajikistan and the economic collapse of perestroika," *Central Asian Survey* 35, no. 3 (2016): 442.

⁹⁷¹ V. Bushkov and D. Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoi voiny v Tadzhikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaiia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*, ed. L. Gubareva (Moscow: Institute of Pratical Oriental Studies of the Academy of Science of Russia, 1996).

⁹⁷² Ibid.

religious forces. Thus, the ruling political leadership of the country, which represented both the nation's Soviet past and the unrivaled dominance of the Leninobod province in federal politics, became primary targets for agitators. The new opposition started demanding independence and the resignation of communist leaders. Mahkamov stepped down and an election was announced to fill the post of President of the newly-independent state. A veteran of the Soviet political system, Rahmon Nabiev, who beat the candidate for the joint opposition forces, Davlat Khudonazarov, in the presidential elections in November 1991, promised to cooperate with all political forces. However, emboldened by the backing of the Parliament, Nabiev cracked down on the opposition forces, arresting some members of these forces in March 1992. These developments were exacerbated by a particular incident; the Speaker of the Parliament, Safarali Kenjaev, insulted the Minister of Internal Affairs, who belonged to the Pamiri elite during parliamentary sessions. These debates were aired on national television and ignited a new wave of demonstrations in the Shahidon square in Dushanbe. President Nabiev was caught by surprise and was virtually paralysed by the size of the demonstrations, the flow of the people from the provinces, and the neutrality of the police.⁹⁷³

1.2. The Tajik civil war in 1992-1997

Parallel demonstrations in the city, one in the Shahidon Square (mainly composed of young citizens of Dushanbe, including some criminals) and another in Ozodi Square (featuring a gathering of pro-government people from Kulob and Khujand) were the earliest sign of an emerging civil war in Tajikistan. The distribution of power among the regional factions was to become the main issue of the civil war. The elites of Leninobod (Khujand),⁹⁷⁴ Kulob, and Leninobod were interested in the status quo of power relations, whereas the Karategin and Badakhshan (Pamiri) elites were looking forward to getting more representation in the government.⁹⁷⁵ In late April 1992, to enforce demands, opposition members took several members of parliament and two deputy prime ministers hostage. As a result, the Presidium of the Parliament removed Kenjaev from his post and added some representatives of the opposition (S. Turaev, A. Turajonzoda, A. Sohibnazarov) to the Presidium.⁹⁷⁶ Nabiev appointed Kenjaev as the Head of the Committee for National Security (KNB, the successor of the Soviet KGB). Shortly after, Kenjaev was reappointed as Speaker of the Parliament. On 1 May 1992, he

⁹⁷³ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁴ Khujand city was known as Leninobod city from 1936 till 1991. The city is the centre of a province, which was named as Leninabad province (*oblast'* in Russian and *viloiat* in Tajik) in 1930-2000 and as Sughd province since 2000. In this chapter Leninobod city and Khujand city, as well as Leninobodi and Khujandi is used interchangeably.

⁹⁷⁵ Oksana Sharafieva, "Grazhdanskaia voina v Tadjikistane 1990-1997 gg." (Tomsk State University, 2010), 19.

⁹⁷⁶ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoi voiny v Tadjikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

ordered that 2000 guns be given to pro-government demonstrators.⁹⁷⁷ The arming pro-government individuals and outlawing opposition protesters via the introduction of a curfew on 5 May 1992, forced the latter to also become armed and occupy the airport, railway station, and President's office.

Even though these demonstrations ended with the inclusion of eight opposition leaders in the newly formed government of national reconciliation, there was no force that could stop radicalized, newly-armed people from using violence against their opponents after they returned to their home provinces. In particular, the Kulobis and Leninobodis were not happy with the inclusion of opposition leaders within the government or with the appointment of Akbarsho Iskandarov, a representative of the Badakhshani elite, as a Speaker of the Parliament. In the summer of 1992, the armed groups in Kulob and Qurghonteppa attacked supporters of the opposition.⁹⁷⁸ Also, dissatisfied with the growing influence of Pamiris and Gharmis at the expense of Leninobodis, the local assembly of Leninobod took all public enterprises located in the region under the management of the regional government.⁹⁷⁹ President Nabiev reportedly said that he was invited to become the President of Leninobod.⁹⁸⁰

On 31 August 1992, the radical youth of Dushanbe barged into the President's Office and took 32 government officials from Leninobod and Kulob hostage. They were demanding that Nabiev resign from his role as President. The pressure tactic worked; the cabinet accepted the request of the hostage-takers and called for the resignation of the president. Similarly, the local Assembly of Leninobod, in the hope that they could replace Nabiev with another Leninobodi, agreed to withdraw their support of Nabiev. The president was caught at the airport when he was escaping the city on 7 September 1992 and was forced to resign at gunpoint.⁹⁸¹ The capital city then fell under the control of the armed opposition, and the government became dysfunctional. Iskandarov, the representative from the Pamiri elite, who was earlier appointed Head of the Parliament, became acting President.

The Khujandi and Kulobi factions organized a session of the Parliament of Tajikistan in November-December 1992. In a session that took place near Khujand city, the rump parliament elected Emomali Rahmonov, representative of Kulob elite, as its new head. The armed group known as the PFT, which was led by former criminals, led the military campaign against the

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁸ Albert Beloglazov, *Vliianiie Islama na politicheskie protsessy v Tsentral'noi Azii* (Kazan: Kazan University, 2013), 155.

⁹⁷⁹ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoi voiny v Tadzhikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

⁹⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁸¹ Ibid.

opposition in Dushanbe. On 10 December 1992, the PFT recaptured Dushanbe. Throughout January-February 1993, the PFT forces crushed the opposition in the major centers of Tajikistan. The core forces of the UTO and its leadership relocated to Afghanistan and maintained the partisanship war from there. In April 1994, under pressure from Russia, the first talks between Rahmon's government and The United Tajik Opposition took place in Moscow.⁹⁸² Despite the opposition's protests, in mid-1994 the government of Tajikistan decided to organize presidential elections. In the election that took place in November 1994 Rahmon was elected as President. From 1994 till 1997, the government of Tajikistan and the UTO had eight rounds of negotiations, which resulted in a peace accord being achieved on 27 June 1997.⁹⁸³

1.3. The Uzbek players in the Tajik civil war

At various stages of the civil war in Tajikistan, there were several Uzbek players; the leaders of the Uzbek communities of Qurghonteppa and Hisor, the Uzbek-dominated political and economic elites of Khujand province, and the government of Uzbekistan. At various stages, Rahmon, as a member of the Kulobi faction, received either support or opposition from some of these players. The ethnic Uzbek warlords played a secondary role and assisted the Kulobis in their major conflict with the Gharmis.⁹⁸⁴ Of these forces, only "Mahmud Khudoberdyev and Ibodullo Boimatov, who represented the interests of the Uzbek population in Qurghonteppa and Hisor, respectively"⁹⁸⁵ had armed forces and were directly involved in the Tajik civil war. Out of all the leaders on all the warring sides in the Tajik civil war "Captain Mahmud Khudoberdyev, an ethnic Uzbek, was the only warlord with a solid military background."⁹⁸⁶ Khudoyberdyev counted himself as a loyal guard of the president. He actively participated in the civil war by fighting against the Islamic opposition in 1992-1995. He was focused on defending Uzbek communities in Qurgonteppa, which often placed him at odds with Rahmon. He took control of Qurghonteppa in 1996 and demanded the resignation of some politicians, a request which was acceded to by Rahmon.⁹⁸⁷

In June-August 1997, unsatisfied with the terms of the agreement that Rahmon had reached with the Islamic opposition, as well as with the growing influence of the Kulobis at the expense of the Khujandis, Colonel Khudoyberdiyev used his military power in an attempt to influence

⁹⁸² The Russian government used Tajikistan's financial dependence of Russia to press Rahmon to start negotiations with the UTO. See Nurali Davlatov, "Tadzhikistan: ot mirotvorchestva k mifotvorchestvu," *Asia-Plus*, 28 June 2016.

⁹⁸³ For details, see Mehrali Toshmuhammadov, *Civil War in Tajikistan and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation* (Hokkaido: Center of Slavic Reserches, Hokkaido University, 2004), 15-16.

⁹⁸⁴ Kirill Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the nation or robber barons? Warlord politics in Tajikistan," *Central Asian Survey* 24, no. 2 (2005): 112.

⁹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

⁹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁹⁸⁷ See Iliia Bulavinov, "Krizis poshel na spad, no ne razreshilsia," *Gazeta Kommersant*, no. 16, 6 February 1996.

Rahmonov. He gave President Rahmon an ultimatum via his occupation of the Fakhrobod pass to Dushanbe city. However, he was outnumbered and had to go into exile in Uzbekistan.⁹⁸⁸ In November 1998, he took control of Khujand after invading through Uzbekistan. However, Rahmon's forces eventually defeated him.⁹⁸⁹

Uzbek leaders in Khujand mostly stayed away from the military campaigns and were supportive of Rahmon as an emerging leader so long as their influence and position in Khujand was not challenged. According to Nourzhanov, "[t]he northerners who had dominated Tajikistan throughout the Soviet era gave up their first role in Dushanbe in 1992 on condition of retaining autonomy in running their own affairs."⁹⁹⁰ It should be noted that after the removal of Nabiev from the political scene, the Leninobodi elite retained power within the Cabinet of Ministers. Considering that the Parliament had abolished the post of President, holding the Prime Minister's Office was vital for the Khujandis. From late-August until late-September 1992, Jamshed Karimov,⁹⁹¹ who was in the team of President Nabiev, became acting Prime Minister.⁹⁹² On 21 September 1992, Abdullojonov, a representative of the Khujandi faction, was appointed Prime Minister. Organising the parliamentary session to be held in Khujand, in addition to the election of Rahmonov as the meeting's Chair led to northerners accepting the leadership of the Kulobi faction.⁹⁹³ This event can be seen as the practical realization of the Leninobodi-Kulobi coalition.⁹⁹⁴ The formation of the PFT, composed of Kulobi Tajiks and various Uzbek groups, is another symbol that is representative of the cooperation between these two groups.

However, this coalition started to collapse in the second half of 1993.⁹⁹⁵ The two forces inevitably clashed when the growing influence of Rahmon's Kulobi faction presented a challenge to the Khujandis' previously unrivaled dominance, not only at the federal level but also in their home province.⁹⁹⁶ Using the inability of the central, Kulobi-dominated government to properly

⁹⁸⁸ N. Mikhailova, "Neizvestnyie peregovory E.Rahmona s miatezhnym Makhmudom," *Ozodagon*, 2 July 2012.

⁹⁸⁹ Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the nation or robber barons? Warlord politics in Tajikistan," 123.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁹⁹¹ He was almost put alight by the demonstrators in 1989 when he was the head of the Dushanbe city. See "Karimov Dzhamshe'd Khilolovich," *Vestnik Zamoskvorechia*, 8 June 2010. In September 4 1992 he gave an interview to a Russian newspaper blaming Nabiev for causing the unrest by his indecisive and uncompromising position. See Oleg Panfilov, "'Iesli by prezident soglasilsia na otstavku...' Iсполniaiushii obiazannosti galvy pravitel'stva Tadjhikistana pervyi vitse-premier Dzhamshe'd Karimov o situatsii v Respublike," *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 5 September 1992.

⁹⁹² Akbar Mirzoev, his predecessor and close ally of Nabiev, was appointed as Tajikistan's political representative in Germany on 29 August 1992. See Hamrokhon Zarifi, ed. *Diplomatiiia Tadjhikistana Vchera i Segodnia*, vol. 1, Vneshniaia Politika Tadjhikistana (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2009), 19.

⁹⁹³ One of the participants of the event remembers Abdullajonov and his delegation attempted to leave the session in protest. See "Khabibullo Tabarov: 'Ia sil'no obizhen na apparat upravleniia respubliki,'" *Asia-Plus*, 20 September 2011.

⁹⁹⁴ Beloglazov, *Vliianiie Islama na politicheskie protsessy v Tsentral'noi Azii*, 157.

⁹⁹⁵ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoi voiny v Tadjhikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

⁹⁹⁶ For more on the "Kulobization" of the political system in Tajikistan, see Beloglazov, *Vliianiie Islama na politicheskie protsessy v Tsentral'noi Azii*, 157.

perform its political and economic duties as a convenient excuse, the Khujandis began to compose and implement their own policies.⁹⁹⁷ "When Rahmonov tried to deploy Kulobi police and military in Khujand in August 1993, the Executive Chairman of the region, Abdujalil Homidov, blew up the only bridge connecting Dushanbe with the north and threatened to join Uzbekistan."⁹⁹⁸ In late 1993, as a last resort against the Kulobi elite, the Khujandis started entertaining the idea of either economic-political autonomy or re-introducing the post of President.⁹⁹⁹

As an attempt to curb the power of the Khujandis further, and as a demonstration of power, in December 1993 Rahmon replaced Abdullojonov with a less influential representative of Khujand, Abdujalil Samadov. Abdullojonov was a serious contender against Rahmonov.¹⁰⁰⁰ In November 1994, Abdullojonov ran against Rahmonov in the presidential elections. Following Rahmonov's victory in the elections, Abdullojonov attempted to form a political opposition. In November 1994, with the support of Samadov, and Karimov, he formed a new political organization – the National Revival Movement (NRM) – with the hopes of getting elected to the parliament. However, the election committee refused to register his candidacy.¹⁰⁰¹ Abdullajonov and his team contacted the UN Secretary-General to assist them in joining peace talks as a third party, representative of the Leninobod province.¹⁰⁰²

The constitutional changes that took place during the presidential elections resulted in a significant reduction of the Prime Minister's power. Therefore, the appointment of Jamshed Karimov, an old member of the Khujandi ruling faction, as the new Prime Minister in December 1994 did not add to the power of Khujandis. Replacement of Karimov by Yahyo Azimov, a Kulobi politician, in February 1996 completely removed the influence of the Khujandis in central

⁹⁹⁷ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoj vojny v Tadjikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

⁹⁹⁸ Nourzhanov, "Saviours of the nation or robber barons? Warlord politics in Tajikistan," 122.

⁹⁹⁹ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoj vojny v Tadjikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Abdullajonov had a career as a Soviet apparatchik, whereas Rahmon joined politics only closer to the collapse of the Soviet Union. For instance, in 1987, when Rahmon became the head of a collective farm, Abdullajonov was appointed the Minister of Grain Products of Tajik SSR. The latter was the acting Prime Minister of Tajikistan when Rahmon became the head of the parliament as well as the acting head of state in November 1992. See Dobronravina, "Tadjikistan: raspad i rastsvet natsional'nogo gosudarstva," 440.

¹⁰⁰¹ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoj vojny v Tadjikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

¹⁰⁰² See "Vytesnenie leninabadtsev s politicheskoj areny," *Human Rights Watch*, April 1998.

government.¹⁰⁰³ In 1997, Abdullojonov went into exile to avoid arrest.¹⁰⁰⁴ The Tajik government continued to hold him responsible for the failed coups.¹⁰⁰⁵ Eventually, Rahmon deployed regular armed forces to Khujand in 1997 to fight against Colonel Khudoyberdiyev and methodically replaced the dominant elite of the region with his own people.

As far as Uzbekistan is concerned, it had “legitimate concerns” about the Tajik civil war.¹⁰⁰⁶ The establishment of the Islamic State of Tajikistan, which was the aim of the UTO, was not in the interest of Uzbekistan.¹⁰⁰⁷ Tashkent supported Rahmon’s rise to power in November 1992.¹⁰⁰⁸ The Ministry of Defense of Uzbekistan organized the transit of the delegation from Kulob to Khujand, through Termez city, to participate in the aforementioned session of the Parliament near Khujand city.¹⁰⁰⁹ The security of the session was maintained by armed forces of Russia and Uzbekistan. The PFT received the Uzbek government’s support even before Rahmon’s rise to power. As a Tajik expert puts it, “Uzbekistan’s support was crucial regarding the military and organizational “survival” of the PFT during the most difficult period of the civil war (from May till October 1992), when Moscow officially declared its neutral stance toward the Tajik conflict.”¹⁰¹⁰ In December 1992, together with Russia, Uzbekistan helped PFT forces to free Dushanbe city from opposition.¹⁰¹¹ In February 1993, Colonel Aleksandr Shishliannikov and

¹⁰⁰³ “Even within the Khujand area, however, there is no “Abdullojanov hegemony.” In fact, numerous groups, some of them centred around traditional, powerful extended families, have spent much time and energy in the past fighting each other for greater control of the Tajik pie. President Rakhmonov, however, has ironically had great success in pushing these groups together, and most of them are represented in the National Revival Movement (NRM).” See Keith Martin, ““Welcome to Leninabad Republic?,” *Central Asia and Caucasus* 10, no. 4 (1997).

Therefore, appointment of Oqil Oqilov, who was born in Leninabad, became the next Prime Minister and served 14 years, is not surprising. “Complete absence of political ambitions and private business interests” made him acceptable for President Rahmon. See Khairullo Mirsaidov, “Novomu premieru nuzhnu novyie polnomochiia,” *Asia-Plus*, 29 November 2013. The current Prime Minister Qohir Rasulzoda is also from Leninabad, but considering that his political career started in 2000, he has no connections to previous Leninobodi nomenclature.

¹⁰⁰⁴ For a review of repressions used against Abdullajonov and the Leninobodi clan in general, see “Vytesnenie leninabadtsev s politicheskoi areny.”

¹⁰⁰⁵ “OON prizyvaet Ukrainu osvobodit’ èks-prem’era Tadjikistana,” *Levyi bereg*, 20 March 2013.

