

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SOVIET
CENTRAL ASIA (1924-85): A CASE STUDY OF
UZBEKISTAN**

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CERTIFICATE

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PREFACE

Before the October revolution, Central Asia had a low level of economic development with patriarchal and feudal relations reigning over a great part of the territory. The October revolution of 1917 ushered in a new era of socio-economic development in Central Asia. The formation of Soviet Central Asian republics in 1924 was an important step towards their economic as well as social development.

The national delimitation of 1924, resulted Uzbekistan in becoming a full -fledged Soviet Socialist Republic. The traditional Muslim society of Uzbekistan took a new turn with the coming of Soviet power to this region. Important measures were undertaken to overcome the age old economic, political and social backwardness of the people. Rapid industrialization along with collectivization of agriculture and expansion of irrigation opened the way for the reconstruction of the economy. The development in transportation and communication technology loosened the link between the location of industries and natural resources. Material development, productivity of labour and availability of qualified workers for rapid industrialization led to the socialist revolution. At the same time eradication of adult illiteracy, introduction of compulsory education for children, creation of modern healthcare system and technological advance accelerated the growth of the society. The Muslim women got the equal status with men. They

came out of the traditional society and took active part in the nation building process. Growth of technical and scientific education created a new class of professional female workers, who exceeded their male counterparts in number as well as skill. Soviets applied the policy of peaceful co-existence with the orthodox Muslims. Advancement of modern education made them less fanatic towards religion. Hence, though the Soviet policy had its shortcomings, still a remarkable socio-economic transformation has been effected in the life of the Central Asian people during the Soviet rule in a historically brief period.

This study describes in brief what was the situation in Central Asia and Uzbekistan on the eve of October revolution and after the formation of Soviet Central Asian Republics, how the people overcame their economic and social backwardness, built socialism and how far they achieved the success. As part of M.phil programme, this dissertation deals with the socio-economic development in Soviet Central Asian republics with special reference to Uzbekistan from the period 1924-85.

The first chapter provides brief geographical overview of Central Asia with a focus on Uzbekistan, besides discussing the ethnic set up in Uzbekistan. Further it gives a historical perspective of the socio-economic development in Uzbekistan.

Chapter two makes a critical appraisal of the economic development in Central Asia in general and Uzbekistan in particular with reference to agriculture, industry and transport.

Chapter three analyses the process of social development in Uzbekistan with focus on health, education and employment.

Chapter four explains the community development giving attention to law and order, status and position of women, religious situation, institution of marriages and *mahalla* system in Central Asia with special preference to Uzbekistan.

Chapter five carries the concluding observation on the process of socio-economic development in Uzbekistan during 1924-85.

GLOSSARY

Adat: Central Asian Customary Law, as opposed to Muslim Law.

Aksaqal: Litt- "White Beard" (oq soqol in Uzbek) a village elder.

Bai: A land owner.

Basmachi: A Native guerrilla movement fighting against the Russians (1918-22)

Batraks: Landless agricultural labour.

Feldsher: Assistant physician.

GOELRO: State commission for electrification in Russia.

Gosplan: State Planning Commission.

Hujum: Litt-Assault, The radical unveiling campaign of 1927-29, started in Uzbekistan.

Kalym: Bride price, paid by the groom's family to the bride's family.

Kishlak: Village.

Kolkhoz: Collective farm.

Koshchi: Peasant's union.

Kultpokhod: A campaign launched to eradicate illiteracy.

Kurma: A new ethnographic group emerged out of the mixed marriage between Kazakhs and Uzbeks.

Kutarma: Keeping the bride till the dowry has been paid.

Mahalla: Local self governing associations.

Medreseh: Muslim secondary school, place for training clergy.

Mektab: Muslim primary school.

MTS: Machine Tractors Station.

Oblast: Province.

One Pood: 16.38 k.g.

Qazi: A judge of Muslim law.

Sovkhoz: State farm.

Tekhnikum: Secondary specialisation establishments.

Ulema: "Scholar", the most intellectual and orthodox of the Muslim clergy.

VUZ: Higher educational establishments.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Geographical Perspective

Central Asia is a geographical expression, which refers to vast areas lying in China, Iran, Afghanistan and the republics of former Soviet Union. Geographically speaking, Central Asia is situated in the heart of Asian continent, comprising of five former Soviet republics – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. This whole area encompasses the area between the Great Wall of China to the east, the Himalayas, the Hindukush and the Pamir mountains on the south, the Caspian Sea and Siberia on the north. This region, known for being a famous seat of Islamic learning before the revolution.

“The entire Central Asian region has extremely varied climatic and natural conditions. “In the west and north there are extensive plains, in the east and south a considerable part of the territory is mountainous. As the entire region is far from oceans, it shows a true picture of continental climate”¹. Winters in Central Asia are short but cold. Temperature increases from north to south latitudinally and January is normally the coldest month. The mountaintops are covered with snow all the year round. Except in the mountain regions, heavy snowfall is rare.

The Central Asian mountain systems began as a large syncline in a great inland sea. With the gradual retreat of the sea and increasing lateral pressure, the northern and central ranges of the Tien Shan formed, which extends from west to east for 2,450 kilometers through both the Soviet Union and China. There are a number of large glaciers in this mountain system. Vegetation in the high mountains is typically alpine. The lower foothills are semi-desert and higher foothills have broad-leaved

¹ Devendra Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from the Early 19th Century*, (Moscow, 1970), pp. 13-14

forest. The Pamir-Alay mountain system begins on the southern flank of the Ferghana basin in the Trans-Alay range and reaches China and Afghanistan where the countries touch near the Pamir-knot. Broad flat, treeless valleys characterise the eastern Pamir region whereas the western Pamirs are dissected by river erosion, slopes are steeper and capped by glaciers. The Kopet Dag Mountains in southern Turkmenistan is identified as a part of the near eastern Highland zone. Transitional areas formed between the desert lowlands and mountains by the Piedmont plains and loess foothills.

Spring is very short, lasting only one month, i.e. April in the north, March in the south. Summer is long and dry in the Central Asian region. It begins in May and lasts through September. "In the valley of Amu-Darya in Termez, the temperature rises up to 50 Degree centigrade in summer, whereas in the central Tien Shan and the Pamirs the average temperature in July is +5 Degree and +14 Degree respectively falling to -47 Degree in winter"². The Aral Sea along with the lower course of the Syr Darya is frozen for four or five months. The average daily temperature is above 15 Degree centigrade in summer. The cool autumn begins in the desert plains towards the end of September or early October. Cloudiness and precipitation though occasionally increases in Autumn By the end of October frosts begin to occur.

Central Asia is a closed basin with no ocean outlet. So it is one of the driest regions of the world. The most important rivers of this landlocked area are the Amu-Darya, Syr-Darya and Irtysh. Amu-Darya is the largest river in Central Asia. It is mainly fed by glaciers. Another important river Sur-Darya begins in the region of permanent snow and glaciers in the central Tien Shan, known as Naryn River. Later it merge with Kara Darya and then onwards it is known as Syr-Darya and it flows through Ferghana valley and lowland plain to the Aral Sea.

The other two important rivers are Emba and Ural Rivers, which flow from north to Caspian Sea in the south. There are many other small rivers such as the Vakhsh, Chu, Murgab, Tedzhen, Sary-su and Zerafshan. All these rivers are used for

² Ibid, p. 14.

irrigation. The lower waters of Irtysh are chiefly used for navigation and hydroelectric stations and the upper course for the irrigation of central Kazakhstan. Besides these rivers, Central Asia has a huge natural reservoir of water named Aral Sea, which is the fourth largest lake in the world.

More than the three fourth of the territory of Central Asia is desert lowland, mainly consisting of sand, stone, salt and clay. "Karakum" is the greatest desert, which stretches more than 350,000 square kilometer. It lies between the mountains and Amu-Darya. Vegetation in this region is mainly consists of various types of drought-resistant plants. Another desert "Kyzyl-Kum" lies between the Amu-Darua and Syr-Darya rivers. It stretches from Aral Sea up to the foothills of Tien Shan.

Major part of Central Asia has inorganic soil, which is suitable for different varieties of crops. Large area between mountains towards the northern lowlands is covered by loess. This soil stands in vertical cliff because of its loosely compacted porous nature and it is ideal for farming.

Uzbekistan, the heartland of Central Asia is situated on the crossroads of Eurasia, connecting west with the east, and the north with the south. "It is situated mainly between the Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya, much of it lies in the desert zone, but in the south-east it is mountainous"³. "It extends in the south-eastern direction from the Aral Sea along the northern foothills and lower slopes of the Tien shan and Pamir Alay mountains, along the valleys of the great Central Asian rivers-the Amu-Darya, the Syr-Darya and Zerafshan and also includes the extensive semi-desert plains of the Kyzyl-Kum"⁴. Uzbekistan is completely landlocked between Kazakhstan to the north, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan to the south, Kyrghyzstan and Tajikistan to the east. Territory of Uzbekistan was the center of the rich cultural and commercial development that took place in Central Asia over a period of two millennia, especially along the silk route⁵.

³ Shirin Akiner, *Islamic People: With an Appendix on the Non-Muslim Turkic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, (London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley, 1983), P. 274.

⁴ W. P. and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets In Central Asia*, (London, 1951), P. 227.

⁵ Uzbekistan Introduction-Flags, Maps, Economic, Geography, Climate..... :
http://workmall.com/wfb2001/Uzbekistan/Uzbekistan_history-introduction.html.