¹⁰⁰⁶ See Stuart Hosrman, “Uzbekistan’s involvement in the Tajik Civil War 1992-97: Domestic considerations,” *Central Asian Survey* 18, no. 1 (1999): 40-41.

¹⁰⁰⁷ In the early 1990s, the Islamic radical groups from the Ferghana valley of Uzbekistan lost their struggle against Tashkent, and most of them moved to Tajikistan to join the civil war on the side of the UTO. The unnecessarily long war against the UTO was creating a proper environment for the military training of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Therefore, the Uzbek government was not interested in the victory of the UTO.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Anatoliï Adamishin, a Russian diplomat responsible for relations with the post-Soviet nations (1992-94, 1997-98), believes that “Uzbekistan could not choose a proper candidate among the representatives of Leninobod thus decided to find a suitable one among the Kulobis and use him to appease the situation. Afterwards, it wanted to change him with another candidate.” See Iskandari Mirzoda, “Adamshin: Uzbekiston mekhlost, Rahmonov barkanor shavad,” *Ruzgor*, 21 June 2012.

¹⁰⁰⁹ See “Khabibullo Tabarov: ‘Ia sil’no obizhen na apparat upravleniia respubliki.”

¹⁰¹⁰ Parviz Mullodzhanov, “Tadjhisko-uzbekskiiie otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy,” *Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting*, 20 March 2015.

¹⁰¹¹ Nourzhanov, “Saviours of the nation or robber barons? Warlord politics in Tajikistan,” 117.

Major-General Aleksandr Chubarov of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan, were appointed as the Minister and Deputy Minister of Defence of Tajikistan, respectively.¹⁰¹²

Rahmon proved to not be as loyal to Uzbekistan as the latter expected. In August 1993, during a meeting in Moscow, Russia and Uzbekistan pressed Rahmon to negotiate with the opposition. However, the Tajik Head of State resisted. He was not only struggling against the Khujandi leaders, but also ignoring Russia and Uzbekistan when these countries requested that he talk to the opposition.¹⁰¹³ With the help of support from Russia, Rahmon successfully distanced pro-Uzbekistan forces from his government, severely curbing Uzbekistan's influence on the Tajik civil war.¹⁰¹⁴ Therefore, during the 1994 elections, the Uzbek government supported Abdullojonov's candidacy.¹⁰¹⁵ When Abdullojonov lost the elections, Uzbekistan helped him to form the opposition. The most famous evidence of Uzbekistan's attempts in this regard is the meeting that was held between Abdullojonov and Akbar Turajonzoda,¹⁰¹⁶ one of the leaders of UTO, in Tashkent in August 1995.¹⁰¹⁷ At the time that the meeting was held, the UTO was falling apart; Rastokhez had disappeared from the political arena due to lack of support; the DPT had split into two factions, with one part establishing direct contact with Rahmonov's government. Most importantly, ongoing peace talks with the government revealed that the UTO was ready to create a secular state in Tajikistan. So, there were serious prospects for UTO and the Leninobod faction to form a coalition, which would improve the positions of both actors and create a serious opposition to Rahmonov's government. "It should be noted that the leader of the UTO, Nuri, consented in principle to the participation of the NRM in the inter-Tajik negotiations of December 1996, upon the condition that the NRM abandoned its proposal to make the Uzbek

¹⁰¹² Chubarov later wrote that "being the officers of the Uzbek army, we first of all thought that the Mother-Russia does not need this mess in the region, where the Islamic fundamentalists were striving for power." See Dmitrii Beliakov, "Moia voina: Aleksandr Chubarov. Sto desiat boievnykh vykhodov," *Bratishka. Zhurnal Podrazdelenii Spetsial'nogo Naznacheniia*, 3 January 2001. Shishliannikov, Chubarov as well as Vladimir Kvachkov, who led the attacks on the opposition strongholds in Tajikistan during the civil war, belonged to the 15th Special Operations Forces of the Main Intelligence Agency (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR. They participated in the Soviet invasion to Afghanistan and after the collapse of the Soviet Union the group was transferred to the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan, which dissolved the group in 1996. See *ibid*.

¹⁰¹³ Bushkov and Mikul'skii, *Anatomiia grazhdanskoi voiny v Tadzhikistane (etno-sotsial'nyie protsessy i politicheskaia bor'ba, 1992-1995)*.

¹⁰¹⁴ Mullodzhanov, "Tadzhiksko-uzbekskiiie otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy."

¹⁰¹⁵ Semen Bagdasarov, as quoted in Gevorg Mirzaian, "Kak possorilis' Emomali Sharipovich s Islamom Abduganiievichem," *Expert Online*, 16 April 2012.

¹⁰¹⁶ Turajonzoda was a deputy leader of the IRPT, and represented the Tajik opposition in the negotiations with the government. He had previous links with the Uzbek authorities. Turajonzoda was a graduate of the Mir-Arab Madrasah in Bukhara in 1976 and the Islamic Institute in Tashkent in 1980. Unlike Said Abdullo Nuri, a self-taught religious activist, who reportedly attracted the attention of KGB and was arrested for illegal religious activities in the late 1980s, Turajonzoda was a government-approved Soviet religious cadre. He worked at the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan located in Tashkent before serving as the head of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Tajikistan in 1988-1993. As Evgenii Primakov, the head of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia (1991-1996), mentioned in his memoirs, it was Turajonzoda who agreed with the 30% quota for the Islamic opposition in the proposed Tajik government of unity in the mid-1993. See Yevgeny Primakov, *Minnoie pole politiki*, Fourth ed. (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 2007), 145.

¹⁰¹⁷ See Dobronravin, "Tadzhikistan: raspad i rastsvet natsional'nogo gosudarstva," 442.

language one of Tajikistan's national languages."¹⁰¹⁸ However, the new opposition bloc was never realized.

Due to the peace agreement that was reached with the UTO in 1997, Rahmon agreed to allow more than 5000 Islamic fighters to his government. He provided them with a 30% quota and appointed their leaders to top government positions. At the same time, he vigorously refused to cooperate with Khujandi groups.¹⁰¹⁹ Uzbekistan's attempts to create a "third force" in Tajikistan failed. The following excerpt from Kniazev, a pro-Uzbekistan expert, summarizes the mood in Uzbekistan in the 1990s:

The government in Dushanbe is making a big mistake by selecting the northerners to be the ultimate enemy. It would be in the best interests of all political forces in Tajikistan if "a third force" took part in peace talks between the United Tajik Opposition and the Kulob clan. The political elite of Khujand, who exclusively seek a secular path for Tajikistan's development], could be an appropriate ally of Rahmonov in his struggle against plans [of the UTO] to make Tajikistan an Islamic state.¹⁰²⁰

In general, the Uzbek players in the Tajik civil war have never provided unconditional support to the Kulobis in its struggle against the UTO. Depending on the situation the Uzbek forces have played either a supportive or unsupportive role. As will be demonstrated in the following part of the chapter, memories of the Civil War in Tajikistan increasingly single out the Uzbek "other" as the element that triggered the war. These same memories ignore the role played by intra-Tajik differences and clashes during the conflict. In an attempt to substantiate the official position, scholarly discourses in Tajikistan overlook any positive role that Uzbek entities may have played during the Civil War.

2. The issue of Roghun HPS in Tajik-Uzbek relations

2.1. Roghun in the 1990s

Since the early 1990s, Tajik officials have viewed the Roghun HPS as an important source of budget income. There are no known records regarding the Uzbek side's opposition to the idea of Roghun's construction in those years. However, since the mid-2000s, when Tajikistan made significant progress in negotiating with potential investors, Tashkent officials started questioning the ecological and agricultural consequences that the Roghun dam might have for countries that lay downstream from it. Due to the growing shortage of electricity in Tajikistan following the demise of the United Energy System of Central Asia in the mid-2000s, Roghun HPS became a "lifebuoy" for Tajik authorities. Thus, the building of Roghun HPS attained the status

¹⁰¹⁸ Footnote 39 in "Uzbekskii faktor," *Human Rights Watch*, April 1998.

¹⁰¹⁹ See Mark Feigin, "Chuzhaia voina," *Novyi mir*, no. 3 (1997).

¹⁰²⁰ Alexander Kniazev, "Tadzhikistan, gde nikto ne khotel vyzhivat'," *Utra Bishkeka*, 14 November 1998, 4.

of a national idea. When Uzbekistan opposed its construction, this triggered the “self/other” dichotomy.

In February 1994, Rahmon condemned those who opposed the Roghun project in the late 1980s and called for an increased tempo to the construction work emphasizing that Tajikistan was buying 2 billion kw/h of electricity from its neighbors every year.¹⁰²¹ He also mentioned Rogun HPS in his September 1994 election campaign, claiming that by attracting a workforce to the construction works he could increase the “social protection of the people”.¹⁰²² Already, in April 1995, Rahmon was arguing about using Tajikistan’s water resources to develop the economy and highlight the strategic importance of big and small HPSs.¹⁰²³ He was determined to save the national economy from crisis by building Roghun, which was partially destroyed during the war, as well as other HPS.¹⁰²⁴ He also started to talk about attracting foreign investors.¹⁰²⁵ In his interview with *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in August 1996, Rahmon stated that so far Tajikistan had spent \$860 million on the construction of Roghun and still needed to invest \$500 million in order to construct two generators. The Tajik government was not only planning to supply electricity to the domestic population, but also to export it, and earn, as Rahmon mentioned in one of his speeches, \$800 million every year.¹⁰²⁶ According to him, “Afghanistan, Pakistan and China are waiting for the start of this HPS.”¹⁰²⁷ Rahmon kept mentioning the importance of Roghun and the necessity of increasing the volume of construction throughout 1998,¹⁰²⁸ 1999¹⁰²⁹ and 2000.¹⁰³⁰

2.2. The Tajik-Uzbek disagreement over Roghun (2002-2009)

In February 2001, Rahmon stated that 48% of the most difficult aspects of the Roghun HPS were completed and within 4 years the HPS would be able to start operating.¹⁰³¹ The Tajik side expressed its interest in attracting Russian investors and specialists to Roghun and argued that 70% of the income from the project would go to the Russian economy.¹⁰³² In October 2002,

¹⁰²¹ Emomali Rahmonov, *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, vol. 1 (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2004), 132. Most probably, here, Rahmonov referred to the so-called “action committee” of local leaders and activists in Komsomolobod in 1989, which organized a protest against the construction of Rogun that was attended by 3600 residents. For more information, see Nourzhanov and Bleuer, *Tajikistan: A Political and Social History*, 203.

¹⁰²² Rahmonov, *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 1, 203.

¹⁰²³ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁰²⁴ *Ibid.*, 309.

¹⁰²⁵ *Ibid.*, 310.

¹⁰²⁶ *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, vol. 2 (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2006), 399. Somewhere else, he mentioned \$900 million income to state budget. See *Ibid.*, 3: 19

¹⁰²⁷ *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 1, 358.

¹⁰²⁸ *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 2, 409.

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3: 108, 47, 74, 240.

¹⁰³⁰ *Ibid.*, 322, 77, 95.

¹⁰³¹ *Ibid.*, 438.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*

Tajikistan reached an agreement with the Russian government over the construction of Roghun,¹⁰³³ however it took Russia two more years to bring in RusAl, a Russian company, as a contractor to complete the construction. In the meanwhile, Rahmon unsuccessfully attempted to secure investment from the World Bank,¹⁰³⁴ China,¹⁰³⁵ and Pakistan.¹⁰³⁶

In February 2005 RusAl chose Lahmeyer International, a German-based engineering company, to conduct an assessment of the technical and economic viability of the project.¹⁰³⁷ In September 2005, Rahmon and the leaders of RusAl officially inaugurated the construction process.¹⁰³⁸ However, there were disagreements over who would own what percentage of shares; the Tajik side wanted the majority of shares as the project had been constructed in its territory and it had already invested a large amount of money.¹⁰³⁹ The leadership of RusAl was confident that without their agreement on the height and the type of the dam, it was impossible to talk about of the extent of a party's investment, and their subsequent ownership of shares.¹⁰⁴⁰ In June 2006, the Tajik ambassador in Russia warned that Tajikistan could go on with the construction of Roghun even without RusAl.¹⁰⁴¹

An assessment by Lahmeyer found that the height of the dam should be 285-meters high, rather than the planned 335 meters.¹⁰⁴² In October 2006, the First Deputy Chairman of *Barqi Tojik* Aleksei Silant'iev complained that the agreement between the Tajik government and RusAl was not being implemented as a result of the two sides' incongruent interests.¹⁰⁴³ According to him, instead of the planned upon \$50 million, the Russian company spent only \$200 thousand on the construction of Roghun. Silanti'ev warned that if RusAl did not go on with the project, Tajikistan would return the amount RusAl had already spent and begin building Roghun using the state budget. In November 2006, Tajikistan decided to include \$168.7 million in its next year's budget for this purpose.¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰³³ Lena Johnson, *Tajikistan in the New Central Asia: Geopolitics, Great Power Rivalry and Radical Islam* (London and New York: I.B.Tauris, 2006), 74.

¹⁰³⁴ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹⁰³⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*, 89.

¹⁰³⁷ R. Shaposhnik, "2 mln. evro – stoimost' proekta po stroitel'stvu 'Roguna'," *Asia-Plus*, 4 February 2005.

¹⁰³⁸ Ekaterina Kozhevnikova and Parvina Khamidova, "Vtoroe rozhdenie Roguna," *Asia-Plus*, 29 September 2005.

¹⁰³⁹ "Tadzhikistan zainteresovan v uvelichenii svoei doli uchastii v stroitel'stve Roguna," *The Review of Central Asia*, 10 December 2005.

¹⁰⁴⁰ "Sergei Annenkov: 280 metrov – optimal'naia vysota Roguna!," *Asia-Plus*, 27 February 2006.

¹⁰⁴¹ "Posol RF v Tadzhikistane: Rossiia postroit Rogunskuiu GES s "RusAlom" ili bez nego," *Regnum*, 6 June 2006.

¹⁰⁴² "Lahmeyer International podgotovila dokumenty po detal'noi otsenke stroitel'stva Rogunskoi GES (Tadzhikistan)," *Regnum*, 8 September 2006.

¹⁰⁴³ Nazarali Pirnazarov, "Iesli Rusal ne toropitsia, Tadzhikistan verniet iemu vse potrachennyye sredstva i doverit Rogun Pakistanu, - 'Barki Tojik'," *Asia-Plus*, 31 October 2006.

¹⁰⁴⁴ "Dlia podderzhanii Rogunskoi GES," *Telecomm Technology*, 14 November 2006.

The Tajik government blamed Uzbekistan for their failure to cooperate with RusAl. According to the Tajik side, the idea for a 285 meter-high dam came to RusAl after the visit of Oleg Deripaska, President of RusAl, to Uzbekistan.¹⁰⁴⁵ Some Tajik observers agree with such claims. As the late Sayfullo Safarov, head of the Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, mentioned, RusAl “wanted to bring the effectiveness of Roghun down to minimum due to being influenced by Uzbekistan. The Tajik government, however, could not accede to this.”¹⁰⁴⁶ Marat Mamadshoev, the Editor-in-Chief of *Asia-Plus*, a Tajik newspaper, was also sure that Uzbekistan’s was behind RusAl’s reluctance. He believed that “the Uzbeks were trying to play a leading role in the region, however, [the Tajik government] could not accept RusAl’s request to discuss its actions with Uzbekistan”.¹⁰⁴⁷ Furthermore, he contended that RusAl “behaved absolutely incorrectly” by trying to consult with Uzbekistan, and that Moscow should have understood this.¹⁰⁴⁸ A Tajik scholar, Parviz Mullojanov, noted that “RusAl seems to have decided not to strain its relations with Uzbekistan. Thus, right after the agreement was signed, the issue of dam’s height and type emerged.”¹⁰⁴⁹

Following a failure to cooperate with the Russians, the Tajiks started searching for other investors and, in the interim, began to finance the project using the state budget.¹⁰⁵⁰ The Uzbek side, which had kept a low profile until this point, began to express its concerns more publicly. During the next two years, even though the construction of Roghun did not progress significantly, the Tajik-Uzbek confrontation over this project escalated. To begin with, the Tajik government took two important steps; first, in May 2007, an International Consortium on the construction of Roghun was established, and the Tajik side invited any interested companies and countries to join it;¹⁰⁵¹ second, in August 2007, Rahmon issued a decree that reformed the Roghun HPS into an open, shareholder company.¹⁰⁵² These moves revived the interest of old players and attracted the interest of new ones. Thus, Russia offered to fill RusAl’s place with RAO EES.¹⁰⁵³ However, the Russian side demanded ownership of 75% of shares, and reportedly RAO EES planned to bring in RusAl as a partner.¹⁰⁵⁴ Moreover, Russia also wanted to have its say

¹⁰⁴⁵ Boris Nikolaev, "Kak dostroit' Rogun?," *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 9 October 2007.

¹⁰⁴⁶ As quoted in Natalia Grib and Vladimir Soloviev, "Mezhdu Rossiiei i Tadjikistanom vstala plotina," *Gazeta Kommersant*, 5 September 2007.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴⁹ As quoted in "Tadjikskii politolog: 'Vidimo, 'RusAl' reshil ne portit' otnosheniie s Uzbekistanom'," *Regnum*, 29 August 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Zarina Ergasheva, "Pravitel'stvo Tadjikistana vydেলilo \$50 mln. dlia stroitel'nykh rabot na Rogunskoi GES," 21 February 2007.

¹⁰⁵¹ See "Poslanie Prezidenta Respubliki Tadjikistan Ėmomali Rakhmona Madzhlisi Oli Respubliki Tadjikistan," 30 April 2007.

¹⁰⁵² "Postanovlenie o sozdanii Otkrytogo aktsionernogo obshchestva "Rogunskaiā GĖS"," *Ministerstvo iustitsii Respubliki Tadjikistan*, 31 August 2007.

¹⁰⁵³ "Rogunskuiu GES budet dostravat' RAO EES," *Asia-Plus*, 12 September 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁴ "Rossiia teper' khochet 75% Rogunskoi GES," *Asia-Plus*, 18 September 2007.

on the list of participants in the anticipated international consortium on Roghun, even though the Tajik President wanted it to be open to any party who wanted to attend.¹⁰⁵⁵ Among the newly interested parties was Kazakhstan.¹⁰⁵⁶

Even though the Tajik side promised to consider the concerns of the downstream countries in building the Roghun dam,¹⁰⁵⁷ the Uzbek government was not convinced. Shortly after the Tajik Prime Minister convened a government meeting to discuss the start the construction process in late July 2007,¹⁰⁵⁸ the Uzbek President Karimov expressed his first ever public opposition to the project. According to him, before building any infrastructure on interstate rivers, all downstream states should have to be consulted.¹⁰⁵⁹ The Uzbek ambassador in Tajikistan called a press conference to make a statement supporting Karimov's words.¹⁰⁶⁰ The Uzbek Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed the same ideas during his UN General Assembly speech.¹⁰⁶¹

Along with that, the idea of having the Roghun project internationally assessed emerged in the Uzbek media.¹⁰⁶² Some Uzbek experts questioned Tajikistan's arguments about solving an electricity shortage by building Roghun. For instance, citing Sergei Zhigarev, Director of "HydroProject" Institute of Uzbekistan, the Uzbek newspaper *Pravda Vostoka* speculated that Tajikistan could instead avoid serious shortages by exploiting existing HPSs more efficiently and decreasing the supply of electricity to TALCO and Tadzhihtsement, companies which consumed approximately half of Tajikistan's electricity. The newspaper further suggested that Tajikistan could refraining from exporting electricity to Afghanistan.¹⁰⁶³

In the meanwhile, Uzbekistan convinced Russia, which was Tajikistan's long-term partner on Roghun, to consider the interests of lower-stream countries before building anything on Tajik rivers. According to one of the clauses in a joint statement signed by Karimov and Putin on 6

¹⁰⁵⁵ "RF nastai vaet na kontrole v proekte Rogunskoi GES," *Vzgliad*, 12 October 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Ernur Akanbaï, "N. Nazarbaev: v ramkakh ekonomicheskikh projektov kazakhstanskaia storona budet uchastvovat' vo vsekh tenderakh Tadjhikistana," *KazInform*, 13 September 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁷ "Rakhmon zaïavil, chto energeticheskie projekty Tadjhikistana ne ushchemliat interesov sosednikh stran," *AsianForm*, 4 June 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁸ "Prem'er-ministr Tadjhikistana provel soveshchanie po podgotovke k vozobnovleniiu stroitel'stva Rogunskoi GES," *Regnum*, 28 July 2007.

¹⁰⁵⁹ "Islam Karimov predlozhl na sammite ShOS razumno ispol'zovat' vodno-energeticheskie resursy Tsentral'noi Azii," *Regnum*, 17 August 2007.

¹⁰⁶⁰ "Posol Uzbekistana v Tadjhikistane: Problemy v Tsentral'noi Azii razduvaiutsia iskusstvenno," *Fergana*, 4 September 2007.

¹⁰⁶¹ See "Address by H.E. Mr. Vladimir Norov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the General Debate of the 62nd session of the United National General Assembly," *General Assembly of the United Nations*, 2 October 2007.

¹⁰⁶² U. Abdullaev, "O problemakh regional'nogo ispol'zovaniia vodotoka transgranichnykh rek," *Pravda Vostoka*, 6 December 2007.

¹⁰⁶³ "Stroitel'stvo gidroelektrostantsii i Aral'skaia problema," *Pravda Vostoka*, 24 January 2008. The Uzbek embassy in Moscow copied and released this text. See "Stroitel'stvo gidroelektrostantsii i Aral'skaia problema," *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Rossiiskoi Federatsii* 24 January 2008.

February 2008, "[t]he parties agree that it is necessary to consider the interests of all states located on the transborder waters of the Central Asia region when considering the establishment and maintenance of hydro-energetic infrastructure construction projects."¹⁰⁶⁴ The Tajik mass-media reacted fiercely to this news. *Tojikiston*, a Tajik newspaper, went so far as to criticizing the statement for its resemblance to the NTD processes that took place in 1924 when the Tajiks claim to have lost many of their territories:

By doing so, the events of 1924 are being repeated, when similar actions resulted in Tajiks' losing their historic centers. In this case, using the energy crisis, these states want to smother the Tajiks completely.¹⁰⁶⁵

Asia-Plus deemed this development to be a severe blow for Tajikistan considering that it followed China's recent support of Uzbekistan's position and withdrawal of its support for Tajikistan's HPS.¹⁰⁶⁶

The Uzbek newspapers went on calling for the Tajik government to be open to their neighbour's concerns.¹⁰⁶⁷ The Tajik side refused to do so. As the Tajik Deputy Minister for Energy and Industry put it "Tajikistan will not wait for the consent of its neighbours, especially Uzbekistan, before constructing of hydroelectric stations, particularly, Roghun, on its own territory."¹⁰⁶⁸ Rahmon was sure that the first generators in Roghun HPS would start producing electricity in the coming 4 years.¹⁰⁶⁹ The government was determined to build the HPS and called for construction workers from all over Tajikistan to come and work on it.¹⁰⁷⁰ Rahmon announced that the construction of HPSs was "a matter of life and death" for Tajikistan, and stated that he needed 3 more years to achieve energy independence for Tajikistan.¹⁰⁷¹ To accelerate the construction work, Tajikistan allocated \$170 million from its 2009 state budget to Roghun.¹⁰⁷² This was almost a 5-fold increase from the \$35 million that was invested in the project in 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁴ "Sovmestnoe zaiavlenie prezidentov rossiiskoi federatsii i respubliki uzbekistan," *Prezident Rossii*, 6 February 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁵ As quoted in "Rossiia i Uzbekistan "khotiat okonchatel'no zadushit' tadjhikov": Tadjhikistan za nedeliu," *Regnum*, 20 February 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Mirzo Amin, "Tashkent s Moskvoi. A Dushanbe ...?," *Asia-Plus*, 14 February 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁷ "V voprosakh ispol'zovaniia resursov transgranichnykh rek neobkhodim balans interesov, schitaet uzbekskii ekspert," *Press-uz.info*, 7 March 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁸ As quoted in "Tadjhikistan nameren dostroit' Rogunskuiu GES i bez soglasii Uzbekistana," *Regnum*, 22 April 2008.

¹⁰⁶⁹ As quoted in "Tadjhikistan nameren cherez 3,5-4 goda zapustit' pervuiu ochered' Rogunskoi GES," *Regnum*, 25 April 2008.

¹⁰⁷⁰ "Vystuplenie Prezidenta Respubliki Tadjhikistan Emomali Rakhmona na vstreche s rukovoditeliami i aktivom goroda Rogun," *Khovar*, 31 May 2008.

¹⁰⁷¹ "Vystuplenie Prezidenta RT po sluchaiu 17-i godovshchiny gosudarstvennoi nezavisimosti Tadjhikistana," *Prezident Respubliki Tadjhikistan*, 8 September 2008.

¹⁰⁷² I. Kurbanov, "V 2009 godu iz gosbuzdzheta na dostroiku Roguna budet vydeleno \$170 mln.," *Avesta*, 8 October 2008.

Rahmon issued orders for a plan to be devised to close the Vakhsh River and install the first two generators of Roghun that would start producing energy.¹⁰⁷³

The determination of the Tajik side apparently concerned the Uzbek government. Thus, on 21 October 2008, the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement:

It should be guaranteed by authoritative international experts that the construction of hydro-technic objects in the region will not have irreversible ecological consequences and will not destroy the existing balance of water flow in the interstate rivers by all states located in the basin on this river. The technic-economic reasoning of new hydro-technic objects in the basin of trans-border rivers needs to go through compulsory objective expertise by neutral international auditory organizations.¹⁰⁷⁴

On 5 December 2008, the Uzbek Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vladimir Norov, used his platform at the OSCE summit in Helsinki to condemn Roghun.¹⁰⁷⁵ On 11 December 2008, Borii Alikhanov,¹⁰⁷⁶ Head of the State Committee on the Environmental Protection of Uzbekistan, condemned Roghun HPS, urged for international assessment, and called for Tajikistan not to ignore the interests of other states.¹⁰⁷⁷

2.3. The escalation of the Roghun issue to diplomatic and economic "warfare" between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (2009)

Some observers called Uzbekistan's efforts against the Roghun project in 2009 an attempt to establish a "water front"¹⁰⁷⁸ or "water bloc"¹⁰⁷⁹ against Tajikistan. The reason for this is that, within the first two months of 2009, Uzbekistan gained the support of Russia and Turkmenistan on the Roghun issue. On 23 January 2006, the Russian President, Medvedev, announced his support for Uzbekistan's vision of water problems in the region.¹⁰⁸⁰ A month later, the Turkmen President, Gurbanguly Berdymammedov, made a similar announcement.¹⁰⁸¹ The Tajik side was concerned about these developments, especially Russia's support of Uzbekistan. The Tajik Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a protest letter to the Russian side.¹⁰⁸² Furthermore, Rahmon

¹⁰⁷³ "'S tsel'iu perekrytiia rusla reki Vakhsh v 2009 godu', - rech' E.Rakhmona v Rogune," *Centrasia.ru*, 31 May 2008.

¹⁰⁷⁴ "O pozitsii Respubliki Uzbekistan po voprosu razumnogo ispol'zovaniia vodnykh resursov v Tsentral'noi Azii," *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 21 October 2008.

¹⁰⁷⁵ "Uzbekistan protiv stroitel'stva novykh gidroenergeticheskikh ob'ektov v Kirgizii i Tadjikistane," *Regnum*, 13 December 2008.

¹⁰⁷⁶ He is the head of parliamentary group of Ecological Movement and Vice-Speaker at the Lower Chamber.

¹⁰⁷⁷ See "K itogam konferentsii vysokogo urovnia Evropeiskii Soiuz - Tsentral'naia Azia na temu «Platforma dlia sotrudnichestva v oblasti okhrany okruzhaiushchei srede i vodnykh resursov»,» *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Azerbaidzhanskoj Respublike*, 2008. The text of his text of speech contains excerpts from Norov's 2007 UN speech, as well as MFA's 21 October 2008 press-release.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Sergeĭ Rasov, "Vodnyĭ front Tsentral'noi Azii," *Politkom.ru*, 15 April 2009.

¹⁰⁷⁹ "Tashkent osnoval "vodnyĭ blok" protiv Tadjikistana i Kirgizii," *Izvestia*, 14 April 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁰ "Tadjikistan nedovolen dogovorĕnnostiami Rossii i Uzbekistana," *Regnum*, 30 January 2009.

¹⁰⁸¹ See "Prezident Uzbekistana nastai vaet na ĕkspertize gidroĕnergeticheskikh proektov Kirgizii i Tadjikistana," *Regnum*, 25 February 2009.

¹⁰⁸² "Tadjikistan nedovolen dogovorĕnnostiami Rossii i Uzbekistana."

boycotted the summits of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community in Moscow in late January 2009, during which he had a planned to meet with Medvedev.¹⁰⁸³ Instead, he visited Belgium, Croatia, and the Baltic states in February 2009, a time during which the Tajik government, among other things, attempted to find investors for Roghun. As Pulod Muhiddinov, Deputy Minister of Energy and Industry of Tajikistan, explained, "Tajikistan will build Roghun HPS even though someone is against it."¹⁰⁸⁴

In February 2009, Uzbekistan halved the amount of daily gas supplied to Tajikistan, with the warning that the supply might get reduced to nothing as a result of the Tajiks' outstanding bill of \$16 million. Simultaneously, the Uzbek government launched an information campaign against Roghun. On April 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan issued a statement¹⁰⁸⁵, and the Parliament of Uzbekistan held discussions condemning the Roghun project.¹⁰⁸⁶ Following the reaction of the Uzbek parliament, President Rahmon gave a speech in the Tajik parliament stating that Tajikistan's energy projects were necessary to put an end to the sufferings that the Tajik people had been having in the last 15 years during winter.¹⁰⁸⁷ On another occasion, he explained why the hydro-energetic projects of Tajikistan were viewed as "a national priority that has no alternatives."¹⁰⁸⁸

On 24 April 2009, *Pravda Vostoka*, an official newspaper of the Uzbek government, published a letter of the World Bank's head, Robert Zoellick, to President Karimov. In the letter, Zoellick assured the Uzbek side that its concerns would be considered in the forthcoming assessment of Roghun.¹⁰⁸⁹ At the same time, referring to some European officials, the Uzbek Embassy in the UK announced that the EU was against the project.¹⁰⁹⁰ The informational attack on Roghun became intense in the Uzbek media.¹⁰⁹¹ All of the articles published in Uzbekistan's newspapers

¹⁰⁸³ "Vodno-energeticheskaia voina: prezident Tadjikistana obidelsia na Uzbekistan, Medvedeva i Rossiiu," *Regnum*, 2 February 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Pa'irav Chorshanbiev, "Prezidenty Uzbekistana i Turkmenii vystupili protiv vozvedeniia Rogunskoi GES i Kambaratinskoi GES," *Asia-Plus*, 26 February 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁵ For the full text, see "Uzbekistan: Zaiavlena ofitsial'naia pozitsiia po voprosu stroitel'stva novykh GES," *Fergana*, 14 April 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁶ "Liberal-demokraty Uzbekistana vyrazhaiut obespokoennost' po probleme ratsional'nogo ispol'zovaniia prirodnykh resursov Tsentral'noi Azii," *Press.uz*, 13 April 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁷ "Poslanie Prezidenta Tadjikistana Emomali Rakhmona Parlamentu strany," *Prezident Respubliki Tadjikistan*, 15 April 2009.

¹⁰⁸⁸ "Sukhanronii Prezidenti Jumhurii Tojikiston Emomali Rahmon dar marosimi ba istifoda dodani Nerugohi barqi obii 'Sangtuda-1'," *Jumhurii Tojikiston Maqomoti ijroiiai hokimiati davlatii viloiati Sughd*, n.d.

¹⁰⁸⁹ "Ego Prevoskhoditel'stvu Islamu Karimovu, Prezidentu Respubliki Uzbekistan," *Pravda Vostoka*, 23 April 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁰ "Ot spravedlivogo vodopol'zovaniia zavisit blagosostoianie i budushchee Tsentral'noi Azii," *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Soedinennom Korolevstve Velikobritanii i Severnoi Irlandii*, 22 April 2009.

¹⁰⁹¹ For examples, see "Lui Fashon: "IA porazhen tem, kak uzbekskii narod stremitsia k dal'neishemu progressu svoei strany," *Pravda Vostoka*, 19 May 2009.; Nozim Madamindzhanov, "V ispol'zovani vodnykh resursov regiona neobkhodim ob'ektivnyi i vzveshennyi podkhod," *Pravda Vostoka*, 28 June 2009. Laziz Tursunov, "Reki, nesushchie zhizn'," *Pravda Vostoka*, 10 September 2009; For article written by the government officials, see N. Koroleva, "'Tromby' na plotinakh. Kto proshchitaet posledstviia?," *Pravda Vostoka*, 15 September 2009; Borii Alikhanov, "Gidroelektrostantsii na krupnykh vodokhranilishchakh - est' li nadezhnye garantii bezopasnosti?," *Pravda Vostoka*, 4 September 2009. Also, see Tursunov, "Reki, nesushchie zhizn'."

contained evidence from experts with negative thoughts about the safety controls at the existing HPSs in Central Asia,¹⁰⁹² or from experts that called the new project a “criminal levity.”¹⁰⁹³ The Uzbek Minister of Foreign Affairs devoted a significant portion of his 2009 UN General Assembly speech to the issue of Roghun, calling for an international assessment of its environmental and economic viability. The Uzbek ambassador at the UN argued that, considering that half of Central Asia’s population lived in Uzbekistan, the Uzbek side had moral rights to raise the water issues in Central Asia.¹⁰⁹⁴

Considering the difficulties presented by attracting foreign investors to such a contested project, the Tajik government decided to cover the lack of funding by drawing money from Tajikistan’s population. The government issued shares for “OAO Roghun HPS” and the Speaker of the upper chamber of the Tajik parliament called upon the Tajik people to spend an amount equivalent to a monthly salary in order to buy these shares.¹⁰⁹⁵ The same idea was later supported by President Rahmon,¹⁰⁹⁶ who proposed an exact amount that each family ought to spend on Roghun shares -- \$690.¹⁰⁹⁷ The idea of building the Roghun HPS at any cost began to sound more convincing to the Tajiks when Uzbekistan left the United Energy System of Central Asia (UES) in 2009.¹⁰⁹⁸ Even though the Uzbek side explained this decision regarding economic and energy independence of Uzbekistan,¹⁰⁹⁹ the Tajik government was sure that it was a political decision against Tajikistan.¹¹⁰⁰ The biggest implications this decision had were for electricity consumers in Tajikistan, mainly, the flagship of the Tajik economy – TALCO and Tajik Cement. In 2009, in his speech during the opening ceremony of the “North-South” electricity line, to

¹⁰⁹² "Uzbekistan vyrazhaet ozabochennost' sostoianiem kontroliã bezopasnosti plotin v sosednikh gosudarstvakh," *Pravda Vostoka*, 11 September 2009.