The Tien Shan mountain system is an extensive and complex group of high mountain ranges. Tashkent, the country's capital is situated in the foothills of TienShan Mountain. Between the ranges, there are mountain basins that are generally flat and characterised by Steppe or desert conditions. The largest and most economically important, the Ferghana basin of Uzbekistan is one of the most densely settled areas in Central Asia. The Ferghana valley is an important cultural, population and economic center of Central Asia. It stretches 300 kilometers in length and 170 kilometers in width. It extends into parts of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. It is mainly desert and desert-steppe, but its flanks contain many loess-rich foothills and mountain slopes through which mountain streams carry sediment to the alluvial fans below. This valley is well known for its cotton cultivation.

“Climate of Uzbekistan is sub-tropical and extremely continental”⁶. Temperature is seasonal with daily fluctuations. During winter, Uzbekistan has a very fluctuating weather. “Rainfall is not more than 8 inches a year”⁷. Summer is very hot dry and long lasting from May to October. Towards the end of September or early October, humid autumn begins in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan's central region consists of deserts, broken by the oases of the Zerafshan River, Qarshi Steppe and Sukhandarya River. This region is best known for the ancient Silk Road cities of Samarkand and Bukhara. Uzbekistan's eighty five percent territory is occupied by desert or semi-desert, including the largest desert of Central Asia, i.e. the Kyzyl-Kum.

Two main rivers of Uzbekistan are Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya. The desert steppe land area of Uzbekistan along the banks of these two great rivers, which finally drop into the Aral Sea. These rivers are flanked by broad, flat valleys, which are extensively used for irrigated agriculture. The valleys of the rivers Ferghana, Syr-Darya, Zerafshan, Amu-Darya and Chirchik, protected from the cold winds by the mountains, are spotted with fertile oases. The main population of Uzbekistan is settled

⁶ Lessons from Uzbekistan: bpsp-neca.brim.ac.cn/calendars/workshop-1/16.html-112k.

⁷ Uzbekistan: Economic Review: WWW.bisnis.doc.gov/bisnis/country/984uzeco.html-38k.

in these fertile oases. The irrigated land of Uzbekistan creates excellent growing conditions for cotton, tobacco, fruits and vegetables.

Ethnographic Situation

The ancient name of Soviet Central Asia "Turkestan" in itself implies "the land of the Turks". An overwhelming majority of the people of Central Asia, including the Steppe region, is of Turkic ethnicity⁸. The Turkic people are mainly a mixture of Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kyrghyz, Turkmen and Karakalpaks. There are also Iranian tribes, which have merged with various groups, thus rendering the ethnographic map of early Central Asia as complex, with people of different ethnic origins living in Central Asia. Out of these ethnic groups, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tajiks, Kyrghyz, Karakalpaks and Kazakhs have been prominent.

Before the advent of the nomadic Uzbek tribes, Central Asia was densely inhabited by the *Turks*. "During the 15th century the Uzbeks occupied the country between the lower Volga and the Aral Sea"⁹. In the 16th century they came towards south and conquered the settled regions of Bukhara, Samarkand and later of Urgench and Tashkent. "As the earlier settlers of this region were old Iranian elements, located mainly in the valleys of upper Syr-Darya, the Zerafshan and the Amu-Darya, Uzbeks gradually mixed them selves with these people"¹⁰. The Uzbeks formed the Khanates of Khiva, Kokand and Emirate of Bukhara.

The process of settlement of the nomadic Uzbeks was spread over a long period. We can divide the Uzbek people of 19th century, mainly into three ethnic layers. Each layer having its own economic, linguistic and cultural differences. The first layer comprised of the Turkic language group of Zerafshan valley, the Ferghana, Tashkent and Khorezm oases. "Second layer consisted of Mongol-Turkic people, who

⁸ R. R. Sharma, *A Marxist Model of Social Change, Soviet Central Asia: 1917-1940*, (Delhi, 1979), p. 2.

⁹ Geoffery Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, (New York, 1964), p.15.

¹⁰ R. A. Pierce, *Russian Central Asia 1867-1917; A Study in the Colonial Rule*, (Berkeley, 1960), p.10.

lived in Transoxiana prior to the Shaibanid invasion in the 15th century”¹¹. The third or final layer comprised of Shaibanid Uzbeks and many other tribes, which inhabited the Steppes and valleys of the Kashka-Darya, Surkhan Darya, Tashkent and Khorezm oases. The Turkic language people are relatively developed than the other two layers. The other two layers still pursued cattle breeding as their main occupation.

Thus an analysis of the process of evolution of Uzbeks shows that the Uzbeks gradually drifted away from their original kinsmen and their mode of life and came under the cultural influence of the Tajiks. Through the process of fusion and assimilation, the Uzbeks mixed themselves with other tribes and ethnic elements of this region. Thus it became easy and possible to speak of the Uzbek people.

After the colonisation of Central Asian region by Russia, another ethnic element “Slavs” was added to the indigenous local population. “Slavs” mainly comprise of Russian, Ukrainian and Bylorussian nationalities¹². The Steppe region of Central Asia was occupied by the nomadic Turks. These nomads gradually settled there and lived a peaceful life. This process was accelerated by the colonisation process of the Russians. On the eve of Russian conquest, “Turkestan” was the most backward area in the Muslim world. The region was occupied by different ethnic groups and subgroups. They were economically as well as socially backward. Russian conquest helped ethnic elements to settle and accept the peaceful and regular mode of living.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, Uzbeks constituted half of the population in the Bukharan Emirate with Tajiks being 31 percent, Turkmen 10 percent, Kyrghyz 6 or 7 percent, and the rest being Arabs, Persians and Bukharan Jews¹³. In this period Uzbeks maintained inter-ethnic contacts with the neighbouring Tajiks, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Kyrghyz, Karakalpaks and the Bukharan Jews. Especially in Bukharan Emirate, Uzbeks dominated others in economic and political spheres.

¹¹ Publication Data: WWW 2.let.uu.nl/solis/anpt/ejos/pdf6/waardenburg-final-pdf.

¹² Sharma, n(8), p. 2.

¹³ Vladimir Mesamed , “Interethnic Relations In The Republic Of Uzbekistan”, *Central Asia Monitor*, (Burlington), No. 6, 1996.

Despite the fact that Uzbeks were superior in numbers, Tajik language, also called Farsi language held a stronger position on the eve of Russian colonisation. Before the foundation of Uzbekistan, the residents of Bukhara identified themselves as Turks or Farsis, instead of Uzbeks or Tajiks, according to their language. Colonisation of Uzbekistan by Tsarist Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century changed the ethnic composition of this region. Migration of the Slavic people was encouraged by the Russian government. Hundreds of thousands came from different parts of Russia and settled there. These migrants were professionally superior to the native people and thus constituted a majority of the skilled workers, professionals and specialists. After the establishment of Soviet rule in a noticeable change occurred in the ethnic composition of Uzbekistan. In 1920s and 1930s, during the industrial development thousands of Russians migrated to the new industrial centers and cities in Uzbekistan. Then during the World War II, Uzbekistan became refuge for those Slavs, who came from the war affected regions of Russia. In the mid-1950s a number of large industries were set up in Uzbekistan. Many workers from central part of Russia, Ukraine and Bylorussia now settled in Uzbekistan. New cities developed around the great industrial enterprises, and these were mainly constituted of Russian speaking people.

Historical Background

Before the Russian conquest, the three Khanates of Kokand, Bukhara and Khiva were ruled by the feudal Khans. These Khanates were economically as well as socially backward states. The *Amirs* and Khans were very powerful in the entire region and had supreme authority over the people. In the whole area, wealthy merchants along with the Khans acquired as much of land as possible. The land ownership and utilisation was mainly regulated by *Shariat* law. The land system was divided into personal land, proprietary land, *Amilak* land, *Waqf* land and gift land etc. Personal lands comprised of lands at the immediate disposal of the state¹⁴. It mainly consisted of cultivated land, orchards, wasteland and lands whose owner had died

¹⁴ Pierce, n(10), p.142.

without leaving an heir. Proprietary lands had a hereditary ownership by the proprietors settled on them. Unirrigated and unoccupied *Amilak* lands were mainly allotted to those whoever irrigated and cultivated it¹⁵. There was no hereditary ownership over these types of lands. *Waqf* lands being the property of Muslim institutions were not subjected to taxation. These lands were given by the Khans to the Muslim shrines or Mosques. The gift lands were mainly found in Khiva. These lands were given by the Khans to their servants as reward and were free from taxes. The main occupation of the people of these Khanates was cattle breeding and horticulture. Peasants used primitive agricultural tools. Cotton was produced in a very little amount in these Khanates. Heavy taxation was put on poor peasants and they had to pay the taxes in kind.

Though irrigation was given importance for the agricultural development, but it could not expanded largely due to heavy requirement of expenditure. Trade and industry was not in a very advance state. There were some lead, copper and silver mines in this region. Oil was being extracted in this region before the coming of Tsarist regime. But these industrial activities were not done on a large scale due to the use of primitive tools and manner. Trade was mainly carried through carts and animals like camels and horses. Only portable items like silk, wool, dried fruits and a small quantity of cotton were exported to other areas.