¹⁰⁹³ "Uzbekskii ãkspert: stroitel'stvo GËS v Kirgizii i Tadzhiãkistane - "prestupnoe legkomyslie"," *Pravda Vostoka*, 8 September 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁴ "Posol Uzbekistana prizval ukrepit' sotrudnichestvo v upravlenii vodnymi resursami," *UzReport*, 9 November 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁵ "Naselenie Tadzhiãkistana prizvali perechislit' meãiachnuu zarplatu v stroitel'stvo Rogunskoï GËS," *CA-NEWS*, 20 November 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁶ "Prezident Tadzhiãkistana obiazal kazhduu tadhikskuu sem'iu priobresti aktsii Rogunskoï GËS na \$690," *Regnum*, 2 December 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁷ "Rakhmon obiazal kazhduu tadhikskuu sem'iu kupit' aktsii Rogunskoï GËS na summu ne menee \$690," *Institut mirovoï ãkonomiki i politiki pri Fonde Pervogo Prezidenta Respubliki Kazakhstan - Lidera Naãsii*, 19 December 2009.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Established during the Soviet period and curated by the Ministry of Energy of the USSR, the system functioned on the basis of water and energy exchange. During the winter, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan would use the dams in their HPSs to collect the amount to release it in spring-summer periods. As a result, they would create excess water for the agriculture of the lower stream countries as well as created excess electricity to export to them. In their turns, the lower stream countries would export the similar amount of electricity to the upper-stream countries during the winter periods. All of the dams, HPSs and the water reservoirs were built with a consideration that the system worked perfectly for all parties. For more on the system, see Farkhod Aminzhonov, "Bessistemnaã ãnergopolitika stran Tãsentral'noï Azii usugubliãet ãnergeticheskuiu bezopasnost' regiona," *Vlast*, 25 December 2014.

¹⁰⁹⁹ "12.uz: Uzbekistan vyshel iz OËS TãSA," *CA-News*, 27 November 2009.

¹¹⁰⁰ "Tadzhiãkistan pridaet politicheskuiu okrasku vykhodu Uzbekistana iz Ob'edinennoï ãnergeticheskoiã sistemy Tãsentral'noï Azii," *Regnum*, 25 November 2009; Konstantin Parshin, "Uzbekistan otkliãchaet rubil'nik, a Dushanbe mozhet perekryt' vodu," *Eurasianet.org*, 1 December 2009.

compensate for Uzbekistan's exit, Rahmon drew attention to the importance of completing Roghun:

The noble people of Tajikistan can be sure that, using the financial resources and abilities of state, and importantly, relying on the will, decisiveness and support of the deserving Tajik nation, as well as attracting external investment, we will definitely build Roghun power station, because for the Tajik people it is the only rescue path from their current problems. Because it meets the energy demands, which define the further development of our national economy and the living standards of our nation, we have no other way.¹¹⁰¹

To further increase pressure on the Tajik government, the Uzbek authorities started blocking the transit of Tajik trains through Uzbekistan's territory. Thus, from November 2009 till February 2010, Uzbekistan detained 400 train cargoes destined for Tajikistan. By June 2010 the number of blocked train cars had reached 2000.¹¹⁰² According to the Tajik side, most of the products that had been blocked on Uzbekistan's railways were fuel materials.¹¹⁰³ In explaining the behavior of Uzbekistan, the Tajik Prime Minister claimed that Tashkent planned to hurt the agricultural industry of Tajikistan, which employed 70% of the Tajik population. This was because the fuel materials were being imported for this industry's usage.¹¹⁰⁴

However, the Tajik side was aware that the ultimate purpose of the Uzbek side was to halt the Roghun project.¹¹⁰⁵ In 2010, after a meeting between the two nations' presidents, Uzbekistan agreed to unblock all cargoes, except for the ones believed to be carrying materials intended for usage at the Roghun construction site.¹¹⁰⁶ As of February 2010, 2000 train cargoes remained trapped in Uzbekistan.¹¹⁰⁷ The Tajik railway company claimed a \$5 million loss due to the blockade in 2010.¹¹⁰⁸ Apparently, the blockade worked so as to disrupt and delay Tajikistan's plan to close to the Vaksh River by the end of January 2010.¹¹⁰⁹

¹¹⁰¹ "É. Rakhmon: 'Splotivshis', my preodoleem problemy'," *Posol'stva Respubliki Tadjikistan v KNR*, 3 December 2009.

¹¹⁰² Mirzaian, "Kak possorilis' Emomali Sharipovich s Islamom Abduganiievichem."

¹¹⁰³ Latifi Latif, "Intiqodi Oqil Oqilov az "bahonasozii"i kishvari hamsoia," *Radioi Ozodi*, 24 March 2010.

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁰⁶ "Uzbekistan demontiruet zheleznuiu dorogu po napravleniiu k iugu Tadjikistana," *Rosbalt*, 20 March 2012.

¹¹⁰⁷ Hamrokhon Zarifi, ed. *Diplomatiia Tadjikistana: Ezhegodnik-2010.*, Vneshniaia Politika Tadjikistana: Khronika i Dokumenty (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2011), 330-31.

¹¹⁰⁸ Khurshedi Hamdam, ""Muhosirai iqtisodii Tozhikiston" tavassuti Uzbekiston," *Radioi Ozodi*, 23 March 2010.

¹¹⁰⁹ "Perekrytie rusla reki Vaksh dlia vozvedeniia plotiny Roguna planiruetsia v Ianvare," *Avesta*, 21 December 2009.

2.4. Paralyzing the Tajik economy: issues concerning gas supply and the railroad blockade

Tajik-Uzbek relations further deteriorated in 2010-2011 due to the uncompromising positions of both sides. Ignoring the demands of the Uzbek side, who wanted no activity to take place on the Roghun construction site until an international investigation was conducted, the Tajik side went on to self-finance the project by allocating \$150 million to Roghun's construction from the state budget in 2010, as well as selling \$105 million worth of shares to the Tajik population.¹¹¹⁰ Apparently, these developments were not acceptable to the Uzbek government.¹¹¹¹ So, Uzbekistan once more halved the daily amount of gas supplied to Tajikistan, this time using the excuse of \$2 million unpaid by Tajikistan for already-imported gas. Tadzhihtsement, a state-owned cement producer in Tajikistan, which was known as the leading supplier of the cement for the construction of the Roghun HPS, was the party most affected by this decision.¹¹¹²

In a letter published in the Uzbek official media, the Uzbek Prime Minister called on his Tajik colleagues to halt the construction works pending an international assessment of the project. The Tajik government was warned that if construction did not stop, Uzbekistan would attract international attention to the issue.¹¹¹³ The growing tension between the two nations over the project made it unattractive to international investors. Kazakhstan, which was the only Central Asian nation that had occasionally expressed interest in the Roghun project, decided that it would wait until the assessment was conducted. In March 2010, the Kazakh President, during a meeting with Karimov, announced Kazakhstan's support for Uzbekistan's position on the Roghun issue.¹¹¹⁴ It should be noted that in February 2008, the Kazakh Ambassador in Tajikistan announced Kazakhstan's interest in joining the international financial consortium on Roghun.¹¹¹⁵

In March 2011, Tajikistan signed an agreement with *Coyne & Bellier*, an international consulting and engineering company based in France, for technical and economic assessment and with *Poyry*, an engineering and company headquartered in Finland, for ecologic and social impact assessment. The World Bank agreed to finance both assessments. However, construction work continued during this period and there were also plans to close the stream of Vakhsh River, in order to install two generators for the Roghun HPS, in November 2011.¹¹¹⁶ The government of Uzbekistan boycotted the first consultation on Roghun, organized by the World Bank with the

¹¹¹⁰ Z. Ergasheva, "Prodazha aktsii OAO "Rogunskaja GES" prekrashena," *Asia-Plus*, 19 November 2012.

¹¹¹¹ "Iskat' razumnyĭ vykhod ili Vodnye resursy ne dolzhny stat' ĩablokom razdora," *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Kyrgyzskoi Respublike*, 10 February 2010.

¹¹¹² "Uzbekistan napolovinu sokratil podachu prirognogo gaza v Tadzhiķistan," *Avesta.tj*, 11 September 2010.

¹¹¹³ Shavkat Mirziĕev, "Prem'er-ministru Respubliki Tadzhiķistan Akilovu A.G.," *Pravda Vostoka*, 3 February 2010.

¹¹¹⁴ Talgat Mamiraimov, "Novyĭ vitok vo vzaimootnosheniĭakh Astany i Tashkenta?," *Fergana*, 12 April 2010.

¹¹¹⁵ See "Rossiĭa i Uzbekistan "khotĭat okonchatel'no zadushit' tadzhiķov": Tadzhiķistan za nedelĭu."

¹¹¹⁶ "Rogun: Ne budet perekrytiĭa - budet ĕnergokrizis," *Asia-Plus*, 10 November 2011.

participation *Coyne & Bellier* and *Poyry*, in Almaty, on 17-19 May 2011. The following quote from an Uzbek newspaper article, published on 12 October 2011, expressed the mood in Tashkent:

Despite the arguments that have been had and notwithstanding the final results of ongoing technical and economic assessment, [Tajikistan] still aims to follow the initial plan for this project, which involve an unprecedentedly gigantic dam. [...] Large-scale and aggressive propaganda for the project, the assessment of which has not yet concluded, remains ongoing [in Tajikistan]. [...] despite the categorical disagreement of international experts, the government of Tajikistan is taken with the idea of starting the construction of the first part of the Roghun HPS, with its preliminary 120 meter-high dam, without waiting for the completion of international assessment, thus putting the international community before the materialized, adventurist fact.¹¹¹⁷

In a statement released on 26 October 2011, the Tajik government blamed the Uzbek media for spreading distorted information about the ongoing taking place on Roghun.¹¹¹⁸ In response, a press release from the Uzbek government accused the Tajik side of hiding the actual scale of construction work taking place on Roghun:

The assertions of the government of Tajikistan that currently only repair works are taking place on the territory of Roghun HPS are inaccurate. If this were the case, how would one explain why in 2010 these so-called "maintenance works" drained \$150 million out of the state budget? This year, \$191 million has been allocated for these works, and the proposed budget for 2012 includes \$223 million for these purposes. It is also known that up to 5000 people are working in the Roghun HPS, which is clearly an excessive workforce for mere maintenance.¹¹¹⁹

As a following step, Uzbekistan took the harsh measures of cutting Tajikistan's gas supply and blocking the railway transit. These measures almost crippled the Tajik economy. Hinting at the expiration of the contract, on 6 January 2012, Uzbekistan stopped the exportation of gas to Tajikistan. Murodali Alimardon, the Deputy Prime Minister, arrived in Tashkent the following day to negotiate a new contract.¹¹²⁰ He was only able to secure an agreement for 45 million cubic metres of gas. On 25 March 2012, Uzbekneftegaz, the state-owned gas company, announced that Uzbekistan would stop the exportation of gas on 1 April 2012, once the Uzbek side had finished supplying the agreed-upon 45 million cubic metres of gas. Referring to new obligations to China, the nation where all Uzbek gas needed to be exported, Uzbekistan refused

¹¹¹⁷ The text of the article is available at "Vopreki logike i razumu," *Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan*, 12 October 2011.

¹¹¹⁸ "Izhoroti hukumati Jumhurii Tojikiston," *Saforati Jumhurii Tojikiston dar Jumhurii Turkiia*, 2011.

¹¹¹⁹ The embassy of Uzbekistan in Russia reprinted an article by Uzbek newspaper Pravda Vostoka. For the text, see "Kogda zaiavleniia raskhodiatsia s real'nym polozheniem del," *Press-sluzhba Posol'stva Respubliki Uzbekistan V Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, 2011.

¹¹²⁰ Anora Sarkorova, "Uzbekistan perekryl postavki gaza v Tadzhiqistan," *BBC Russian Service*, 6 April 2012.

to negotiate with Tajikistan. Furthermore, Uzbekistan did not allow the transit of gas to Tajikistan from Turkmenistan.

Alternative sources of energy proved insufficient to support Tajik industry.¹¹²¹ So, Tajikgaz and Tadzhihtsement had to halt production and provide their entire staff with a leave of absence until further notice.¹¹²² TALCO, which accounted for 75% of export revenue from Tajikistan, risked stopping aluminium production permanently. In a press release, the company stated that without stable energy supply the smelting pots would cool down and it would cost \$200 thousand to restart each of them. In total, the restart process could cost up to \$500 million and take over 3 years.¹¹²³ During this period, 13 thousand people would find themselves unemployed and 40 factories in the supply chain would close. During the energy crisis, 130 factories in Tajikistan had to seek alternative energy sources and take the additional measure of replacing gas with coal.¹¹²⁴ Tadzhihtsement and TALCO began to install technologies that allow to operate on coal.¹¹²⁵ This led to an increase in coal mining in Tajikistan¹¹²⁶ and the establishment of a state-owned coal enterprise, Angishti Tojik, to boost the mining industry.¹¹²⁷

Even though, on 11 April 2012, both sides agreed to renew the gas supply starting from 16 April 2012, the Tajik economy suffered significantly during these fifteen days. These events revealed the overdependence of the Tajik economy on energy supplied by Uzbekistan. This, as well as the previous cuts, were a demonstration of power by Uzbekistan. . As a result, construction on the Roghun HPS slowed down, mainly due to the shortfall in the amount of cement produced by Tadzhihtsement. Furthermore, these measures also affected households in Tajikistan in terms of gas supply and resulted in the temporary unemployment of tens of thousands of people. The Tajik authorities blamed Uzbekistan for seeking to provoke a humanitarian catastrophe, social unrest and disloyalty to the government.¹¹²⁸

In March 2012, Uzbekistan started to demolish the Ghalaba-Amuzang railway, which was one of two routes linking the railway networks of Uzbekistan Tajikistan.¹¹²⁹ As a result, Tajikistan lost its main transit route to the world outside its borders. The other railroad link, Bekabad-Kudukly, which connects Tajikistan's north to Uzbekistan's railway network, still functions but, can only

¹¹²¹ For the claims of the head of Tadjiktransgaz, see "Tadjikistan dogovorilsia s Turkmeniei o postavkakh gaza - slovo za Uzbekistanom," *Regnum*, 28 March 2012.

¹¹²² "Uzbekistan vozobnovil postavki gaza v Tadjikistan," *Regnum*, 16 April 2012.

¹¹²³ "Uzbekistan perekryl postavki gaza v Tadjikistan."

¹¹²⁴ "Uzbekistan vozobnovil postavki gaza v Tadjikistan."

¹¹²⁵ "Kitai pomozhet "Tadjikhtsement" u pereiti na ugol," *Avesta.tj*, 23 April 2012.

¹¹²⁶ "Dobycha uglia v Tadjikistane uvelichena na 60 protsentov - minenergoprom," *Trend New Agency*, 7 November 2013.

¹¹²⁷ Z. Ergasheva, "Tadjikistan do kontsa goda mozhet otkazatsia ot importa uglia," *InoZpress*, 4 June 2014.

¹¹²⁸ Mirzaian, "Kak possorilis' Emomali Sharipovich s Islamom Abduganiievichem."

¹¹²⁹ "Uzbekistan demontiruiet zheleznuiu dorogu po napravleniiu k iugu Tadjikistana."

transport goods to the Sughd province of Tajikistan. Due to Tajikistan's poor internal transportation system, moving of goods from Sughd to the southern parts of the nation such as Khatlon or Dushanbe is difficult. In fact, the transit of cargo through Ghalaba-Amuzang was stopped on 17 November 2011, when Uzbekistan reported that one of the railway bridges had been blown up in a suspected terrorist act.¹¹³⁰ Tajikistan's offers to rebuild the bridge were rejected by Uzbekistan as a result of an ongoing investigation into the potential terrorist act.¹¹³¹

Hundreds of train cars bound for the Khatlon region of Tajikistan have been stuck in Uzbekistan since then.¹¹³² In the meanwhile, the Uzbek railway company has been delivering cargo to the north of Tajikistan via the Bekabad-Kudukly link. However, the Tajik side was reluctant to accept cargo from this direction due to the difficulties presented by internal transportation from this region. The officials of the Khatlon region of Tajikistan claimed that the province suffered millions of dollars of loss in trade due to the damage done to the Ghalaba-Amuzang link.¹¹³³ The Uzbek side criticized Tajikistan's reluctance to receive train freights through the Bekabad-Kudukly link. According to Uzbek online media, "while blaming Uzbekistan for the blockade, Tajikistan is interested in the continuation of this 'blockade'."¹¹³⁴

In general, through the implementation of energy and transportation blockades, Uzbekistan succeeded in slowing down the construction work taking place at Roghun. In July 2012 the Tajik government started to fire construction workers at Roghun en masse.¹¹³⁵ However, some workers remained on the construction site. According to official estimates, 3,000 of the 5,500 workers who had been working on the project were dismissed.¹¹³⁶ According to other estimates, however, more than 5,500 construction workers out of 10,000 were dismissed.¹¹³⁷ Even though Uzbekistan achieved its short-term goal of freezing the construction work on Roghun, it was clear that the Tajik side was far from giving up the idea of Roghun completely.

On 7 September 2012, the Uzbek president went as far as warning that trans-border water issues might result in a regional war.¹¹³⁸ The Tajik government, however, ignored this warning; on 20 October 2012, following a decree from Rahmon, the Project Management Group for Energy

¹¹³⁰ "V Uzbekistane proizoshel vzryv na zheleznodorozhnoĭ linii Termez — Kurgan-Tiube," *Podrobno.uz*, 19 November 2011; "Vzryv v Amuzange - terakt?," *Radio Ozodi*, 20 November 2011.

¹¹³¹ "Tadzhikistan gotov pomoch' uzbekskim zheleznodorozhnikam vosstanovit' razrushennyĭ most," *Regnum*, 21 November 2011.