There was hardly any progressive movement in the social life of the people as well. Education was regulated by the *Shariat* law. Teachers were mainly the clergies. Condition of the native schools was primitive in character. As the nomads used to migrate from place to place, their children also had to travel with them, which led to disturbances in their studies. Even during the long periods of bad weather, schools often had to be closed for the entire period. Schools for the girls were almost nonexistent. Women were treated as inferior in the male dominated society. Their life style was strictly regulated by the Islamic laws. Thus by the middle of the nineteenth

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 143.

century, the society of Central Asian region was in a state of decay and its economy was in a depressed condition.

After the Russian conquest of Central Asia in the later half of the nineteenth century, the Tsarist regime established the Governor generalship in Turkestan with Tashkent as its headquarter. Khanates of Bukhara and Khiva were subjugated to it in the subsequent period. The economy of the entire Turkestan, Bukhara and Khiva was mainly based on agriculture. As discussed earlier, the region was under complex land tax system, the Tsarist government carried out some land reforms. "All lands were declared as the crown property"¹⁶. The Russian officials replaced the officials of the Khans and the new Tsarist government issued a decree by which unoccupied lands adjacent to settled areas were declared as state property. People were only given the right to use the land. The Tsarist power also undertook extensive reforms in the existing tax system. Several original taxes were simplified. Some new taxes were levied on settled rural population and non-native rural population. However *Waqf* lands were left untouched. Russian government recognised the *Waqf* lands and religious institutions maintained their tax-free status. The Tsarist government evolved a uniform pattern of land tenure for the easy collection of land revenue. The land occupied by shops, plantations, houses etc. were declared to be a private hereditary property. But these reforms hardly liberate the masses from its feudal dependence. "The big land owners continued to exploit the peasants, who were known as *izodolshik*"¹⁷. The peasants received only one-fourth share in the crop. As most of the peasants did not have their own agricultural equipments and work animals, it became difficult for them to liberate from the clutches of feudal landowners.

It is obvious that the economic factors draw Tsarist Russia to Central Asia. Central Asia became a raw material supplier base for the central part of Russia. The Russians paid great attention, especially to the cotton cultivation in this fertile area because of the American civil war. America was one of the greatest producers of

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 147.

¹⁷ Devendra Kaushik, *Socialism in Central Asia: A study in the Transformation of Socio-Ethnic Relations in Soviet Central Asia*, (Bombay, 1976), p. 55.

cotton during that period. Due to American civil war the whole world experienced the acute shortage of cotton. Hence the fertile land of Central Asian region, suitable for cotton cultivation drew attention of the Tsarist régime. The land of modern Uzbekistan formed the heart of Central Asian cotton belt. "In 1861, Central Asian cotton was sold at Nizhnii Novgorod And Moscow for four or five rubles per pood (1 pood = 16.38 k.g.), but by 1864, the price had risen between twenty to twenty-three rubles. The rising prices of cotton stimulated the growth of the cotton cultivation. "In 1861, Russia imported 152,000 poods of Asiatic cotton, and by 1864, it rose to 704,000 poods"¹⁸. Russian government tried to improve the quality of cotton on the model of United States. In the early 1880's American variety of cotton was introduced in the Central Asian region, mainly in the fertile Ferghana basin. American machines were also installed for the processing of cotton. A tariff was installed for the processing of cotton, which kept the market price at a level, which became advantageous to the cotton growers. As a result of these measures cotton production increased rapidly in this region. Cotton became the main cash crop of the whole area.

But the growth of cotton cultivation was disadvantageous towards the local farmers. Small-scale textile industries were killed in the process and the cotton textile industries of Russia grew at a faster rate. Powerful landlords continued to exploit the poor peasants. A new kind of middle men, i.e, the cotton purchaser came into existence. They obtained credit from private banks and cotton farms and advanced it to the peasants at a higher rate of interest. The debts accumulated by the majority of small peasants were so great that they could not pay during their lifetime. They were often obliged to sell their land to meet their debt obligation.

The expansion of cotton production was also made at the expense of other crops. Thus the grain requirement was largely met by the supplies made available from the other parts of Russian empire. The wheat cultivation was taken over by the Russian settlers and later replaced by cotton cultivation. But there was some significant growth in the production of rice. Rice, one of the staple diets of central

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 164.

Asian people as required large quantity of water, grew in marshy grounds requiring less irrigation. Due to prevalence of malaria, the government forbade the growing of rice in some of the town areas¹⁹. During the late 1860s, Dungans, Chinese Muslim immigrants began to grow rice in Semirechie oblast and started exporting rice to other areas. In 1890s the Russian government started experimenting with the Chinese dry rice, which required less water than the other varieties. This experiment gave a good result and the people started growing new variety of rice.

As cotton production needed lots of water, efforts were made by the Tsarist government to improve the existing irrigation system. Expansion of irrigation was mainly concentrated in the Ferghana valley and Tashkent oblast to give a boost to the cotton cultivation. An extensive canal-breeding project started in 1874, in the South-West of Tashkent. The Tsarist government employed thousands of natives without pay. But the project was abandoned in 1879 due to technical problems. Another ambitious project, the Romanov canal was also a failure. In addition to these projects a number of small projects were also attempted on more modest means. In the early twentieth century, several projects for a Transcaspian canal to irrigate the eastern part of Kara-Kum desert with the water of Amu-Darya, were formulated. But all these projects did not fulfill the high hopes and great expectations of their designs due to excessive expense and engineering failures.

Central Asian region, known for different fruits and nuts for many centuries, was mainly confined to the local market due to lack of transport facilities. The Russians improved the transport system to transfer the fruits and crops from the producing areas to the central part of Russia. From the last decade of nineteenth century till the October revolution, Russians got actively involved in the development of transport facilities. "Another objective behind this development was to exploit the natural resource and to link the richest cotton growing Ferghana valley to the central region of Russia"²⁰. The Trans-Caspian railroad was completed in 1895 and later extended to Tashkent, which gave a boost to the fruit and cotton production of that

¹⁹ Ibid, p.171.

²⁰ Sharma, n(8), p. 7.

region. The completion of Orenburg-Tashkent railroad in 1906 made the export of Central Asian fruits possible to the market of European Russia. In 1912, another railroad was designed to improve the economy of Semirechie region. The Turkestan-Siberia railroad began in 1912-13, but the construction work was abandoned due to World War I and October revolution. Finally the railroad was completed in 1930²¹.

The pattern of agricultural practices evolved under the Tsarist rule, showed marked preference to cotton followed by grains and other fruits. But the production of grains as compared to cotton was not significant. The improvement of transportation connected the Central Asian products with the external market but achievement was less in the field of irrigation.

A raw material processing industry developed in Central Asian region along with the agriculture. Cotton ginning and cotton oil, soap, brick manufacturing and wool cleaning industries began to be established in this region. Industrial establishments mainly developed around the territory of present day Uzbekistan. "By 1914, there were 818 primitive workshops and factories working in the whole region, out of which, 425 were located in the territory of modern Uzbekistan. The main industrial activity was confined to agricultural output. Workshops and factories were engaged in the processing of raw agricultural materials. In 1913, out of 425 industrial establishments of the present Uzbekistan, 209 were engaged in cotton ginning alone"²².

There was not a single textile mill in Uzbekistan although the main crop was cotton. All textile mills were located in the central part of Russia. People were also financially too weak to open large industries. The native people were mainly engaged in factories and mills as workers. The growing population of different industrial centers considerably increased the strength of the working class. "In 1914, there were nearly, 21,000 factory workers in the whole Central Asia, out of which 77 percent

²¹ Pierce, n(10), p. 189.

²² Kaushik, n(17), p. 59

were the natives and the rest were the skilled Russian settlers”²³. The Russian workers were mainly engaged in technical work. Out of the native workers, Uzbeks constituted the majority of over 60 percent of the workers, as the modern Uzbekistan region was the main cotton growing area. But less attention was paid to the living condition of the workers by the government. Surplus native labour force resulted in low salary of the workers. Seasonal employment of the workers worsened their condition. Agricultural labourers were mainly employed in construction, transportation, road and railroad construction during the off-season²⁴. In comparison to these workers, Russian workers were better paid and were generally employed throughout the year. Their living standard was also in a higher position than the native workers.

The Tsarist government cared little for the development of the society. Health and education remained underdeveloped. “In 1913 there were only 408 doctors in the whole of Central Asian region and most of them were living in towns. This implies that there was one doctor for every 33,000 persons. In the same year there were one hospital bed for 4,200 persons”²⁵. People living in the khanates of Bukhara and Khiva were wholly under the mercy of religious quacks. There was hardly any qualified doctor to look after their health. Infant mortality rate was also high due to lack of proper nutrition and medical care.

The educational system in Central Asian region was mainly based on Muslim pattern. The religious preachers functioned as teachers in schools and they were regarded as the most learned scholars in the society. The native schools were divided into two parts. Primary schools i.e. *Mektebs* and the high schools i.e. *Medresehs*. The curriculum in a *Medreseh* was mainly consisted of subjects like *shariat* law, theology and philosophy. Languages such as Arabic, Persian and Turkish were also taught to the students. After the completion of the course offered by a *Medreseh*, a student was treated as an educated man and was eligible to become a teacher or to hold a religious office.

²³ Sharma, n(8), p. 15.

²⁴ Charles. K. Wilber, *The Soviet Model and Underdeveloped Countries*, (Chapell Hills, 1969), p. 36.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 145.