¹¹³² Nosirzhoni Ma'murzoda, "Rohi bastai Amuzang millionho dollar ziion ovaast," *Radioi Ozodi*, 6 September 2012.

¹¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹¹³⁴ As quoted in "Uzbekskie zheleznodorozhniki oprovergaiut obvineniia v osushchestvlenii ekonomicheskoi blokady Tadzhikistana," *Regnum*, 22 December 2011.

¹¹³⁵ R. Mirzobekova and Kh. Mirsaidov, "Rogunskai GES - chas X priblizhaietsia," *Asia-Plus*, 20 July 2012.

¹¹³⁶ Paĭrav Chorshanbiev, "Poluchit Tadzhikistan polozhitel'nyie rezultaty ekspertiz Roguna?," *Asia-Plus*, 14 November 2012.

¹¹³⁷ A. Iuldashev, "Raboty na Rogunskoi GES priostanovleny," *Asia-Plus*, 18 July 2012.

¹¹³⁸ Ergasheva, "Prodazha aktsii OAO "Rogunskai GES" prekrashena."

Projects, a government body regulating the construction of Roghun, was transferred from Prime Minister's control to the President's control.¹¹³⁹ The proposed budget for the following year included approximately \$250 million for Roghun, which was more than what had been spent in 2012.¹¹⁴⁰ On 7 November 2012, the Uzbek side boycotted the second meeting on Roghun, which was organized by World Bank as a part of ongoing international assessments of the project.

3. Uzbekistan as an threat to the national unity and economic development of Tajikistan: the discursive construction of the Uzbek "other" and the heroic image of Emomali Rahmon

3.1. The official discourses on Uzbek meddling in the Tajik Civil War

The official discourses about Uzbekistan's role in the Tajik Civil War were initially positive. However, in 1997 the Tajik government started openly accusing Tashkent of igniting the Tajik civil war. Until then, the official discourses rather pointed at the Islamic and national-democratic forces as the sources of the Tajik civil war. To begin with, in his first official statement as the Head of the Tajik Parliament Emomali Rahmon referred to "some [political] parties and socio-political groupings" as the forces behind the war in Tajikistan.¹¹⁴¹ In December 1992, he pinpointed Islamic fundamentalists, who were acting illegally in Tajikistan, as well as the DPT, who were followers of the *Rastokhez* movement.¹¹⁴² In particular, he claimed that the DPT had "seeded hatred between Tajiks and Uzbeks."¹¹⁴³ Repeating similar accusations, Rahmon stated, in March 1993, that "it is precisely this "demo-Islamic" [sic] opposition that has succeeded in splitting the people of Tajikistan into Khujandis, Gharmis, Hisaris, Badakhshanis, Kulobis, and Uzbeks."¹¹⁴⁴ Rahmon used to talk positively about the role played by Tashkent the Tajik conflict.

During our meeting with the President of Uzbekistan, comrade I.A.Karimov, we signed an Agreement on Friendship and Mutual Assistance between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. By this agreement, the [Tajik] Republic is receiving humanitarian aid, clothes, medications, food, fuel, and combustive-lubricant materials.¹¹⁴⁵

Furthermore, in December 1993, Rahmon stated that "I have to say that, for Tajiks, friendly, robust and long-term relations with Uzbekistan is a historical factor [sic] and our nation needs

¹¹³⁹ "Ukaz Prezidenta Respubliki Tadjikistan O Gruppe po realizatsii proektov stroitel'stva énergeticheskikh sooruzhenii pri Prezidente Respubliki Tadjikistan," *Gruppa po realizatsii proektov stroitel'stva énergeticheskikh sooruzhenii pri Prezidente Respubliki Tadjikistan*, 20 October 2012.

¹¹⁴⁰ A. Iuldashev, "Tadjikistan uvelichit finansirovaniie stroitel'stvo Rogunskoi GES," *Asia-Plus*, 9 October 2012.

¹¹⁴¹ As quoted in Abdufattoh Sharifzoda and Abdullo Ghafurov, *Nazhotbakhshi millat* (Dushanbe: Ispolnitel'niy Apparat Prezidenta Respubliki Tadjikistan, 2012), 21.

¹¹⁴² Rahmonov, *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 1, 16.

¹¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

this."¹¹⁴⁶ All throughout 1994, President Rahmon kept expressing his gratitude to the Uzbeks for their contribution to improving the situation in Tajikistan. In January 1994, he gladly acknowledged that Uzbekistan had agreed to pay 15% of the expenditure that Tajikistan had earmarked for its newly-formed national army.¹¹⁴⁷ He was sure that Uzbekistan "would spare no efforts in rebuilding our ruined economy."¹¹⁴⁸ In May 1994, Rahmon stated that "with the help and support of our brothers we have overcome difficulties ranging from the Spring-time sewings to problems in the economy. The President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, personally cares that we [Tajiks] solve our problems quickly."¹¹⁴⁹ In his speech at the UN General Assembly in September 1994, Rahmon thanked Uzbekistan for its efforts in relation to the "peaceful resolution of inter-Tajik conflict, as well as the maintenance of security and stability in the Central Asian region."¹¹⁵⁰ Even during his first presidential campaign in 1994 Rahmon did not say anything negative about Uzbekistan, which had supported Abdullajonov's candidacy. He rather criticized "enemies of national unity" and condemned them for using propaganda in public places and in the media to split "us into true and fake Tajiks, into Gharmis and Khujandis, Kulabis and Mastchohis, Pamiris and Hissaris, Uzbeks and Russians, Muslims and infidels."¹¹⁵¹

The positive tone of the official rhetoric surrounding Uzbekistan's role in the Tajik conflict began to fade after 9-day-long demonstrations in Leninobod in May 1996, which resulted in the dismissal of 70 local government officials, mostly Kulobis.¹¹⁵² Rahmon accused Uzbekistan of supporting the demonstration.¹¹⁵³ Shortly after his visit to Uzbekistan in 1997, Rahmon began to talk about equality and justice in the relations between the two nations, as well as the internal and external forces that wanted to spoil the "millennium-long" friendship:

our relations should be based on the principles of equality, brotherhood, social justice and good-neighbourliness. [...] Unfortunately, there are internal and external forces that would like to complicate our relations. However, the neighborhood of these two nations is decided by God, not by some politician.¹¹⁵⁴

In April 1997, Rahmon survived an assassination.¹¹⁵⁵ This happened two months before the Tajik government, and the United Tajik Opposition forces, signed a peace treaty putting an end to the

¹¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 121.

¹¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 129. Russia paid half of the total expenses, while Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan promised to cover 15% each, whereas Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan agreed to pay 10% each.

¹¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 144.

¹¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 159.

¹¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 194.

¹¹⁵¹ Ibid., 197-98.

¹¹⁵² "Demonstratsii v Leninabadskoĭ oblasti v mae 1996 g.," *Human Rights Watch*, April 1998.

¹¹⁵³ "Uzbekskii faktor."

¹¹⁵⁴ Emomali Rahmon, "Vystupleniie na vstreche s intelligentsiiei," *Prezident Respubliki Tazhikistan*, 19 March 1997., also Rahmonov, *Nezavisimost' Tadzhikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 2, 100.

¹¹⁵⁵ For the details of the assassination and the reaction of Rahmon's government to it, see Martin, "'Welcome to Leninabad Republic?'"

civil war. In August 1997, Rahmon's government survived a coup. Following these events Rahmon started to make implicit statements about the destructive role that Uzbekistan and its clients had played in the Tajik Civil War:

Remember the attempted coup [in August 1997] that began with an attempted assassination of the President [in April 1997]; after the dirty intentions and plans of the killers were not realized, these traitors of the nation and motherland attempted to organize a military coup overtly. Fortunately, our great armed forces, in a demonstration of true heroism, destroyed the military group of putschists and saved the motherland from collapse. [...] The nation had a good chance to recognize the faces, aims and intentions of the traitors, who traded their own Motherland and nation, who attempted to destroy our state with the help of their bosses abroad.¹¹⁵⁶

In response to such accusations, President Karimov of Uzbekistan said that "Sometimes it is necessary to remember how, with whose support, with whose resources, the current government of Tajikistan came to power. It should be occasionally remembered in order to regain the memory, to realize what they are doing."¹¹⁵⁷ Overall, the positive rhetoric about the role of Uzbekistan in the Tajik civil war, which had been abundant up until this point, almost disappeared from Tajikistan's official discourses.¹¹⁵⁸ Uzbekistan replaced the "demo-Islamic" as the "other" in Rahmon's rhetoric. Casting a shadow on Uzbekistan's previously positive reputation, Rahmon claimed that their true face had now been revealed:

The separatists, who got scared of [sic] peace, tranquillity and national unity, attempted to divide society the hostile groups and to sow seeds of discord and distrust between the brotherly people of our country. [...] [An investigation] will tear the masks off the faces of those who committed these anti-constitutional actions with the help of their patrons abroad and their internal cohorts. It will reveal the ill-wishers of our nation.¹¹⁵⁹

Following the occupation of the Khujand region by the forces of Colonel Khudoyberdiyev, in November 1998, Rahmon became more explicit in his accusations addressed to Uzbekistan. He highlighted the fact that Uzbek warlords sought to disrupt the process of national reconciliation in Tajikistan:

[The internal and external enemies of Tajikistan] are trying to use all means to stop the national reconciliation process and spread hatred and enmity among the people. The events of August last year are evidence of that. Back then,

¹¹⁵⁶ Rahmonov, *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 2, 155-56.

¹¹⁵⁷ In an interview with Interfax date 30 October 1997, as quoted in footnote 42 in "Uzbekskii faktor."

¹¹⁵⁸ Only two exceptions can be found. First, in his official statement after signing the peace treaty with opposition in Moscow, Rahmon mentioned Uzbekistan's positive role; "When there is fire in your house, your neighbour comes for a rescue first. We deeply appreciate the leadership of the brotherly Uzbekistan, which was beside us in difficult minutes". See *Nezavisimost' Tadjikistana i vozrozhdeniie natsii*, 2, 125. Second, during his visit to Uzbekistan in June 1998, Rahmon stated that "it is exactly the friendship between Tajiks and Uzbeks that allowed us in the tragic 1990s to overcome the big trouble. People of Tajikistan will never forget help and esteemed Islam Abdughanievich's sincere personal contribution in the establishment of lasting peace and national reconciliation in the land of Tajiks". See *ibid.*, 327-28.

¹¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 156.

government forces destroyed criminal groups and maintained peace in the country. However, the leaders of these forces, who aspired to rise to power [in Tajikistan], did not learn their lesson. Without giving up their dirty plans, and with the backing of the external ill-wishers, they attempted to bring calamity to their own people. As you all know, on the morning of 4 November [1998], enemies of the nation, backed by intelligence services abroad, [sic] intruded upon the holy territory of our Motherland. After many unsuccessful attempts that had been made in the southern regions of the country, this time they chose the territory of the peaceful Leninobod region for their evil activities. [...] The predatory attack of the armed gang, headed by Abdumalik Abdullodzhonov, Mahmud Khudoyberdiyev and their supporters, among whom were the citizens of Uzbekistan, as well as the mercenaries of the Afghan General of Uzbek origin, Dostum, resulted in the death of a dozen of law enforcement officers [of Tajikistan], who took the first blows upon themselves, as well as the peaceful civilians.¹¹⁶⁰

Besides singling out Uzbek warlords and Uzbek citizens as the enemies of the Tajik nation, Rahmon accused Uzbekistan of providing support to them:

[T]his time they came from the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan. They were hiding there after repeatedly committing their black deeds [in Tajikistan]. Most probably this coup d'état would not have taken place if these individuals, who attempted to take over [Tajikistan], did not hide in the territory of another state after their initial plans failed last year.¹¹⁶¹

Furthermore, according to Rahmon these events helped the Tajik nation to find out who its true enemies and friends had been for the last six years (1992-1998):

During the last six years, I have highlighted several times that the ultimate aim of the enemy is to liquidate the statehood of the Tajik nation. This threat is still present. The tragic events in Leninobod have once more proved this. However, our enemies should not forget that the people of Tajikistan have already recognized who is their friend and who is their enemy.¹¹⁶²

While making implications about the negative role played by the ethnic Uzbek generals or Uzbekistan as a nation in the civil war, Rahmon made sure not to alienate the Uzbek population of Tajikistan:

There were and there will always be forces that try to hinder the neighbourliness and friendship between the Tajik and Uzbek people. These forces will try to implant discord and hatred between them. However, they are deeply mistaken. There is no force that could destroy the friendship of our two nations. Statesmen may come and go, however, the friendship of the Tajik and the Uzbek people has been and will always be eternal.¹¹⁶³

¹¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 372.

¹¹⁶¹ Ibid., 374.

¹¹⁶² Ibid.

¹¹⁶³ Ibid., 354.

Rahmon was careful enough to note that the enemy was not the Uzbek people but rather their leadership who were attempting create a divide between the peoples of each nation:

Anyone who tries to play games with the fate of the Tajik and Uzbek people is a despicable enemy of the nation. The friendship of these two nations, which has survived several challenges over the centuries, cannot be destroyed by the intrigues of various adventurists and politicians.¹¹⁶⁴

Tajik scholars, who were quick enough in following President Rahmon's lead in blaming Uzbekistan for causing and aggravating the Tajik civil war, were not as careful as the President was: "[t]here is a popular belief [in Tajikistan] that the main reason for the start of the civil war in Tajikistan was an Uzbek plot to crush Tajik nationalism".¹¹⁶⁵

3.2. Linking Uzbekistan's participation in the Tajik Civil War to the NTD of the 1920s

It is common in Tajik scholarly discourses to link the civil war to NTD. As one Tajik scholar put it, "the roots of the civil war in the Republic of Tajikistan can undoubtedly be traced to incorrect policies regarding central power [sic] in the 1920s-1930s."¹¹⁶⁶ As far as Uzbekistan's participation in the Tajik civil war is concerned, Tajik scholars believe that the Uzbek side craftily planned to take advantage of the Tajik civil war. According to Mullojanov, supporting Rahmon in 1992 was part of Uzbekistan's century-long plan to take control of Tajikistan:

Naturally, Tashkent was seriously expecting the new Tajik government [of Rahmonov] to follow Uzbekistan's geopolitical orientation and give key official positions to representatives of the political lobby [sic] loyal to Tashkent. [...] This would result in the victory of the "Great Uzbekistan" project, which [...] would include post-war Tajikistan.¹¹⁶⁷

Mullojanov implies that the idea of the "Greater Uzbekistan", which the Uzbeks failed to achieve the 1920s, may have been realized in the 1990s. He is sure that "the roots of the current geopolitical standoff between the two neighbouring states should be sought precisely in this historical period [i.e., the 1920s]."¹¹⁶⁸ Dagiev, a Tajik scholar, similarly believes that Uzbekistan's involvement in the Tajik civil war was an attempt to establish control over Tajikistan, following the course the Uzbek side has been pursuing since the separation of Tajikistan from Uzbekistan.¹¹⁶⁹ However, after Rahmon effectively defeated the pro-Uzbekistan forces during

¹¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 374-75.

¹¹⁶⁵ Dagikhudo Dagiev, *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 98.

¹¹⁶⁶ Gafor Mirzoev, "Preodoleniie konfliktnoi situatsii v Respublike Tadjikistan. Rossiia i vosstanovleniie mira: 90-gody XX v." (The Academy of Science of Russia, 2004).

¹¹⁶⁷ Mullodzhanov, "Tadjhisko-uzbekskiiie otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy."

¹¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁶⁹ Dagiev, *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*, 97.

the Tajik civil war, Uzbekistan lost its influence in inter-ethnic relations in Tajikistan, which started the currently ongoing deterioration in the Tajik-Uzbek relations.¹¹⁷⁰

An official newspaper published a letter from an ordinary reader, who wrote that “Uzbekistan, of course, wanted to use the situation to its benefit and do its best to return Tajikistan [to Uzbekistan’s territory] as it was in 1924.”¹¹⁷¹ According to Dagiev, it was not only the Tajik people, but “particularly the Tajik leadership, who viewed Uzbekistan’s involvement in the Tajik civil war as an aggressive and hostile manifestation of the neighbouring country’s attitude to Tajikistan and the Tajik people.”¹¹⁷² Indeed, President Rahmon shared these beliefs:

In the last decade of the 20th century, tragic and horrible events were imposed on our nation, which aimed at eliminating the Tajik nation. And, as it was during the upheavals of the times of Shirinsho Shotemur, these [events of the civil war] were, in a different guise, attempts to liquidate the national state and statehood of Tajiks.¹¹⁷³

The Tajik scholars mention the growing nationalism in Tajikistan among the reasons why Uzbekistan developed a strong interest in the Tajik civil war. Dagiev, for example, states that Uzbekistan was afraid of the nationalistic slogans of the Tajik “Islamic Democratic opposition”.¹¹⁷⁴ Likewise, Mehrali Toshmuhammadov believes that Uzbekistan foresaw the threat of Tajik nationalists and felt threatened by their claims about returning “the lost cities”, i.e., Bukhara and Samarkand. In his own words, “Arrival of national-patriotic and Islamic forces in [Tajikistan] was considered, by Tashkent, to be a threat to Uzbekistan’s integrity and security, since “the talk of the town” was the issue of the ownership of two ancient – Samarqand and Bukhara.”¹¹⁷⁵ Another Tajik scholar, Rustam Shukurov, went as far as arguing that the loss of these two cities in the 1920s was the ultimate factor, which, in the long run, led to the Tajik civil war in the 1990s:

The Tajiks suffered significant inter-ethnic disintegration following the loss of these two cities. A fierce debate erupted among the Tajik ethnoses regarding the civilizational priority of this or that dialectic group. Deprived of its “head”, the “body” of the ethnoses got dissected, and the Tajiks had to re-enter the path of ethnogenesis, which they had already been on once before. This, precisely, was one of the driving forces behind the civil war in Tajikistan.¹¹⁷⁶

¹¹⁷⁰ See Mullodzhanov, "Tadzhiksko-uzbekskii otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy."