Until the last part of the nineteenth century, no significant effort was made by the Russian government to modernize the old and traditional educational system. The Russian government introduced "Russo-native" schools in the last decade of the nineteenth century. But the local prejudices and sentiments were so strong that, these schools did not achieve any success. These schools attracted only a few native students as the Muslim religious education was excluded from their curriculum²⁶. Hence the Tsarist government divided the Russo-native schools into two parts i.e. Russian language and arithmetic were taught by a Russian teacher and Muslim religious instruction by a *mullah*. This reform resulted in increasing the native students in Russian schools. Another type of schools called New Method schools were also established by the government. It adopted the phonetic method of study. A movement for reforming schools started at Crimea, Caucasia and Volga region on the mode of modern Russian culture, spreaded to Central Asia, which resulted in increasing the number of New Method schools in this area. But these types of schools were very few in number in comparison to traditional *medreseh* and *mektebs* and failed to attract a large number of native Muslim students.

Thus illiteracy was widespread among the people. "In 1897, the illiteracy rate of the age group nine to forty-nine was 96.4 percent in Uzbekistan, 91.9 percent in Kazakhstan, 96.9 in Kyrgyzstan, 97.7 percent in Tajikistan and 92.2 percent in Turkmenistan"²⁷.

In the Tsarist Russian period, the whole region witnessed joint patriarchal family system. The Uzbeks preferred the rules of endogamy i.e. marriage within the group, which resulted in less inter ethnic marriages among different nationalities. The size of the family was large due to the custom of having more than one wife. The family system was patrilocal in character i.e. the bride came to live in the bridegroom's house. But in some cases the husband went over to live with the family of the bride if the parents of the bride had no other child, especially male child²⁸.

²⁶ Sharma, n(8), p. 16.

²⁷ Wilber, n(24), p.144.

²⁸ Sharma, n(8), p. 212.

There were some evil practices like *Kalym* (bride price) and *Kutarma* (keeping the bride till the dowry has been paid) were prevalent in the society.

The traditional Muslim laws governed the role of Uzbek women in the society during this period. The position of women was lower in the scale of social values. Not only in the family but also in the whole social order, women had less right. Men occupied a higher position in the society. The property right of the female members were also restricted. Education among the women was almost nonexistent. Women were kept under *Purdah* system and mainly engaged in domestic services. The Muslim women had no say in their marriages.

Thus on the eve of the October revolution, Central Asian society, particularly modern Uzbekistan was ridden with various social and economic difficulties. Though capitalist development was initiated in this region by the Tsarist regime, but it was not so deep rooted due to the feudal regimes of Turkestan, Bukhara and Khiva. Side by side the society was dominated by the Islamic laws and its orthodox preachers, which turned the region culturally backward as well.

The Soviets occupied the entire region of Turkestan, Bukhara, Khiva and the territory of Steppe region after the October revolution of 1917. The new Soviet policy aimed at bringing out the Central Asian region from this economic and social backwardness so that the Soviet government could hope to achieve its aim of consolidating the territories and constructing a proletariat society. By 1924, after the national delimitation process of Central Asian Republics, this region became the main focus of the Soviet policy, for all round development. The Soviet government helped the Central Asian people in overcoming their centuries old backwardness. Objective of the Soviet policy was not only to initiate a faster rate of economic growth, but also to steer socio-economic development in a specific direction.

CHAPTER II

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural Development

Stalin believed that socialism did not relate to towns alone, but it was that organisation of economy, which united industry and agriculture on the basis of the socialisation of the means and instruments of production. "If those two branches of economy are not united, socialism is impossible"¹, Stalin said. Agriculture besides being a basic factor for the economic development of a country, is an integral part of the change in social structure generated by the social revolution. In Soviet Central Asia, after the revolution of 1917, agriculture took a new shape through the new policies.

The revolution of 1917 was a turning point in the history of Central Asia. Under the leadership of Lenin a new approach was adopted for the development of this region. Soviet government took the responsibility to turn the technically backward peasant economy into a large-scale mechanised collective economy. Efforts were made to establish a socialist society through non-capitalist path of development. The main idea was that a backward region could create conditions for the development of socialism with the material assistance from a developed country. It was suggested that agricultural economy could be developed in the process of modern industrialisation.

"The history of the agricultural revolution in Central Asian region can be categorised into three main stages:

- (i) Preparation for transition to the socialist path (1920-29)

¹ *Works of J. V. Stalin*, 1925, Vol. 7, (Moscow, 1954), pp. 333-334.

- (ii) Mass collectivisation of agriculture (from the autumn of 1929 to the mid-1930s)
- (iii) Consolidation and development of the collective farm system (from the mid-1930s to the initial period of communist construction)².

In 1921, after the revolution and civil war, when the question of construction came to the forefront, the question of building socialism again rose in the party, which led to New Economic Policy (NEP). It negated the policy of the earlier period and developed a new economic and social policy. Gradually the NEP covered the whole web of socio-economic life of the Soviet society. The conditions after the civil war and the *Basmachi* revolt greatly hindered the immediate application of the NEP. But, by the end of 1921, the impact of these factors had grown weak and the agrarian reforms gained momentum.

In the subsequent time, efforts were made to improve the condition of the peasants. Class-consciousness among the peasants was developed. Government also tried to organise them and persuade them to join cooperatives of the simplest type. These efforts paved the way to the socialist path of development. Soviet government tried to carry out land and water reforms, provide modern equipments to the poor peasants along with the irrigation facilities. In the early 1920s Soviet government distributed the private land and estates of the Russian Tsar, the Khan, the *Amir* and the feudal lords among the Central Asian peasants. The second stage of land reform started in late 1925. Reforms were spread over the entire Central Asian region. The *Kulaks* were dispossessed of their land. Mass organisation of the poor and middle class peasants' union *Koshchi* became stronger. The condition of the peasants improved a lot. But in the countryside situation did not change radically. Lenin realised this situation and showed the way to gradual co-operation of small farmers. Rural cooperatives made their appearance in Central Asia. Cooperatives of simplest type became very popular in this region and peasants readily joined them. Higher

² Devendra Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from the Early 19th Century*, (Moscow, 1970), p. 233.

types of cooperatives and marketing cooperatives were also formed. They received the easy term credits from the state and distributed them among the members. Though it was opposed by the *Kulaks*, *Bais* and moneylenders. The working peasants of Central Asian region supported the Soviet administration and by the end of 1927 it took the shape of agrarian revolution.

Pre-War Plan Period:

Since 1926, State planning commission (Gosplan) had been tentatively formulating Five Year Plans (FYPs) of economic developments. In October 1927, the party congress voted for the formulation of a Five Year Plans based on rapid industrialisation with emphasis on agriculture, as advocated by Stalin.

The Soviet power completely abolished the private property in land and started the implementation of a whole series of measures aimed at the organisation of large-scale socialist agriculture. The most important of these measures were the organisation of state farms, the encouragement of agricultural communes and cooperatives for the collective cultivation of land by the state of all cultivable lands, no matter whom they belonged to, mobilisation by the state of all agricultural specialists for measures to raise farming efficiency etc³.

During the first Five Year Plan the simplest form of agricultural cooperatives and the system of state contracts for farm, i.e., state farm concept known as *Sovkhozes*, played an important role in preparing the peasants of Central Asia for transition to socialism. The government also realized that it was not possible to make productive utilization of land without heavy investment by the state in irrigational work. State farms i.e. *Sovkhozes* were created. The area covered under *Sovkhozes* was actually more than that of cooperative farms because it was easy to create State farms than cooperative farms. State farms were also a better source of revenue. The highest form of agricultural cooperatives was constituted of collective farms known as *Kolkhozes*. *Kolkhozes* were put into action on a large scale. These collective farms

³ *Collected Works of V. I. Lenin*, March-August 1919, Vol. 29, (Moscow, 1965), p. 139.

were first organised in cotton growing areas as what was called *Tozs*. The second half of 1929 marked the beginning of a mass movement of collectivisation in Central Asia. In 1930 *Tozs* began to convert themselves into *Artels*, which were real collective farms.

The years following 1917 revolution, could not bring drastic changes in the condition of peasants in Uzbekistan. Efforts were made to carry out land reforms in the Ferghana, Samarkand, Tashkent and Zerafshan oblasts of Uzbekistan. Agricultural holdings of big landowners and former officials of Tsarist regime were confiscated and distributed among the poor agricultural labourers. But these reforms could not bring out the peasants completely from the control of moneylenders. State credit to the peasants was not adequate and the peasants were forced to borrow credits from the moneylenders. Thus the Uzbek peasants were more attracted by the *Kolkhozes* than in other areas as they had seen the advantages of collective labour. In Uzbekistan "according to the evidence of archival records the first cooperative farms i.e. *Kolkhozes* were organized as early as in the spring of 1918."⁴⁵ State farms, i.e., *Sovkhozes* were also created for the benefit of poor peasants. Through the first Five Year Plan, the policy of collectivisation of agriculture on a large scale was undertaken by the close of 1929. Its important feature of it was the formulation of policy to eliminate the *Kulaks* and *Bais* as a class. The collectivisation process continued to advance after 1930. "By March 1931, 47.9 percent peasants had joined the farms in Uzbekistan"⁶.

Several cotton growing *Kolkhozes* started in Uzbekistan, as the governments main concern was to revive cotton production for Russia's textile mills. Scientific technologies were applied in cotton raising areas. Cotton selection stations were situated mainly near Tashkent. Those institutions were concerned with the improvement of the quality of cotton. Latest equipments were introduced for cotton plantation. "Of the various harvesting machines, the SKhP-48 had shown itself to be

⁴ R. R. Sharma, *A Marxist Model of Social Change, Soviet Central Asia: 1917-1940*, (Delhi, 1979), p. 101.

⁶ Kaushik, n(2), p. 240.

the most efficient and labour-saving”⁷. The Uzbek scientists tried to find out the cause of disease, particularly Wilt, in the cotton plant. Uzbek cotton selectionists developed varieties of long-staple cotton, which never suffer from Wilt and ripen rapidly. Some of the new varieties were extremely cold resisting. The expansion of irrigation also contributed to the growth of cotton cultivation. By the end of 1932 collectivization process was completed in the cotton growing *Kolkhozes* of Uzbekistan.

Mechanisation, the important part of collectivisation, achieved remarkable progress through the first two Five Year Plans (1928-37). It not only increased the productivity of agriculture but also the yield per acre. Concentration on agricultural machinery in the MTS (Machine and Tractor Stations) became an essential part of mechanisation, through which the government had the direct guidance over the *Kolkhozes*. The first MTS was set up in 1929 in Uzbekistan. The numbers increased rapidly to 48 in 1931 with 2,389 tractors, and to 67 in 1962 with 2,899 tractors⁸.

The following tables 2.1 give the data about increase in number of tractors in Uzbekistan including other republics.

Table 2.1

Number of Tractors per 1,000 hectares of areas (1940-86)

	1940	1953	1960	1970	1986
USSR	4.55	7.88	9.78	9.0	12.1
Uzbek Republic	7.8	16.49	23.01	40.0	49.0
Kyrghyz Republic	5.78	9.16	14.46	18.5	20.1
Tajik Republic	5.08	10.7	20.8	27.9	43.0
Turkmen Republic	10.95	21.85	33.1	40.2	39.3

Sources: Devendra, Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from the Early 19th Century* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970), p. 243. and A. Patnaik, “Agriculture and rural out migration in Central Asia”, *Europe Asia Studies* (Oxford Shire), Vol. 47, No. 1, 1995, p. 151.

⁷ “Mechanization cotton harvesting: Uzbekistan”, *Central Asian Review*, (London), Vol. 2, No. 1, 1954, pp. 39-40.

⁸ Ibid, p. 48.

Another special feature of collectivisation of agriculture in Uzbekistan was the setting up of female *kolkhozes*. "There were 500 female *Kolkhozes* in 1929, embracing 14,000 women, which increased to 1,665 with about 53,000 members. There were also 1,600 female brigades in ordinary *Kolkhozes* in which more than 34,000 Uzbek women worked"⁹.

The houses of the *Kolkhozes* were small and built of clay and native stone. They were one-storied building containing two or three rooms with a small kitchen. Each room contained a bed with embroidered cover. The walls were hung and floor covered with bright rugs of many colours, mainly woven by womenfolk.

Thus the first and second Five Year Plans (1928-32 and 1933-37) gave very substantial results in Uzbekistan. "By the beginning of 1938 the total cultivated area increased from 2,166,200 hectares in 1913 to 2,832,300 hectares, and the area under cotton cultivation increased from 423,500 hectares in 1913 to 917,200 in 1938"¹⁰. In the subsequent Five Year Plans, especially through the third Five Year Plan, irrigation was given importance for growth of agriculture. Cotton and Alfalfa became two major crops in the Ferghana basin.

War and Post War Period:

The crop pattern was disturbed severely by the war with the German occupation of much of the food surplus areas of the USSR in Europe. It became impossible to supply food to cotton growing and other industrial crop areas. Consequently, by the year 1943 the production of cotton fell to only 32 percent of pre-war. In Central Asia, collective farms achieved a great amount of success in the post 1953 period. "The gross agricultural output in Central Asia region grew at a faster rate than the U.S.S.R from 1928 to 1953, the value of raw cotton made up about one-half of the total value of agricultural output"¹¹. In 1958, machine and tractor stations (MTS) were closed down and their farm machines were sold directly to collective

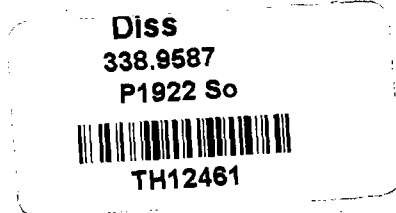
⁹ Ibid, p. 47.

¹⁰ W. P. and Zelda K. Coates, *Soviets in Central Asia*, (London, 1951), p. 228.

¹¹ Charles K. Wilber, *The Soviet Model and Underdeveloped Countries*, (Chapel Hill, 1969), p. 178.



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farms. The technological revolution in agriculture and the success of rural development brought radical changes in Central Asian region.

During the postwar period, there was remarkable growth in the number of tractors in Uzbekistan. This resulted in the ploughing of areas of potential pasture areas. The mechanisation of agriculture also led to a large scale output in the subsequent period in Uzbekistan. In addition to cotton, the *Kolkhozes* also raised wheat, barley, rice, maize, other grains, cattle, fruit and vegetables. It was also noted for its silk and orchards. Uzbekistan supplied dry fruits, such as raisins, sultanas and apricots, canned fruit, vegetables and wine to the other areas. In southern valleys almonds, figs and pomegranates were grown. "Different variety of pomegranates, figs and many other tropical crops were grown at the south Uzbek zonal station of the U.S.S.R attached to the Institute of Arid Sub-Tropics, near the village of Denau, in the Surkhan-Darya Valley"¹². The Uzbek Rice Experimental Station also produced many varieties of rice of high yield and quick-ripening qualities. New tractor-drawn potato-digging machines were used in collective farms of Uzbekistan. This machine lifted potatoes from twenty or twenty-five acres per day along with carrots, beetroots and other root vegetables.

As a result of mechanisation and collectivisation process, agricultural output, particularly cotton, increased remarkably in Uzbekistan. Due to production of high variety of cotton, Tashkent became the centre of cotton zone of Central Asia.

Livestock

With the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia, the cattle breeding nomad economy was transferred into settled agriculture. Though the importance of cattle in the economy was affected, still there was remarkable improvement in the productivity of cattle in Central Asia. Number of sheep and goats increased over the years. The average collection of sheep's wool in Central Asia took one of the foremost places in the world. Cow milk became one of the staple diets of the people.

¹² Coates, n(10), p. 235.

The Central Asian people, who for centuries had been nomads, possessed a large majority of the livestock. Collectivisation did have one major negative impact on the Central Asian agriculture during the rapid collectivisation process. Attempts were made to settle the nomads and to collectivise their herds at once. The nomadic people did not agree and slaughtered their livestock before entering in to the collective farms¹³. But by 1942 the nomad cattle breeders were allowed to resume their traditional life style. In the postwar period measures were taken for the improvement of the animal husbandry. Emphasis was given on livestock improvement in state and collective farms, including breed improvement, building of barns etc to increase the yield.

The following table 2.2 gives details about the number of livestock in Central Asian republics from 1928 to 1962.

Table 2.2

Livestock in Soviet Central Asia (Thousand Heads)

(1928-62)

Years	Horses	Cattle	Hogs	Sheep & goats	Total in Livestock units: 1928=100
1928	5,138	11,273	339	44,521	100
1933	1,382	3,643	214	8,655	23
1953	3,200	9,971	1,046	42,344	92
1962		13,881	2,881	57,681	129

Sources: Charles K. Wilber, *The Soviet Model and Underdeveloped*

***Countries*, (Chapell Hills: North Carolina Press, 1969), p. 169.**

¹³ Wilber, n(11), p. 170.

But the number of camels dropped from 1,100,000 in 1927-28 to 137,500 in 1962¹⁴. Later on Khrushchev's call for the revival of camel breeding, led to increase in number of camels. The number of livestock though did not increase remarkably in 1970s and in the subsequent period, but there was a steady growth in the number of livestock particularly cattle in this period.

One can summaries it from the following table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Livestock (Cattle) in private ownership by Central Asian republics

(1970-85)

Thousand Heads	1970	1980	1982	1984	1985
Kazakhstan	1,898	2,185	2,301	2,307	2,412
Uzbekistan	1,440	1,719	1,854	1,997	—
Kyrghyzstan	344	317	381	407	451
Tajikstan	480	606	658	—	—
Turkmenistan	274	338	—	388	410

Sources: John. E. Tedstrom (Ed), *Socialism, perestroika and the Dilemmas of Soviet Economic Reform*, (San Francisco & Oxford: West View Press, 1990), p. 147.

As most of the Uzbek population was concentrated in the oases, emphasis was given to the stockbreeding. Traditionally, the major livestock system was based on sheep, horses and to a lesser extent to cattle and camels. In the following years of

¹⁴ Elizabeth. E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rules: A Study in Cultural Change* (New York, 1966), p. 123.

revolution the number of livestock was self-sufficient for the Uzbeks. People did not depend on imported inputs. Major outputs were wool, carpets, skins and milk. Karakul breeding was an ancient traditional livestock system in Uzbekistan. It was created by special selection methods and was a valuable national property of the Uzbek people¹⁵. But the traditional livestock system was broken up after the collectivisation process in the early thirties. In the subsequent period a more settled system developed for increasing the livestock, which was characterised by:

- (i) Fodder cultivation on irrigated land was given importance along with cotton cultivation.
- (ii) Increasing transformation of the small ruminant production system into fine wool using Merino and Karakul sheep
- (iii) Increasing dependence on imported input such as protein feed and other grains

These measures led to increase in the livestock considerably from very low numbers after the collectivisation process. Emphasis on feeding on grain also led to increase in the number of cattle. Massive death of the animals after severe winters and droughts were counteracted by supplementary feeding and large-scale movement of animals.