¹¹⁷¹ Salomiddin Mirzorahmatov, "Shumo kisted? Maktubi kushodai ruznomagir S. Mirzorahmatov ba Hozhi Akbari Turajonzoda," *Zhumhuriyat*, no. 94, 17 July 2012.

¹¹⁷² Dagiev, *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*, 113.

¹¹⁷³ "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

¹¹⁷⁴ *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*, 97.

¹¹⁷⁵ Toshmuhammadov, *Civil War in Tajikistan and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation*, 6-7.

¹¹⁷⁶ Rustam Shukurov, "Tadzhikistan: muki vospominaniia," in *Natsional'nyie istorii v sovetskom i postsovetskikh gosudarstvakh*, ed. K. Aimermakher and G. Borbiugova (Moscow: Fond Fridrikha Naumanna, AIRO-XX, 2003), 239.

Bukhara and Samarkand resurfaced in the last years of the Soviet Union and became part of the slogans of nationalistic movements such as Rastokhez. According to Shukurov:

[I]f the issue of disputed territories used to be discussed in secret within party structures, in the 80s the problem was picked up by humanitarian [sic] intelligentsia. The whole range of letters were sent in this regard to [the CC of the CP of the Soviet Union] and the government. As far as we know, the last such letters from 1990, addressed to M.S. Gorbachev and E.A. Shevardnadze, and signed by the top members of the humanitarian elite of Tajikistan, was a good example of the [still ongoing] territorial dispute. The photocopied texts [of the letters] were actively circulated among the Tajik people.¹¹⁷⁷

One of these letters was sent to the Political Bureau of the CC of the CP of the USSR and the Chair of the CC, M. Gorbachev, on 2 March 1989.¹¹⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that one of the appendices of the letter contained Shirinsho Shotemur's letter to Stalin about "the socio-economic condition of Tajiks in the territory of the Uzbek Republic" sent in May 1926.¹¹⁷⁹ The other appendices included a detailed analysis of cases of Uzbekification from the 1920s till the 1980s.¹¹⁸⁰ Reportedly, a similar letter was sent to President Karimov in 1990.¹¹⁸¹ Bukhara and Samarkand were a hot topic in the press from 1990-1992, and as a result of this NTD became a topic "where authors did not hold back from quite tough evaluations regarding the Uzbeks."¹¹⁸² The fact that the fate of Bukhara and Samarkand became a popular topic was "a sign of the final acquisition of European paradigms of nationalism."¹¹⁸³

National identity discourses in Tajikistan ignore the fact that the Tajik civil war started as a clash of regional factions over governance and ideology. It is believed that Samarkand and Bukhara "became the real issue of the war."¹¹⁸⁴ As far as the inter-Tajik fights during the civil war is concerned, Tajik scholars tend to play down the differences that the conflicting sides had:

With Rahmon's choice of Tajik nationalism, based on nostalgia for Samarqand and Bukhara, the differences between his government and the warring opposition faded away. The Tajik and Uzbek governments rather inevitably had clashing on this issue.¹¹⁸⁵

In general, Uzbekistan emerged as the single most important "other" in memories of the Tajik civil war. As former government official Usmon Davlat put it, Uzbekistan was not only a

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁸ For the text of the letter, see Muhammadjoni Shakurii Buxoroi, *Panturkizm va sarnavishti ta'rikhi Tojikon* (Dushanbe: Adib, 2010), 117-59.

¹¹⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, 154-59.

¹¹⁸⁰ See *ibid.*, 129-51.

¹¹⁸¹ According to Shukurov, the text of this letter was published on *Junbish* newspaper in 1997. See Shukurov, "Tadzhikistan: muki vospominaniia," 239.

¹¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 240.

¹¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸⁴ Dagiev, *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*, 92.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 100.

contributor to “fratricidal war” in Tajikistan but also, “under the influence of the past”, still did not take Tajikistan’s independence seriously.¹¹⁸⁶

3.3. The “Uzbek hurdle” for Tajikistan’s economic development

In August 2014, the ecological and economic-technical assessments of Roghun, financed by the World Bank, were completed. With minor suggestions, the assessment reports approved the construction of the Roghun HPS. However, the Uzbek side rejected these conclusions. The Uzbek Prime Minister, Rustam Azimov, stated that the evaluations had not been independent and impartial enough, as the tender had been organized by Tajikistan, even if the assessments had been financed by the World Bank. According to him, the final reports “are anything – essay, pre-project review, student coursework – but a professional, qualified and truly expert evaluation of the construction project of the Roghun HPS.”¹¹⁸⁷ Moreover, he noted that none of Uzbekistan’s concerns had been addressed in the reports.¹¹⁸⁸ In fact, three months before the announcement of the outcomes of the assessments, the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement emphasising that, regardless of the results of international assessment, construction of the Roghun HPS was not acceptable to Uzbekistan.¹¹⁸⁹

For the Tajik side, this meant that, in fact, Uzbekistan had requested international assessments solely to postpone construction works in Roghun. In the words of Gulomiddin Saydiddinov, a Tajik energy expert, “Uzbekistan is just afraid that by building this HPS Tajikistan will start to experience a sustainable development.”¹¹⁹⁰ A former head of *Barqi Tojik*, Bahrom Sirojev, believed that, after the completion of the Roghun HPS, Tajikistan had the potential to compete with Uzbekistan in terms of energy exportation. According to him, “the Uzbek side has never attended any technical [sic] meetings. They just came to the fifth session to express their disagreement. Their statements have been ignorant.”¹¹⁹¹

Georgii Koshlakov, a former Senior Advisor to the Tajik President, argued that Uzbekistan’s arguments were “at the least – lies, at the most – sheer provocations.”¹¹⁹² He had no doubt that the current government of Uzbekistan “would not approve any conclusions” about Roghun.”

¹¹⁸⁶ Avaz Iuldashev, "Davlat Usmon: Toshkand to kunun istiqloliati Dushanbero e'tirof namekunad," *Asia-Plus*, 13 July 2013.

¹¹⁸⁷ "Vystuplenie Pervogo zamestitel'ia Prem'er-ministra, ministra finansov Respubliki Uzbekistan R. Azimova na vstreche predstavitelei pravitel'stv stran Tsentral'noi Azii po obsuzhdeniiu proekta doklada Vsemirnogo banka," *Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Respubliki Uzbekistan*, 18 July 2014.

¹¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁸⁹ "Stroitel'stvo Rogunskoi GES vne zavisimosti ot rezul'tatov mezhdunarodnoi ekspertizy nepriemlemo," *Posol'stvo Respubliki Uzbekistan v Soedinennom Korolevstve Velikobritanii i Severnoi Irlandii*, 18 May 2011.

¹¹⁹⁰ Shakhloi Gulkhodzha, "Tadzhikistan derzhit otkrytymi dveri Roguna dlia Uzbekistana," *Radio Ozodi*, 5 August 2014.

¹¹⁹¹ "Tashkent: 'My nikogda ne podderzhim Rogun!'," *Asia-Plus*, 11 August 2014.

¹¹⁹² Ibid.

According to him, “when technical and economic issues intersect with political interests, common sense will absent itself.”¹¹⁹³ Mullojanov states that Uzbekistan’s uncompromising position might change “if the Uzbek side is allowed to construct the project and take control of the distribution of the water resources of Tajikistan.”¹¹⁹⁴ However, he implies that this is impossible considering that maintain control over the construction of Roghun is a matter of sovereignty for Tajikistan.¹¹⁹⁵ Abdughani Mamadazimov, the Chairman of the National Association of Political Scientists of Tajikistan, made a proposal for Tajikistan to disengage from political debates with Uzbekistan and instead concentrate on raising funds to finish the construction.¹¹⁹⁶

Even though it had its own reasoning for taking the measures that it did, Uzbekistan was worsening its already negative image in the eyes of Tajiks. Rahmon picked up on this and started to play the Bukhara-Samarkand “card”. As was later leaked, in a closed-door meeting with approximately 50 Tajik journalists in 2009, Rahmon pledged to return Bukhara and Samarkand to Tajikistan’s control.¹¹⁹⁷ Arkadii Dubnov, a Russian journalist who publicized this, argued that by making this pledge “Rahmon sought to win the support of Tajik journalists.”¹¹⁹⁸ As he claims, “it is achievable if only [he manages] to look like a hero-patriot and a leader who is wholeheartedly devoted to his country and who knows how to lead the country to a bright future.”¹¹⁹⁹ According to Dubnov, “Rahmon knows that his hatred towards Uzbekistan fits in with the mood of a significant portion of the Tajik population.”¹²⁰⁰ During the same meeting, Rahmon reportedly told journalists about how he had engaged in two fistfights with the Uzbek president and how the Uzbek leader wished the Tajik nation ill.

Roghun had already emerged as a national idea. Making a financial contribution to the construction of Roghun equalled to supporting a national idea. As Sukhrob Sharipov, the then Head of the Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan, argued, anyone who did not make a personal financial contribution to Roghun enterprise could easily be labeled as a traitor or the enemy of the nation.¹²⁰¹ He also stated that “Neither any politician, nor president can take a step back. Otherwise, he can be announced as a traitor to the Motherland.”¹²⁰² Two

¹¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁴ Mullodzhanov, "Tadzhiksko-uzbekskii otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy."

¹¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁹⁶ "Tashkent: 'My nikogda ne podderzhim Rogun!'."

¹¹⁹⁷ "Prezident Tadzhikistana - prezidentu Uzbekistana: "Samarkand i Bukharu my vse ravno voz'mem!," *Regnum*, 10 December 2009.

¹¹⁹⁸ Dubnov, "'My voz'mem Samarkand i Bukharu' - Tadzhikskii prezident rasskazal o sokrovennom."

¹¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹²⁰¹ As quoted in Nazarali Pirnazarov, "N.Pirnazarov: Voda kak vnutripoliticheskiĭ instrument. TŠentrAziia pered liŝsom destabilizatsii," *Centrasia.ru*, 14 June 2009.

¹²⁰² Galim Faskhutdinov, "Spory o vode v TŠentral'noi Azii usilivaĭutsia," *DW*, 14 July 2009.

years later, when a Tajik professor, Alimkhon Burkhonov, attempted to argue that Roghun was not viable and was dangerous and thus must be abandoned,¹²⁰³ he was criticised for being against the economic development of Tajikistan. As the press-service of Barqi Tojik commented on the issue, "Professor Burkhonov [...] is repeating the already-known arguments of opponents of Roghun", and "the aim of these people is but one – to create hurdles to the economic prosperity of our republic."¹²⁰⁴

One Tajik media outlet stated that Roghun was Rahmon's last chance to develop the economy of Tajikistan.¹²⁰⁵ Rahmon himself has continually called Roghun a matter of "life and death" for Tajikistan:

I said this in my address [to the Parliament] last year, and I would like to repeat it: building the hydroelectric infrastructure is a matter of life and death for us. [...] Thus, in order to meet energy demands we have no other way. This will be the basis for the development of all spheres of the national economy [...].¹²⁰⁶

Despite the numerous hurdles to Roghun's construction created by Uzbekistan, their readiness to go as far as launching a war against the Tajiks, Tajikistan has no plans to abandon this important project. Rahmon has promoted it as a matter of national pride and prosperity:

I would like to refer to each proud citizen, to all the generous and patriotic people of our nation, and particularly, to the qualified constructors and specialists in the fields of energy and construction. I would like to call for active participation in the prompt construction and finalization of Roghun HPS and contribution to the achievement of energy independence for the nation.¹²⁰⁷

So far, according to Rahmon, Tajikistan has made significant progress when it comes to supplying electricity to the households; he compares 3-5 hours of energy supply per day in the early 2000s to 12 hours of supply in 2015.¹²⁰⁸ However, the 24-hour uninterrupted energy supply might still be further away than official Tajik discourses claim. Since 2007, the Tajik government has spent around \$820 million on the Roghun project.¹²⁰⁹ At this rate, it might take Tajikistan another decade or two to complete the Roghun HPS. It is most likely that during this period, relations with Uzbekistan will keep deteriorating and that Uzbekistan's image within Tajikistan will

¹²⁰³ Païrav Chorshanbiev, "Professor A.Burkhonov: Tadzhiqistanu nuzhno otkazatsia ot stroitel'stva Rogunskoi GES," *Asia-Plus*, 8 November 2011.

¹²⁰⁴ ""Barki Tozhik": Rogun dolzhen byt' postroien, i my jego postroim," *Asia-Plus*, 10 November 2011.

¹²⁰⁵ As reviewed in "Islam Karimov ugrozhaet nachat' "vodnuu" voïnu: Tadzhiqistan za nedeliu," *Regnum*, 16 Septemeber 2012.

¹²⁰⁶ Emomali Rahmon, "Sukhanroni dar vokhuri bo sokhtmonchiioni nerugohi barqi obii Roghun," *Prezidentii Zhumhurii Tozhikiston*, 28 October 2009.

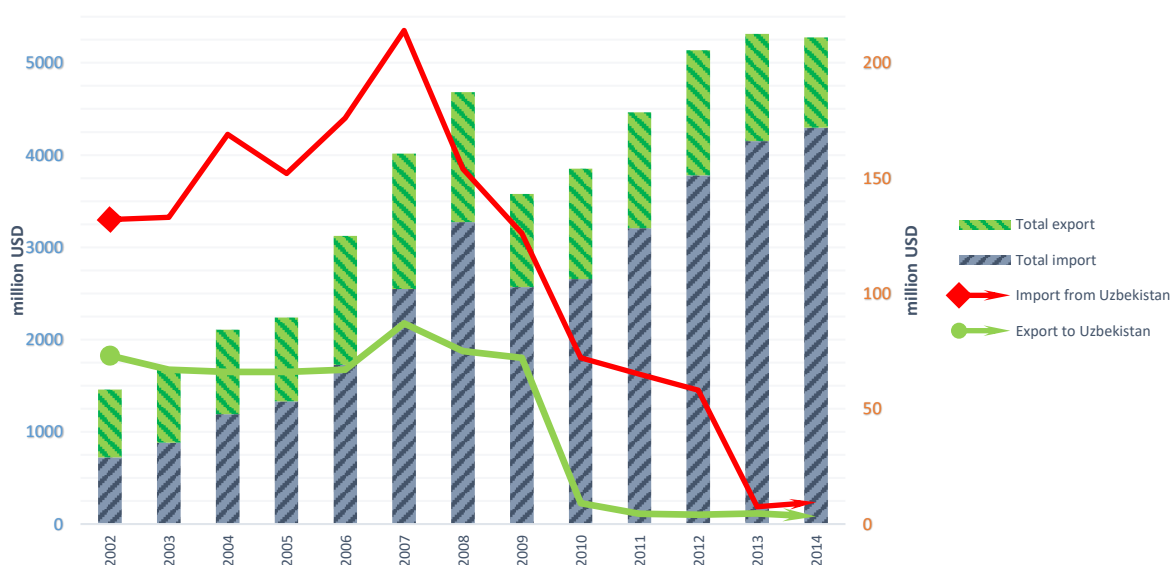
¹²⁰⁷ "Payomi Prezidenti Zhumhurii Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon ba Mazhlisi Oliy Zhumhurii Tozhikison."

¹²⁰⁸ A. Iuldashev, "E.Rahmon: Dlia podzariadki mobil'nykh telefonov v Tadzhiqistane potracheno svyshe 22 mln kVtch," *Asia-Plus*, 23 January 2015.

¹²⁰⁹ Païrav Chorshanbiev, "Na dostroiïku Roguna s 2007 goda napravleno bolee 6,5 mlrd. somoni," *Asia-Plus*, 24 July 2015.

become yet more negative. This means that the Roghun project will keep triggering the Uzbek-Tajik “self/other” dichotomy. Rahmon in his turn, will need to continue being Tajikistan’s national hero. Throughout the last decade, hardly any Tajik officials have acknowledged that, due to this dam, Tajikistan has lost millions of dollars in trade with Uzbekistan (see Figure 1), deprived its producers of the potential Uzbek market, with its population of 32 million, and lost secure energy and transportation routes without working out alternatives.

Figure 4. Tajikistan's trade turnover and Uzbekistan's share in it. Source: Adapted from data available at the website of the Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan - http://www.stat.tj/ru/library/table_43.xls and http://www.stat.tj/ru/library/table_44.xls.



As some observers have noted “the difficulties presented by reaching a compromise on the scale of Roghun led to the indefinite postponement of devising solutions for all other problems in Tajik-Uzbek relations.”¹²¹⁰ As one Tajik journalist mentioned, there is hardly any sign that Tajikistan has had any meaningful negotiations with the Uzbek side on the Roghun HPS. In her own words, “I will not judge our diplomats. How, and about what, they have talked to Uzbekistan all these years, I do not know. Most importantly, there is no result other than deteriorating relations with the neighbor.”¹²¹¹ Roghun has no final price tag or completion date at this stage. However, the burden of the crisis in Tajik-Uzbek relations has had real impacts upon the Tajik economy thus far. It has been argued that “the national strategy of development ignores the notion that the state has reached a critical point, beyond which local natural resources will not suffice to develop the economy [...]”¹²¹² Nevertheless, the Tajik government seems to find the

¹²¹⁰ Aleksei Malashenko and Aziz Niiāzi, *Prezidentskie vybory v Tadjikistane 2013 g.: itogi i perspektivy* (Moscow: Carnegie Moscow Center, 2014), 16.