Expansion of Irrigation

After the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia, much attention was paid to the expansion of irrigation. Irrigation was essential for this region as it is completely land-locked. The production of cotton along with other crops demanded the expansion of irrigation. Through the Five Year Plans, emphasis was given on irrigation in all republics. Heavy investment and modern engineering technology

¹⁵ Framework of Assessment Methodology Research Site: Karnab Chul..... : WWW.inweh.unu.edu/inwen/drylands/project_Reports/2003_Uzbekistan_Report.pdf

made the irrigation projects successful. "The powerful irrigation and hydel power complexes were built in this region thereby bringing millions of hectares of desert and semi-desert land under cultivation and generating enough power to meet the demand of newly built industries"¹⁶.

In Kyrghyzstan, old canals were repaired and improved and new networks were laid down between 1937 and 1940. Chumysh dam with two main canals were built on the main river of Chu. Dams on the Kara-Darya River in the Dzhahal-Abad oblast was made to retain the flood water and prevent them from overflowing on to the land. The irrigated area in Tajikistan increased during the Soviet era. "In 1934 the first stage of the Vakhsh valley project was completed a new system of canals with a total length of 13,000-kilometre put into action"¹⁷. In the Gissar valley the Molotov canal was opened in 1942 and more than 1,000 ha. came under cultivation. One of the important irrigation project in Tajikistan was Kara-Kum reservoir, was completed in 1956. The Druzhba-Narodov hydroelectric station was a part of this project. Both the power station and resorvoir played an important role in the economy of Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Canals and reservoirs were built in the valleys of the Yakh-Su and the Kzyl-Su. Floating pumping station was built on the bank of Syr-Darya. Over the period of 1927-32, the Basaga-Kerki canal was completed. This canal was mainly fed by Amu-Darya River. One reservoir was created to conserve the floodwater of the Tedzhen River and to irrigate the Ashkabad oblast. The main Turkmen canal and Kara-Kum canal were one of the greatest attempts made by the Soviet regime. Extensive irrigation network were laid down in Kazakhstan. In western Kazakhstan the Ural-Kushum canal was built in 1939. The Kamynin canal was built in Gur'yev oblast in 1951. The great Kzyl-Orda dam was built on the Syr-Darya in 1956. "The Botogar canal stretching from the Irtysh to Karaganda was built to supply water to the important industrial area of Dzhezkazgan, Atasu, Shagiy, Karoba and

¹⁶ K. Warikoo, "Soviet Central Asia in Ferment", In K. Warikoo and Dawa Norbu, ed., *Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1992), p. 72.

¹⁷ "Public Works: Irrigation in Central Asia", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1957, p. 274.

others. "By 1980, renovation of irrigation with intra-farm systems considerably made some advantages in agriculture"¹⁸.

Uzbekistan the queen of cotton cultivation obviously needed large irrigation network. With the coming of the Soviets to this Republic major irrigation projects were constructed. The building of major irrigation canals started during the second Five Year Plan. "By 1938 about 1,480,000 out of the total of over 2,800,000 hectares of cultivated land were under irrigation"¹⁹. The members of the *Kolkhozes* understood the importance of the canals and irrigation. Thus they started helping the government in the construction of the canals.

The Ferghana valley, one of the most important cotton and silk-producing areas of the Soviet Union, was also famous for rice and fruit growing. Oil, mining, engineering, chemicals and textiles were the major industries of this region. The main population of Uzbekistan lives in this valley. Thus the Ferghana valley received much attention in expansion of irrigation. The irrigation system of this Ferghana basin was mainly dependent on the Syr-Darya and its headwaters, the Naryn and the Kara-Darya. The great Ferghana canal was constructed in 1939 and by 1940 it was extended to Tajikistan. "The North Ferghana Canal was created to the north of the site of the ancient capital of Ferghana"²⁰. The Akhunababaev canal passed to the west of the village of Dzhamatai in the Trans-Darya region. Rice and cotton fields were greatly benefited due to these canals. The south and southeastern parts of the valley, i. e., Ferghana town, the Margelan and Andizhan districts were irrigated by the south Ferghana canal and by the Margelan and Shakhimardan rivers. Cultivation also expanded northwards into the Yaz-Yavan steppe. Rice, Cotton and Alfalfa became major crops of this region. Towards the west of the Ferghana valley a dam was built at Kara-Kum desert area. The Uzbek, Tajik and Kazakh governments jointly

¹⁸ "Rethinking Central Asian Irrigation", *The Current Digest of The Soviet Press*, (Ohio), Vol. 32, No. 12, 23rd April 1980, p. 7.

¹⁹ Coates, n(10), p. 230.

²⁰ "Agriculture: Uzbekistan: Irrigation And Settlement In The Ferghana Valley", *Central Asian Review*, Vol 2, No. 2, 1954, p. 135.

constructed out a hydroelectric station in Tajikistan along with this project. This project was made for the mutual benefit of these three Republics.

“Some of the other important canals the Mikoyan Northern Ferghana Canal (165 kilometre), the Andreev Southern Ferghana Canal (108 kilometers), the Molotov Tashkent Canal (63 kilometers) and the Northern Tashkent Canal etc. were built at a record speed”²¹. The Katta-Kurgan reservoir was started in 1940. But its construction was interrupted due to the Second World War. Thousands of *kolkhoz* members were engaged in the construction of this reservoir. In the post-war period, in the Hungry Steppes, the construction of the first section of the Southern Golodnensk Canal-one of the largest irrigation project in Uzbekistan started. Some 20,000 hectares of desert land were irrigated through this project²². Another two important Verkhno-Bukhara and Southern Bukhara canals were also built in Uzbekistan to expand the irrigation. The Vekhno-Bukhara canal filled the huge ravine of Kuya-Mazar with the excess water of the Zerafshan and converted it into a reservoir. The Southern Bukhara Canal connected the water from this reservoir to the cotton fields of the Sverdlovsk, Karakul and the Alat region.

“The Tuyamuyun water engineering project in Uzbekistan was completed in December 1981 to irrigate the land in Khorezm oblast, the Kara kalpak and Tashauz oblasts”²³. “By 1982, Uzbekistan had internal reservoirs with a total of 6,000 million cubic meters of waters and inter republican reservoirs with a total capacity over 30,000 million cubic meters of water”²⁴. Large number of pumping stations started supplying water to irrigate the land.

Thus extensive irrigation work completely transformed the face of Uzbekistan. Cotton fields in this region were in an advanced state. Large number of peasant families benefited from the expansion of irrigation. They were granted long term subsidies by the Soviet government.

²¹ Coates n(10), p. 230.

²² Ibid, p. 231.

²³ SWB, SU/W1178/A/4, 26 March 1982.

²⁴ SWB,, SU/W1178/A/4, 8 January 1982.

Development of Industry

Industries were even more backward than agriculture in Central Asia during the Tsarist period. The coming of the Soviets changed the situation in Central Asia. The need for setting up industries in the non-Russian territories was also kept in view by the Soviet government. Lenin pointed out that one of the principal objectives of socialist construction was the rational distribution of industry in Russia from the point of view of proximity of raw materials and minimum waste of labour. The Gosplan (State Planning Commission) was drawn up in 1921 with the objective of the development of all areas. "In April 1923, the Twelfth Party Congress decided that the aid given to backward national areas should take the form of practical measures to organize industrial centers in the Republics of the formerly oppressed nations"²⁵. It was felt that by forwarding the level and mode of production amongst the former colonial people, the Soviets would actually be helping themselves.

Pre-War Plan Period

Since 1926, Gosplan had been tentatively formulating Five Year Plans (FYP) for economic developments, and produced several variants, based on different rates of growth and different proportions of heavy (basic) and light (consumer) industries. In October 1927, the party Congress voted for the formulation of Five Year Plans based on rapid industrialisation, as advocated by Stalin.

First Five Year Plan (1928-32):

The initial stage of industrialisation began in Central Asia with the first Five Year Plan. The Fourteenth Congress of the party in its directive had pointed out that the plan must give special attention to the economic as well as cultural development of the backward areas. One of the important objectives of the first plan was the attainment of self-sufficiency in cotton for textile industries of the U.S.S.R. The

²⁵ N.N.Agrawal, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*, (Agra, 1969), pp. 339-340.

earlier priority given to regional development was ignored in favour of the aim of attaining high rates of national economic growth. Industrial development in Central Asia Republics was impressive during first Five Year Plan. In Tajikistan, primary industries concerned with the first stage of processing agricultural products were established. Though there were no textile industries in Central Asian region during the Tsarist period as stated before, new textile industries made their appearance in this region through the first Five Year Plan. "In Turkmenistan, textile, chemical and food industries were built and heavy industries as oil, chemical and construction materials were founded"²⁶. The number of industrial cooperatives also increased. Technical and financial help was provided to women carpet makers who were organised into industrial cooperatives.

"In March 1927 the Second Congress of Soviets in the Uzbek Republic considered it necessary to create a textile industry, organize new branches of industry to process agricultural raw materials. The government also carried out, an electrification plan and organised the production of agricultural machines and tools"²⁷. Several powerhouses were constructed in Uzbekistan. In Margelan and old Bukhara silk-weaving factories were started. In Tashkent, shoe and tobacco factories were opened. In Ferghana basin, spinning and weaving factories were also setup. "A number of thermal power stations were erected between 1921 and 1926 at Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Namangan and New Urgench, the first big project was carried out for the electrification of Russia-was the hydroelectric power station on the Boz-Su canal"²⁸.

During the first Five Year Plan, coal and cotton industries were paid great attention in Uzbekistan. A large sum of money was invested in Uzbekistan. Development of power production, metal industries and machine building was impressive during the first Five Year Plan. An agricultural machinery plant was established in Tashkent. It supplied different types of equipments required for

²⁶ Kaushik n(2), pp. 218-219.

²⁷ Ibid, P. 216.

²⁸ "Industry : Uzbekistan: Electric Power in Uzbekistan", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1953, p. 29.

agriculture in the republic. For the repair of agricultural machines and tools, plants were setup. The Almalyk copper processing plant and the Chirchik chemical combine came into existence during this plan period. In 1932 a big textile combine was constructed in Tashkent. The volume of industrial production increased 2.9 times in Uzbekistan whereas it was two times in central areas. The first Five Year Plan achieved great success in Uzbekistan.

Second Five Year Plan (1932-37):

The Second Five Year Plan had the objective of liquidation of all exploiting classes and establishment of socialism²⁹. Through this plan period great attention was given to the development of heavy industries, like generating electricity, chemical combine, copper melting etc. Technical education and training became widespread during this period. In Turkmenistan oil and chemical industries passed through a rapid development phase. Kyrghyzstan saw the growth of heavy and light industries along with local agricultural products. The Kara-Balty sugar works and Frunze leather works were also established during this period in Kyrghyzstan. Similarly, in Tajikistan industrial progress achieved a great success. Alabastor and lime factories were established in Dushanbe and Isfara. With the rapid industrialisation process gap between the central part of Russia and Central Asian region was reduced to a great extent.

Through this second Five Year Plan heavy industries and cotton textiles saw a rapid growth in Uzbekistan. "Nearly 189 enterprises were built in Uzbekistan in this period"³⁰. Some of the most outstanding were the textile combine at Tashkent, two fertilizer plants at Kokand and Kagan, an oil extraction plant at Kattakurgan, the meat combine at Tashkent etc. "While the increase in the value of production was 220.5 percent for RSFSR, it was 243.0 percent for Uzbek SSR"³¹.

²⁹ Kaushik, n(2), p. 220.

³⁰ Sharma, n(4), pp. 170-171.

³¹ Kaushik, n(2), p.223.

A large number of hydro-electrical power stations were established in Uzbek republic through the second Five Year Plan. The total capacity of the electrical stations in 1913 was 3,000 kilowatts. By 1932 it rose to 27,5000 kilowatt and by 1937it increased to 80,000 kilowatt³². In 1947 the total electricity output of Uzbekistan was hundred times more than that of 1913 production. Numerous small stations were built for the special use of *Kolkhozes*.

Through these first two Five Year Plans the backward Central Asian people who joined the Soviet family after the October revolution obtained economic equality to a large extent.

Third Five Year Plan (1937-41):

Regional development once again came to the forefront during third Five Year Plan. As the bulk of the industries were concentrated in U.S.S.R, emphasis was shifted towards to the less developed East. Industries developed at a faster rate since 1928 in the Central Asian republics. The growth was so rapid that by the early 1940s share of industries in the economy reached nearly the same level in some republics as in the country as a whole. In Kyrghyzstan electric power stations, mechanical plants, sugar factories, footwear factories were set up. In Tajikistan, silk reeling combines in Dushanbe and a metallic combine at Kansai were established. Glass factories and textile plants at Askabad in Turkmenistan were set up.

The third Five Year Plan continued with the earlier trend of industrialisation in Uzbekistan. A further expansion of energy resources, textile industry was done on a large scale. Establishing new factories at Tashkent, Ferghana, Samarkand and Khodjhent further expanded the food industry. The Soviet government undertook water construction projects in Central Asia. The great Ferghana canal was completed and it led to increase in cotton along with other crops.

³² Coates, n(10), p. 237.

The following table 2.4 can show the rate of growth of gross out put in Central Asian republics during 1913-40.

Table 2.4

Rate Of Growth Of Gross Output of Local Industries of

Central Asian Republics (1913-40)

Republics	1913	1940
Uzbekistan	1	4.7 times
Turkmenistan	1	6.7 times
Tajikistan	1	8.8 times
Kyrghyzstan	1	9.9 times

Sources: R. R. Sharma, A Marxist Model of Social Change, Soviet Central Asia: 1917-1940, (Delhi: The Macmillan Company of India Ltd, 1979), p. 166.

War Period (1941-45)

“At the beginning of the German invasion in 1941 Soviet resistance crumbled so swiftly that immediate steps had to be taken to prevent the whole of the industrial potential of the Ukraine and the Moscow and Leningrad region might fall into the hands of the invaders and thus leave the Soviet state defenceless”³³. Many equipments were destroyed to prevent it from falling into the enemy hands. Many plants were shifted to the East. Much of the developmental work on metallurgical plants in this region was carried out in strict secrecy. Some major plants engaged in wartime tank production were transferred to the Central Asian region. “During the war years (1941-

³³Alec Nove, and J. A. Newth, *The Soviet Middle East: A Model For Development?* (London: 1967), p. 47.

45), a number of industrial enterprises from the western part of the Soviet Union were shifted to Central Asia, more than 100 to Uzbekistan alone, which further helped to accelerate the economic development of the region"³⁴. After the war, power stations were built on a larger scale. Big projects were carried out on the Chirchik and Boz-Su rivers in Tashkent. Farkhad hydroelectric station which began during the Second World War time i.e. in 1943 and started its operations in February 1948. These hydroelectric stations set in motion thousands of new machines in Uzbek factories, electrical powered tractors and threshing machines on the collective farms of the republic.

Fourth Five Year Plan (1946-50):

After the war, while these industrial areas continued to benefit from the wartime shift to East. However, the Central Asian republics received relatively less attention than the other parts of Soviet Union. One reason was the concentration of resources on the reconstruction of the badly damaged areas of Eurasia due to the war. The cotton producing areas in Uzbekistan returned to the pre-war level. Gradually the condition improved. Due to improved breeds and increased quantities of fertilisers yields per acre rose 50 percent over the past.

Fifth Five Year Plan (1951-55):

Industrial growth continued and in particular there was a spectacular increase in production in Karaganda coalfield. Production on this coalfield in 1955 increased four times greater than 1940. There was also large increase in non-ferrous metals, electricity generation and chemicals in Kazakhstan, which rapidly became a major industrial center.

Through the fifth Five Year Plan, hydroelectric power stations, which were abandoned due to war once again started generating power. "In 1955, 85 percent of

³⁴ Shirin Akiner, "Uzbeks", In Graham Smith, ed., *The nationalities Question in the Soviet Union*, (Singapore, 1992), p. 219.

the electric power in Uzbekistan was generated through hydro electric power plants³⁵.

Sixth Five Year Plan (1956-60):

Central Asian industries now produced steel, rolled metal, non-ferrous metals, mineral fertilizers, metal-cutting industries, oil and electrical equipments and silk fabrics, footwear, clothes, tinned food, glass, cement etc. Central Asian republics started exporting industrial goods not only to Soviet republics but also to abroad as well. Automation and telemachines were widely employed in the industrial enterprises, power station and oil fields.

During the sixth Five Year Plan, the production of electric power was raised in all Central Asian republics, particularly in Uzbekistan. "Electric power production in Uzbekistan increased 1.6 times over the 1955 figure"³⁶. High voltage power transmission lines linking the various hydroelectric and thermal power stations were laid in new areas.

Seventh Five Year Plan (1961-65):

The Soviet Republics made noticeable progress in the industrial sector during this plan period. The gross industrial product of the Kyrghyz Republic had doubled from 1959 to 1965. The giant Toktogul hydel power station was established on the Naryn River. In Turkmenistan, gross industrial output was 3.9 times that of the pre-war period. "Between 1950 and 1963 the gross industrial production of the USSR rose 394 percent, while in Central Asia it increased 530 percent"³⁷.

The industry of Soviet Uzbekistan had fulfilled the Seventh Five Year Plan ahead of schedule. "As Uzbekistan was the most important cotton producing area of the U.S.S.R, much its mechanical engineering was concentrated on the production of

³⁵ "Public Works: More Power For Central Asia", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 4, No 3, 1956, p. 269.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 269.

³⁷ Kaushik, n(2), p. 225.

machinery for the cotton industry. The Voroshilov Tashkent Agricultural machinery Works –the biggest plant in Central Asia, produced machinery for cotton cultivation³⁸. After the war mechanical industry became one of the leading industry of Uzbekistan. A large number of foreign countries started importing industrial goods-textile, agricultural machinery, chemical and mining equipment, excavators, compressor stations and electrical equipments etc from Uzbekistan during the post war period. Uzbekistan also boasted of power and radio engineering, gas, chemical, oil, coal, textile and other industries.

The discovery of mineral fuels was a turning point in Uzbekistan during the Soviet period. Large deposits of natural gas were discovered in early 1960s in western Uzbekistan around Bukhara. By 1963 a pipeline was constructed from the major field Gazli, over 2,000 kilometers to Chelyabinks in the Urals. In 1965 a second line was laid from Gazli to Sverdlovsk in the Urals. The new city of Navoi was established in this area. Gradually it expanded into a major chemical and thermal electric generating center.