¹²¹¹ Ol’ga Tutubalina, “Rogun: pora brat’siā za um,” *Asia-Plus*, 26 May 2011.

¹²¹² Aleksei Malashenko and Niiāzi, *Prezidentskie vybory v Tadjikistane 2013 g.: itogi i perspektivy*, 17.

prospect of adjusting the height of Roghun, in order to meet Uzbek demands, unimaginable. Similarly, abandoning the project completely remains unthinkable. Knowing that it would be unacceptable for the Tajik government to give up on the Roghun project, a Tajik poet allowed himself to issue this ultimatum to Rahmon:

The time you give up Roghun, you are not the Shah,
You ought to make Tajikistan an illuminated heaven.

[Soate forigh zi Roghonu zi Shohon nesti,
Tojikistonro bihishtoso charoghon mekuni.]¹²¹³

While the economic benefits of Roghun are yet to be seen, its symbolic value for Tajik national identity has been immense. For the last decade, Roghun has been triggering pride amongst the population and has been inspiring visions of a potentially great future for the nation as well as hatred for Uzbekistan. According to Joshua Kucera, Rahmon has gone so far as to claim that with the help of the Roghun dam, “[w]e will bring Uzbekistan to its knees.”¹²¹⁴

3.4. Rahmon’s heroism amid the crises in the Tajik-Uzbek relations

Tajikistan’s foreign policy is entirely under the control of President Rahmon. “As per the Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan, the President of Tajikistan is the Head of State and the executive body – government, [and] leads and defines the direction of the nation’s foreign policy.”¹²¹⁵ The President also controls the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹²¹⁶ As a former Tajik Foreign Minister acknowledges, “if we look to the last twenty years of history, we can see that, in the beginning, Tajikistan had no experience in planning and conducting its internal and foreign policies [...]”¹²¹⁷ Nevertheless, Rahmon is depicted as a master of using foreign policy-making in bringing about political and economic stability:

From the early days, Emomali Rahmon started to employ a far-sighted and consistent foreign policy strategy, [and] despite the difficult situation in the Republic, he found ways to use opportunities available overseas [*imkoniiathoi khoriji*] to solve the most difficult issues. This young leader and politician, who had a genuinely pure soul and perpetual knowledge and wisdom of the Tajik people [sic], created and utilized all necessary conditions to stop the civil war and stabilize the ruined economy [...].¹²¹⁸

¹²¹³ A. Sharifzoda and N. Murodov, *E'zhosi Rahmon: Mazhmuai she'rho dar vasfi Prezidenti Zhumhuriati Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon* (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2011), 66.

¹²¹⁴ Joshua Kuchera, "Tajikistan's Dream," *Wilson Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (2013): 8.

¹²¹⁵ Hamrokhon Zarifi, ed. *Diplomatiia Tadzhiikistana Vchera i Segodnia*, vol. 2, Vneshniaia Politika Tadzhiikistana (Dushanbe: Irfon, 2011), 4.

¹²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²¹⁷ *Emomali Rahmon - bunyonguzori siyosati khorizhi Tozhikistan*, 240.

¹²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Amid the “cold war” with Uzbekistan over the Roghun project, national identity discourses in Tajikistan have consistently portrayed Rahmon as heroic. As some Tajik poets have written in poems devoted to Rahmon, his heroism resembles that of Bobojon Ghafurov and Sadriddin Aini,¹²¹⁹ and the spirits of Aini and Gafurov are happy with what he has been doing.¹²²⁰ Rahmon has been hailed as the first true leader since the times of Makhsum and Shotemur, and it is said that he has been leading the Tajik nation towards unity, stability, peace and prosperity.¹²²¹ Rahmon himself believes that Makhsum and Shotemur dreamt of “sovereignty, territorial unity, obeisance to a national language, state emblems, respect for national culture and for the high values of world civilization,” so there is reason to be proud that these dreams are coming true.¹²²² This continuity applies to his efforts to end the civil war as well as to bring economic prosperity to the nation. In doing so, like the previous Heroes of Tajikistan he has been struggling against Uzbekistan.

As the authors of a government-sponsored book about Rahmon argue, “the greatest successes and achievements of our country have been the result of selfless work and heroic effort on the part of Emomali Rahmonov.”¹²²³ The narratives about Rahmon’s heroism mainly focus on notions that he ended the civil war and has been building the Tajik economy ever since. To begin with, Rahmon is hailed for bringing an end to the Tajik civil war. As *Asia-Plus* recounts:

In the summer of 1992, when Kulob was choking under siege, he, an ordinary director of *sovkhos*, led this warring region, and shortly thereafter, the whole country. [...] Right after being elected as a chairman of the parliament, he promised: “I will bring peace to you!” He kept that pledge. [...] The country was on the brink of collapse into “independent khanates” and [was at risk of] a complete disappearance from the political map of the world. Gradually, bit by bit, Emomali Rahmonov succeeded in maintaining stability. He initiated the peace process and carried it through to its logical end. For this, he has been awarded the title of “Hero of Tajikistan.”¹²²⁴

These type of narratives surrounding the Tajik civil war are common not only in mass media but also in official and literary discourses. A former Tajik Foreign Minister, Hamrokhon Zarifi, for instance, believes that Rahmon’s tactfulness and wisdom have allowed him to lead the nation towards peace and unity.¹²²⁵ Tajik writers and poets wax lyrical about Rahmon’s heroism during the civil war. Explaining Rahmon’s “historical service” Sharifzoda and Murodov note that “by taking the control of the state [into his hands] Rahmon prevented its collapse, extinguished the

¹²¹⁹ See Sharifzoda and Murodov, *E'zhosi Rahmon: Mazhmuai she'rho dar vasfi Prezidenti Zhumhuriati Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon*, 154.

¹²²⁰ See *ibid.*, 66.

¹²²¹ See Sharifzoda and Ghafurov, *Nazhotbakhshi millat*, 8.

¹²²² "Sukhanroni dar mazhlisi botantana ba iftikhori chashni 110-solagii zodro'zi Shirinsho Shotemur."

¹²²³ Sharipov and Sirozhov, *Emomali Rahmonov: God Ariiskoi tsivilizatsii (Vnutrenniaia i vneshniaia politika Prezidenta Tazhikistana)*, 8.

¹²²⁴ "Voina i Mir," 21 June 2007.

¹²²⁵ Zarifi, *Emomali Rahmon - bunyonguzori siyosati khorizhi Tozhikistan*, 61.

flame of the civil war, [...] laid the political and legal foundations for signing the General Agreement on Establishment of Peace and National Consensus on 27 June 1997 [...].¹²²⁶ Abdumalik Bahori, a Tajik poet, in his poem *Ba Bakhti Mo* [For the Sake of Our Happiness], after depicting the horrors of the war, glorifies “the morning after the nightmares,” when Rahmon became a new leader of the nation and made peace talks his agenda, thus “breaking the neck of the hatred.”¹²²⁷ “The seeds of our peaceful negotiations bore harvest, bravo to you, a steadfast leader!” concludes the poet.¹²²⁸ Another Tajik poet, Mahmud Ziyo, thanks Rahmon’s mother for “creating” the “creator” of the Tajik nation:

A Tajik mother again gave birth to one of the Somon dynasty,
 She created Emomali Rahmon for this nation.
 I kneel before such woman,
 For she created a cure for the issues of Tajiks,
 And helped the people to achieve their goals.
 It does not suffice to call him Shah,
 For what she created is the Shah of all Shahs,
 My Tajikistan was sliced into pieces,
 But Rahmon created Tajikistan anew.

[Modari tojik boz iāk Oli Somon ofarid,
 Bahri millat ŷ Ęmomalii Rahmon ofarid.
 Sajda meoram ba peshi inchunin zan dar haēt,
 K–az baroi dardi tojik malhami jon ofarid,
 Khalqro imrūz dar kūi murodash ū rasond,
 Shoḥ guftan in kam ast, ū Shohi Shoḥon ofarid!
 Pora–pora Tojikistoni maro kardand, lek
 Az sari nav ibni Rahmon Tojikiston ofarid!]¹²²⁹

The following poems by Mirzo Faizali depict Rahmon as the only signatory of the peace treaty worthy of a golden statue:

He went to Kabul, Tehran, and Moscow to say peace,
 He stood to defend his nation like Ismail Somoni.
 Supported by God in his great efforts,
 Look, he brought peace to the Motherland.

[Kalomi sulḥ dar lab Kobulu Teḥronu Maskav raft,
 Chu Ismoili Somonī ba hiḥzi millatash barkhost.
 Dar in azmu talosh ūro Khudo, ki rahnamoiash shud,
 Bubined, in zamon sulḥu amonii Vatan barjost.]¹²³⁰

Let me put aside his all other good deeds,
 Just for the peace that he brought to the country,
 To this selfless great man of the nation,
 I would build a golden statue, if I could!

¹²²⁶ Sharifzoda and Murodov, *E'zhosi Rahmon: Mazhmuai she'rho dar vasfi Prezidenti Zhumhuriati Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon*, 15-16.

¹²²⁷ See *ibid.*, 28-29.

¹²²⁸ See *ibid.*

¹²²⁹ See *ibid.*, 140.

¹²³⁰ Nuriddini Amriddin, "Vatandorī ba sidq astu ba imon," *Jumhuriāt*, 4 September 2014.

[Hama a"moli neki digarashro iak taraf monam,
Faqat bar khotiri sulhe, ki barpo kard dar kishvar,
Ba in mardī buzurgu jonfidoi millatu Mehan,
Agar az dasti man oiad, guzoram haikale az zar!]¹²³¹

For some Tajik scholars, Rahmon not only ended the civil war and united the nation, but also set forth Tajik nationalism:

[R]evival of Tajik nationalism was something for which Tajik nationalists had to wait until Rahmon came to power. Rahmon came to power as a result of the civil war, to aid the development of Tajik nationalism, which provided a stronger national identity for the Tajik people. Rahmon also maintained the unity of state and society, which gained him a sense of legitimacy and support internationally and domestically. This helped to preserve the state-ness of the post-Communist, post-civil war Tajikistan, which was exceptionally fragile. [In general,] Tajik nationalism enabled Rahmon to cement his image as a national hero.¹²³²

Discussing the peculiarities of the nationalism endorsed by Rahmon, Dagiev notes that he "tried to include and incorporate most of the UTO's national projects in the process of recreating and re-forging Tajik national identity. This, once again, raised the issue of Samarqand and Bukhara and Tajik community in Uzbekistan."¹²³³

As far as Roghun is concerned, official news sources depict Rahmon as taking a direct part in the construction works. Regarding one of many meetings held between Rahmon and the construction workers in Roghun, an official newspaper highlighted that "the quality of the repair works, continuation of the construction works, high mood and spirit of the workers of this site show that the instructions and advice of the President of the country, in relation to the accomplishment of every task with high durability and quality, have been taken seriously."¹²³⁴

Rahmon uses every possible opportunity to highlight that energy independence, which can only be achieved by building Roghun, is a priority for the Tajik government. Referring to such claims, *Jumhuriyat*, an official Tajik newspaper, stated that Tajikistan's energy independence is close:

These words, which evidence that ever bigger measures are being taken to achieve progress in the energy sphere, give hope to both the energy workers and the population of the country, who experience energy shortage in cold seasons. Light can be seen from a distance, and we are all convinced that due to the effective policies of the President of the nation, Emomali Rahmon, we are close to achieving energy independence.¹²³⁵

¹²³¹ Ibid.

¹²³² Dagiev, *Regime Transition in Central Asia: Stateness, Nationalism and Political Changes in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*, 113.

¹²³³ Ibid., 30.

¹²³⁴ "Emomali Rahmon dar nerugohi Roghun," *Jumhuriyat*, 17 July 2015.

¹²³⁵ Nozir Edgori, "Rushdi gidroenergetika rushdi Tojikiston ast," *Jumhuriyat*, 19 December 2015.

Along with mass media, Tajik writers and poets have expended some effort upon attempts to romanticize the Roghun project.¹²³⁶ “In response to a request from the President of the Republic of Tajikistan about contributing to the construction of Roghun HPS, the Union of Writers of Tajikistan requested that all writers pay special attention to inscribing the heroism of workers of the greatest construction of the century.”¹²³⁷ In a meeting organized by the Union, a dozen of writers and poets reviewed what had been written on Roghun so far and pledged to write more about it.¹²³⁸ As part of the joint effort of Tajik writers, in 2010 a collection of literary works devoted to Roghun was published under the title of *Navrūzi Roghun*.¹²³⁹ In his speech during the 14th Meeting of the Writers of Tajikistan, Mehmon Bakhti, the Chair of the Union of the Writers of Tajikistan, listed several new books written on the topic of Roghun, noting that these were written to meet the demands of President Rahmon.¹²⁴⁰ Another interesting work to mention is a trilogy by Jamoliddin Toshmatov, an ethnic Uzbek writer of Tajikistan, devoted to three HPSs, Nurek, Sangtuda, and Roghun.¹²⁴¹

Tajik poets have written passionate poems about Rahmon’s heroic efforts to go on with constructing the Roghun dam contrary to barriers created by Uzbekistan. In a literary representation of such heroic deed, Abdusamad Jo’rayev, in his poem titled *Ilhom az Roghun* [An Inspiration from Roghun], says:

The leader of my nation is Emomali the Connoisseur,
Roghun went on following his great steps.
He has been receiving a reprimand of the neighbor,
The Vakhsh River is the sign [sic] of my Mawarannahr.

[Peshvoi millatam Ēmomalii nuktadon,
Bo qadamhoi buzurgash sūi Roghun shud ravon.
To ba in dam mekashad ū minnati hamsoiaro,
Vakhsh khud nomu nishoni Movaronaħri man ast.]¹²⁴²

Mirzo Faizali in one of his poems depicts Roghun as a site of battle, where national dignity will be either lost or won:

Roghun is a battlefield,
The battlefield of honor.
It is the frontline of national pride,
The arena [of struggle] of disgrace and dignity.

¹²³⁶ Jovid Muqim, a Tajik journalist and scholar, provides an interesting review of the journalistic and literary works devoted to Roghun. See Jovid Muqim, "Naqshi ocherk va publitsistika dar tashakkuli afkori jomea," *Jovidmuqim's Blog*, 15 May, 2013.

¹²³⁷ "Ishtiroki adibon dar sokhtmoni Nerūgohi barqi obii Roghun," *Jumħuriyat*, n.d.

¹²³⁸ Ibid.

¹²³⁹ "Naqshi ocherk va publitsistika dar tashakkuli afkori jomea.

¹²⁴⁰ See "Sukhanronii Raisi Ittifoqi navisandagoni Tojikiston Mehmon Bakhti dar Anjumani 14-umi navisandagon," *Ittifoqi navisandagoni Tojikiston*, 2015.

¹²⁴¹ U. Abdulloeva, "An'anai zullisonaini dar nasri davrai navi tojik," *Paēmi Donishgoħi millii Tojikiston* 97, no. 4/6 (2012): 183.

¹²⁴² See Sharifzoda and Murodov, *E'zhosi Rahmon: Mazhmuai she'rho dar vasfi Prezidenti Zhumhuriati Tozhikiston Emomali Rahmon*, 31.

[Sahni Roghun korzor ast,
Korzori iftikhor ast.
Jabhai nomusi millat,
Arsai nang astu or ast.]¹²⁴³

4. Conclusion

The dominant discourses on the Tajik civil war and the Roghun project represent Uzbekistan as the enemy of Tajik national unity and economic prosperity. Such a negative image of Uzbekistan fits perfectly into the historical narratives of “Uzbek atrocities” being perpetrated against the Tajiks. Tajik-Uzbek tensions have always had their own hero; Shirinsho Shotemur and Nusratullo Makhsom struggled for Tajik nationhood and statehood against Uzbek leadership, whereas Sadriddin Aini successfully demonstrated that, contrary to the assertions of Uzbek nationalists, the Tajiks have always had a well-developed language and rich literature, which made them a fully-fledged nation. In his turn, Bobojon Ghafurov, by writing the history of the Tajik nation, proved that the Tajiks are the most ancient people of Central Asia. Thus, all other nations that came to Central Asia later reside on what were originally Tajik lands. In a similar manner, Rahmon, as the only living Hero of Tajikistan, is arguably continuing the deeds of the past national heroes.

Considering Tajikistan’s interdependence with Uzbekistan in regards to transportation, energy and water, as well as in terms of history and culture, relations with the Uzbek republic can be viewed as a central factor in Tajikistan’s overall development. Therefore, Tajikistan’s sour relations with Uzbekistan have been a heavy burden for the political and economic development of the nation. However, given that memories of the civil war and ongoing disputes about the Roghun dam have created a negative image of Uzbekistan, a perpetual conflict with Uzbekistan might have positive implications for Tajik national identity. Because “[e]ven a harmful or self-defeating relationship can provide ontological security, which means states can become attached to conflict.”¹²⁴⁴ In other words, crises in Tajik-Uzbek relations and the subsequent demonization of Uzbekistan by the Tajik side has been essential to the smooth discursive construction of Tajik national identity vis-à-vis the Uzbek “other.” This supports Campbell’s statement that “[t]he constant articulation of danger through foreign policy is not a threat to a state’s identity or existence: it is a condition of its possibility.”¹²⁴⁵

¹²⁴³ Amriddin, "Vatandori ba sidq astu ba imon."

¹²⁴⁴ Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma," 342.

¹²⁴⁵ Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, 13.

Conclusion

The lives of heroes become playgrounds of the imagination, richly inviting terrains for ideological projection and mythical speculation.¹²⁴⁶

1. Summary of the argument

Using reflexivist methodology, post-structuralist theory, and discourse analysis methods, this thesis has demonstrated the direct links between “domestically” and “internationally” constructed sets of self/other dichotomy in Tajikistan. At the domestic level, historical narratives on Tajik national statehood, language (and literature), and historiography construct an image of Tajik “self” that has survived “atrocities” committed by the Uzbek “other”. At an inter-state level, covering bilateral issues with post-Soviet Uzbekistan, Tajik official, journalistic and literary discourse depict the image of a vulnerable “self” and a dangerous Uzbek “other”. The links between the two levels of “self” and “other” construction mean that the politics of identity is more than a matter of domestic policy; identity politics encompasses all aspects of the state’s function – “domestic” and “external” – aimed at ensuring the construction of “self” and “other”. In the words of David Campbell, “identity in the realm of global politics can be understood as the outcome of exclusionary practices in which resistant elements to *a secure identity on the inside* are linked through a discourse of danger with *threats identified and located on the outside*.”¹²⁴⁷

Consequently, three functions of identity politics ought to be highlighted. First, the politics of identity has an epistemic function. Through discourse, it outlines the moral space of identity, thus, informing the population about what is good and acceptable. In this regard, media, education systems, linguistic reforms, historiography, and national events as well as legitimate violence methods are relevant means of discourse production. Second, identity politics has a boundary-making performance. Relying on the moral space of identity, it locates the “self” and “other” and highlights the boundaries between them. The positive qualities and ideas associated with the moral space are deemed to be the core of national identity, whereas anything that opposes those ideas becomes associated with the “other” and, by default, remains forever excluded by the boundaries of “self”. Third, identity politics is aimed at maintaining ontological security. This makes identity/alterity construction a never-ending and ever-inchoate process. To

¹²⁴⁶ Cubitt, "Introduction," 3.

¹²⁴⁷ David Campbell, "Global Inscription: How Foreign Policy Constitutes the United States," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 15, no. 3 (1990): 266.

borrow Campbell's words again, it is the state's "evangelical" function to locate the dangerous "other", because, otherwise, there will be no reason for the state to exist.

This thesis revealed that one of the means of politics of identity – the commemoration of national heroes – can fulfil all mentioned functions. Heroes define the moral space by representing exemplary qualities around which national identity can be constructed. Simultaneously, discourses on heroes either implicitly or explicitly establish which qualities are unacceptable or threatening, which ideas that are necessarily associated with "other". As Manzo puts it, "[n]ations are typically invented through allegorical stories about birth or awakening" where "godlike founding fathers" impersonate how the nation "stood up in opposition to some form of oppression and tyranny."¹²⁴⁸ Using Tajikistan's politics of identity and its foreign policy issues with neighbouring Uzbekistan, this research made an original contribution that an analyses of discourses surrounding national heroes can be helpful in understanding interstate relations.

The bulk of this thesis has dealt with explaining why the Tajik government chose six personalities from the recent history of Tajikistan to be national Heroes and why the government has expended significant effort to highlight the aspects of the Heroes' personal and professional lives that feature struggle against Uzbek dominance. Specific chapters have been devoted to an analysis of discourses on the Heroes preceded by a review of the context of those discourses. For instance, the chapter on Shirinsho Shotemur and Nusratullo Makhsum revealed that in Tajikistan the heroism of these two statesmen is explained in terms of their methodical struggle against debilitating Uzbek dominance and their concerted efforts toward preserving Tajik statehood and nationhood from Uzbek threat in the 1920s. Other representatives of the Tajik elite are remembered as traitors to the Tajik nation for their cooperation with the Uzbek elite. Uzbeks are explicitly defined as the "other" in these discourses. Sadriddin Aini, in his turn, is remembered in Tajikistan as the founder of Tajik literature and linguistics, which proved instrumental in defending Tajik national identity from Uzbek threat in the period between the 1920s-1940s. It was also shown that Tajik narratives on Aini ignore the aspects of his life where he struggled to choose his national identity, and overlook Aini's contribution to the Uzbek prose of the 1920s. The chapter on Bobojon Gafurov showed that his heroism in Tajikistan is defined in terms of his contribution to the construction of the historiographic foundations of the superior Tajik "self" and the inferior Uzbek "other".

¹²⁴⁸ Kathryn Manzo, *Creating boundaries: The politics of race and nation* (London: Lynne Rienner Publisher Inc, 1996), 40.

The dominant narratives in Tajikistan about the heroism of these personalities maintain the ontological security of the Tajik “self”. This explains why any archival discovery about Shotemur or Makhsum attracts nationwide news coverage;¹²⁴⁹ why Aini’s “Turkestani” identity is absent in Tajik discourses;¹²⁵⁰ and why any minor attempt to discredit Ghafurov’s image as a historian mobilizes Tajik officials, scholars and journalists to leap to his defence.¹²⁵¹ As Cubitt notes, “[w]hat resonates is not the life [of the founding fathers] as lived, but the life as made sense of, the life imaginatively reconstructed and rendered significant.”¹²⁵² So, what is sacrosanct is not only the images of the heroes, but also what is deemed as significant in their lives and deeds. In the case of the Heroes of Tajikistan, dominant discourses establish the defence of the Tajik “self” from the threat of the Uzbek “other” as the core element of heroism. As the last chapter of this thesis revealed, problematic relations with Uzbekistan are made sense of in Tajikistan by relying on these dominant narratives, i.e., the necessity of defending the Tajik “self” from the dangerous Uzbek “other”. In this regard, the discourses pre-define the courses of action that President Emomali Rahmon, who holds the title of Hero of Tajikistan, can and should take in relation to the Uzbek “other”. The historical discourses also pre-define any concession made upon the pressure of the Uzbek side in bilateral issues as a sign of anti-heroism.

This does not necessarily mean that Rahmon has been acting under the pressure of his Hero title. It rather means that the deterioration of relations with Uzbekistan to an historically low and economically unviable level under his presidency have increased the image of his heroism, as he has stood against Uzbek pressure. Furthermore, no matter what reasoning is used on the Uzbek side of the conflict, it reaches the Tajik side (including the Tajik population) in the form of the moral settings that the dominant narratives pre-set. In other words, constructed public ‘knowledge’ of the historical animosity of Uzbeks appears to be justifying an uncompromising position on foreign policy issues, whereas any issue that emerges in relations with Uzbekistan appear to be the continuation of historic “atrocities” towards Tajikistan, which in turn, boost national memories about “bad” Uzbeks. In this regard, unfriendly relations with Uzbekistan are not only the source of a threat but also a condition for the success of the politics of national

¹²⁴⁹ The chapter 3 shows the process of steady consolidation of new knowledge on Shotemur and Makhsum such as videos, letters, oral memories, etc.

¹²⁵⁰ The chapter 4 reveals that Aini’s emergence as the defender of the Tajik language has not been straightforward, contrary to the assertions of the Tajik discourses.

¹²⁵¹ For instance, in March 2009, when a Soviet archaeologist Boris Litvinskii claimed the authorship of Ghafurov’s *Tadzhiki*, Tajik media and forums reacted fiercely, which eventually forced Litvinskii and his interviewer to change the original text of the interview. For the original text of Litvinskii’s interview, see Yanovskaia, “Boris Litvinskii: My podarili tadzhikskomu narodu pervuiu polnotsennuiu istoriiu.” For the reaction of the Tajik scholars to Litvinskii’s claim, see K. Rustam, “Zachem Gospodin Litvinskii Lzhiot?,” *Iran-name*, no. 1 (2009); A. Turson, “Sbros’ Obuzu Korysti, Tsheslaviie Gnet...”: Po Povodu Odnogo Akademicheskogo Skandala Provintsial’noi Zakvaski,” *Iran-name*, no. 1 (2009); Ikrami, “Kto na samom dele napisal “Tadzhiki”?” For a reaction by a Tajik official, see A. Dostiev, “Istoriia ne mozhnet byt podarkom,” *TAJINFO*, 3 May 2009.

¹²⁵² Cubitt, “Introduction,” 3.

cohesion in Tajikistan. Because “[t]he constant articulation of danger through foreign policy is not a threat to a state’s identity or existence: it is its condition of possibility.”¹²⁵³ Last, but not least, “[t]he construction of the ‘outside’ as hostile and threatening, legitimises violence in international relations.”¹²⁵⁴

2. Dominant discourses as a burden on goodwill: reflections on emerging détente in Tajik-Uzbek relations

Knowledge created by using the reflexive methodology is “instrumentally valuable, but only insofar as it provokes greater self-awareness and self-reflection on the part of the producers and consumers of such knowledge.”¹²⁵⁵ This thesis, despite belonging to a narrow field of IR scholarship, can be helpful for the “producers” and “consumers” of the discourses on Tajik “self” and Uzbek “other” in better reflecting on their contributions to the bilateral relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Furthermore, “[fo]r a reflexivist, knowing the world and changing the world are inseparable.”¹²⁵⁶ Thus, this thesis suggests that the Tajik and Uzbek states should invest in mutually complementing modes of national identity projects, which eventually should lead to a change of the current dominant discourses. This suggestion is based on the belief that Tajik and Uzbek people deserve better relations between their two nations.

Since the death of the first President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, there have been signs of improvement in bilateral relations between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In October 2016, the Uzbek ambassador in Dushanbe, informed about the ongoing bilateral talks on improved visa processing for the national of Tajikistan.¹²⁵⁷ In late December 2016, the Uzbek delegation visited Dushanbe to discuss economic and trade cooperation, as well as the establishment of direct flights and a railway link between the two states.¹²⁵⁸ In January 2017, the two sides started negotiations on a new railway route that connects Tajikistan with Russia via Uzbek territory.¹²⁵⁹ The Uzbek side also announced plans to introduce direct flights to Dushanbe no later than April 2017.¹²⁶⁰ However, there are no official announcements regarding any agreements on the construction of the Roghun HPS, which has been one of the main issues in bilateral relations.

¹²⁵³ Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, 13.

¹²⁵⁴ Jill Steans et al., *An Introduction to International Relations Theory: Perspectives and Themes* (Harlow, Essex: Pearson, 2010), 150.

¹²⁵⁵ Jackson, *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, 198.

¹²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 160.

¹²⁵⁷ "Tadzhikistan i Uzbekistan rassmotriat vopros smiagcheniia vizovogo rezhima," *Avesta*, 25 October 2016.

¹²⁵⁸ "Tadzhikistan i Uzbekistan podtverdili vozobnovlenie aviasoobshcheniia," *Regnum*, 29 December 2016.

¹²⁵⁹ "Zheleznodorozhniki Tadzhikistana i Uzbekistana obsuzhdaiut novyi marshrut v Rossiю," *Avesta*, 24 January 2017.

¹²⁶⁰ "NAK «Uzbekiston khavo iullari» v 2017 g. otkroet novye reisy," *UzDaily*, 27 January 2017.

All the goodwill about visa, transportation, and demarcation might get wiped out by unresolved disagreements over Roghun – the national idea in Tajikistan, as it happened in 2007-2011. Most importantly, there is no sign that in the near future the sides plan to discuss the issue of conflicting histories and mutually antagonistic national identities. A Tajik scholar rightly noted that without solving this issue, all other achievements in bilateral relations might remain tense:

Neither momentous détente nor fundamental deterioration should be expected to happen in the Tajik-Uzbek relations. The status-quo is more likely to retain, even though certain improvements such as the introduction of new [transportation] communications, and improvements in visa processing are possible. However, a particular level of tension in the [bilateral] relations will prevail for a considerably long time; at least, until a mutually acceptable form of compromise is not achieved between the Tajik and Uzbek national projects.¹²⁶¹

The first, unfriendly gesture from either of the sides regarding the Roghun project might easily bring relations back to their “cold war” state. A deterioration in bilateral relations might further be exacerbated by the long-pending demarcation of state borders. In November 2016, the Uzbek Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that the two sides had three-day negotiations devoted to border demarcations issues.¹²⁶² The last of such meetings failed in February 2009, when there was a major disagreement about the Farkhad HPS.¹²⁶³ While the Farkhad HPS was a matter of negotiations, there was also the issue of Bukhara and Samarkand, which the Tajik side viewed as a legitimate part of demarcation talks. In the early 1990s, the Tajik side had already attempted to link Bukhara and Samarkand to demarcation issues:

We stated that we would agree to solve the demarcation issue if only Uzbekistan accepted one condition. If Uzbekistan acknowledges that the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara are the historical and cultural cities of the Tajiks, then we can proceed with the demarcation. Otherwise, no. Uzbekistan did not accept this. We also said that we are not going to go ahead [with the demarcation], and that, today, we should still not proceed. [...] These [un-demarcated] borders do not cost us anything [*non namekhourad*]. [...] The tenth or further generation will come and solve the [the demarcation] issue, but until then we should keep silent. No one should attempt to raise the issue, because it is sin and crime.¹²⁶⁴

Viewing the issues of delimitation and demarcation through the prism of the already crystallized notion of “lost territories” has been inevitable for the Tajik side, given the dominant narratives of Tajik “self” and Uzbek “other” in Tajikistan. On the other hand, lingering demarcation

¹²⁶¹ Mullodzhanov, "Tadzhiksko-uzbekskii otnosheniia - dinamika razvitiia i perspektivy."

¹²⁶² "O vstreche rabochikh grupp pravitel'stvennykh delegatsii Uzbekistana i Tadzhikistana po voprosam granitsy," *Ministerstvo inostrannykh del Respubliki Uzbekistan*, 20 November 2016 2016.

¹²⁶³ "Uzbeks, Tajiks Resume Border Talks After Three-Year Pause," *Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty*, 20 February 2012. The attempts to resume the talks in 2012 failed. See "Tadzhiksko-uzbekskii peregovory po granitse. Kazhdyi ostalsia pri svoiom," *Avesta.tj*, 23 February 2012. There is a disagreement over the ownership of the Farkhad HPS; the Tajik side argues that the dam of the HPS was rented by Uzbekistan, whereas the Uzbek side believes that Tajikistan has received some lands equivalent to the territory of the dam, which should mean that the two lands were swapped forever.

¹²⁶⁴ Abduqaiumi Qaiumzod, "Rahim Masov: Tozhik qamvu qabila nadorad," *Radioi Ozodi*, 18 January 2011.

continues to trigger mutual accusations of territorial occupation. For instance, a Tajik official once called Uzbekistan's behaviour in relation to the Farkhad HPS as "an attempt to annexe sovereign Tajikistan's territory",¹²⁶⁵ which is a readily recognizable behaviour associated with the Uzbek side as per the dominant discourses in Tajikistan. As Doty notes, "[i]f the same kinds of subjects, objects, and relations are found to exist in different texts, this is indicative of a particular logic at work. We can think of texts that illustrate the same kind of logic as constituting a controlling or dominant discourse."¹²⁶⁶ So, every time the sides resorted to the blame-game, they were involved in further fortifying dominant discourses. As a result, relations between the two nations have become the captive of dominant discourses on "self" and "other" relations. Each side expects a change in the behaviour of the other side.¹²⁶⁷ However, none of the sides have come to understand, so far, that the dominant discourses about the "self" and "other" on both sides will need to change prior to any behavioural change taking place. The language of these narratives, the discursively constructed images of the other are not merely matters of domestic "consumption". They create the world that we live in. To use Jackson's words, "our very *experience* of the world is inescapably mediated by the conceptual and linguistic apparatus that we bring to bear when producing knowledge *of* the world."¹²⁶⁸

Overall, this thesis has established a direction that might lead to a better understanding of why nation-states easily get into military confrontations with each other even if conflicts are not economically or "logically" viable. Also, the findings of this thesis may be well supplemented with research on how the Tajik population perceives dominant discourses on the construction of the Tajik "self" vis-à-vis the Uzbek "other". The popular perception of the "self" and "other" is beyond the methodological capabilities of the Campbellian post-structuralist, which should be deemed as one of its limitations. Furthermore, the complex nature of Tajik-Uzbek relations necessitates a separate scholarly inquiry into practices surrounding the discursive construction of the "other" in Uzbekistan. These studies would clarify the role, if any, of the Tajik "other" in the construction of Uzbek "self".¹²⁶⁹ Finally, the methodology and theoretical assumptions used

¹²⁶⁵ See "Gazovyi ultimatum Tashkenta. Uzbekistan sprovotsiroval promyshlennyi kollaps v Tadjikistane," *Avesta.tj*, 9 April 2012.

¹²⁶⁶ Doty, "Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines," 308.

¹²⁶⁷ For instance, according to a Tajik political scientist, Uzbekistan "has to revise certain parameters in relations with Tajikistan" and "find the courage to sit around the negotiation table". See Daler Ikromov, "Sharipov nameknul Uzbekistanu, chto v sluchae destabilizatsii Tadjikistana, prezhdе vsego postradaut uzbeki," *TJKNews.com*, 15 July 2010. According to an Uzbek diplomat, rather than tying their patriotism to the construction of HPS, the Tajik consumers should learn paying for the used electricity. See Sanjar Hamidov, "Ekskluzivnoe interv'iu: Shokasym Shoislamov, posol Uzbekistana v Tadjikistane," *Stan*, 26 November 2009.

¹²⁶⁸ Jackson, "Foregrounding ontology: dualism, monism, and IR theory," 130.

¹²⁶⁹ An article by Suyarkulova is a good start in this regard, though a bit limited to the study of the metaphorical use of water in Uzbek discourses. See Suyarkulova, "Between national idea and international conflict: the Roghun HHP as an anti-colonial endeavor, body of the nation, and national wealth."

in this thesis might be a useful means of better understanding the complexities of our presently emerging “post-truth” world.

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