Along with it the newly developed technological skills helped in increasing the number of Uzbek working class. Higher educational level among the working class was also improved, because the higher the educational level of the worker, the more rapidly he acquired the specialized knowledge. The new skilled workers mastered the mechanical complex trades of metal smelting, power production, construction, chemical and engineering.

Period of steady growth (1966-80)

Industrial sector continued to develop but at a lower rate during this period in Uzbekistan. Consumer goods sector expanded relatively at a faster rate than the producer sector. The main cause behind it was the declining growth of labour

³⁸“Industry: Uzbekistan: Mechanical Engineering Industry”, *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1954, p. 303.

productivity in Uzbekistan. Thus the period from 1966 to 1988 is known as the period of steady growth.

Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plan (1965-80):

The discovery of mineral fuels became a major growth-promoting factor in this period. In 1966 gas was discovered in Turkmen Republic. Oil production exceeded the production of natural gas in Central Asia. The oil refineries at Krasnovodsk, Shagal, Khamza and Kirgili were developed into major complexes, sometimes with fertiliser plants appended.

By 1970 modern industries like gas, chemical and metallurgical developed in Uzbekistan. From 1965 onwards cotton production was increasing in Uzbekistan, which however, declined during the war period. "In 1980 Uzbekistan produced over six million tones of raw cotton, in 1983 it almost rivaled the output of the United States of America"³⁹. Hence these Five Year Plans facilitated rapid development of power generation, non-ferrous metallurgy, machine building, light and food industries in Uzbekistan.

One can visualise the growth rate of industrial production in all Republics from the following table 2.5

³⁹ Smith ed., n (34), p. 219.

Table 2.5
Soviet Industrial Production Ratios (1940-83)
(1940=1)

	1965	1975	1980	1983
Republics				
USSR	7.9	17.0	21.0	23.0
RSFSR	5.6	15.0	19.0	20.0
Uzbekistan	6.3	13.0	16.0	19.0
Kyrgyzstan	10.0	29.0	37.0	42.0
Tajikistan	6.6	14.0	18.0	20.0
Turkmenistan	4.5	10.0	12.0	12.0

Sources: R. G. Gidadhubli (ed.), *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia* (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1987), p. 157. And also in K. Warikoo and Dawa Norbu, ed., *Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1992), p. 72.

Rate of industrial output in Uzbekistan through the Five Year Plans as follows.

Table 2.6

**Average annual rates of growth of industrial output
in Uzbekistan through Five Year Plans (FYPs)**

	Percent per Annum
First FYP (1928-32)	11.7
Second FYP (1933-37)	19.4
Third FYP (1938-40)	9.5
Third FYP (1941-45)	1.3
Fourth FYP (1946-50)	11.3
Fifth FYP (1951-55)	10.1
Sixth FYP (1956-60)	7.4
Seventh FYP (1961-65)	8.4
Eighth FYP (1966-70)	6.3
Ninth FYP (1971-75)	8.55
Tenth FYP (1976-80)	4.95

Sources: R.G. Gidadhubli (ed.), *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia* (New Delhi: Patriot Publishers, 1987), p. 175.

From the above data it is very clear that the first two Five Year Plans achieved significant success in Uzbekistan. Though in the war period, industrial output decreased, but there was a large-scale construction of consumer goods industries. The

shifting of many industries from other parts of Soviet Union to Uzbekistan during war period led to heavy industrial development. The post war period saw the expansion of industries like energy, fuel, metallurgy, chemical and light to a large extent.

The growth in industry in Uzbekistan resulted in the founding of new towns and industrial centers. Almalyk, a new center of an ore-mining industry and of non-ferrous metal refining came into existence. Angren, the coal-mining center, Begovet, a steel center, Chirchik a power, chemicals and machinery manufacturing city rose into prominence⁴⁰. The industrialisation process in Uzbekistan also established the base needed for improving the conditions of life and level of culture of the workers. "The workers had an eight or seven hour workday, weekly days off and a three shift system of operation"⁴¹. Arrangement of working days also gave considerations to women having children below one year and young workers who were studying. Socialist industrialisation along with mechanisation of agriculture turned the backward agrarian and raw material outskirts Central Asia in general and Uzbekistan in particular into a developed and prosperous region.

Expansion of Transport System

As transportation is one of the basic and essential factors of the economic development, the Soviet government since the middle of 1920s had pursued a vigorous programme of railroad construction in Central Asia⁴². Central Asia as a whole is a very desert ridden zone and has few rivers capable of extensive transport development. Rivers are also very shallow. Thus the Soviet government focused on the construction of railroads.

Most of the road construction took place in the two largest Republics of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Metal roads were also constructed mainly in these two

⁴⁰ R. T. Kamilov, "Growth Of The Working Class Of Uzbekistan (1953-58): Sociology of Labor", *Soviet Sociology*, (New York), Vol. 2, No. 4, Spring 1964, p. 34.

⁴¹ K. L. Zadykhina, "Empirical Studies of Worker Communities: Ethnographic Data On The Mode Of Life Of The Uzbek Workers Of Tashkent And Andizhan", *Soviet Sociology*, Spring, 1963, Vol.1, No. 4, p. 12.

⁴² Wilber, n(11), p. 184.

Republics. "Out of 110,000 kilometer of road, 2,400 kilometers were metallic in Kazakhstan"⁴³. Most of these metal roads were in southern and eastern Kazakhstan around Alma-Ata and Ust-Kamenogorsk. In 1954 three new motor-road stations were built in the West-Kazakhstan, Aktyubinsk and Pavlodar oblasts. During the harvest season grain was carried through these roads to the collection points and from them to the main towns by lorries with one or two trailers attached. The demand for expansion of road construction continued in the following period in all Central Asian Republics. Government responded to the demand of the people quickly and new roads were constructed. New roads from Akmolinsk to Ivanovka in the Karaganda oblast and from Pavlodar to Mikhailovka, on the border with the RSFSR were constructed.

One of the most important objectives of road transport system of Uzbekistan was the delivery of cotton harvest to rail and riverheads. Stalino-Kosh Tepe-Sarpi road was economically important in the Andizhan oblast because it was designed to facilitate the transport of cotton to the other areas. Another road of great importance was the so-called Zerafshan road in the Kermininski district. The expanding jute and hemp industry was also making demand for the construction of new roads. As the government took interest, several new road construction stations were established. These stations were supplied with tractors, bulldozers, scrapers, graders and other useful equipments to speed up the repair and construction of roads.

"ZIS 154 buses of the No. 1 coach were introduced in Tashkent. These buses were under the authority of Ministry of Motor Transport and during the initial stage the buses ran between Tashkent and Tashkhopokmash"⁴⁴. As a result of construction of new roads, use of heavy vehicles also increased in different parts of Uzbekistan. In Kara kalpak, plans were made for the greater use of vehicles. Bus lines were opened between Nukus and Kyz Ketken and between Khodzheili and Takhia Tash.

Demand for more railway construction also went side by side with the demand for road construction. Supply of cotton from producing area to the urban areas was

⁴³ "Communications: Communications In The New Lands", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1955, p. 199.

⁴⁴ "Road Transport: Uzbekistan: Communications", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1953, p. 19.

one of the important causes of expansion of railway line. Construction of new railway lines got attention in all republics. The construction of Turkestan-Siberian railway was an important achievement in Soviet railway building. The project was started in 1927, and completed in 1930. "The 1,445 kilometer long railway line runs from Semipalatinsk, through Aina-Bulak, Alma-Ata to Lugo-Vaya, thus linking Siberia with Kazakhstan and Central Asia"⁴⁵. An extensive programme of railway construction was included in the post war Five Year Plans.

Construction of railway lines in Uzbekistan started at a rapid scale. Construction of the first section of the Khorezm railway line, linking Chardzhou-Alexandrov-Gai was begun towards the end of 1947. This line later extended to the rich reserves of salts, building materials and other minerals of the Ust-Urt plateau. The rich deposits of potassium salts were discovered in the Baisun Mountains of southern Uzbekistan also enhanced the growth of railway line in the republic. On the bank of the river Angren, rich coal deposits were discovered just before the outbreak of Second World War. Despite of difficult wartime conditions, a way track between Angren and Tashkent was built. Another railway line of 615-kilometer i. e. Chardzhou-Kungrad railway was constructed. A large number of Uzbeks and Turkmenians volunteered to help this project. This railway line connected the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Republic and the Khorezm region of Uzbekistan with the Tashauz region of Turkmenistan. "The net material utilized in transport and communication varied from 102 million ruble in 1960 to 823 million ruble in 1982 in Uzbekistan"⁴⁶. Thus expansion of transport worked as a catalyst for the growth of cotton in Uzbekistan along with other crops. The development in transportation and communication technology loosened the link between the location of industries and natural resources.

Hence the economic development made in Uzbekistan after 1924, had a significant character both in agriculture and industry. The new Soviet government not

⁴⁵Coates, n (10), p. 111.

⁴⁶ Alastair Mcauley, "Economic Development and Political Nationalism in Uzbekistan", *Central Asian Survey*, (Oxford Shire), Vol. 5, No. 3-4, 1996, p. 163.

only ruptured the influence of traditional feudal lords but also introduced new agricultural reforms. Old economic institutions and mechanisms and landed estates were replaced through the process of collectivisation. Mechanisation, an essential part of collectivisation, not only raised the production of cotton along with other crops but also the living standard of the peasants. Through the collectivization, livestock production decreased dramatically, but the situation improved with the coming of Khrushchev to power. Emphasis on fodder cultivation along with allowing private house holds other than collective farmers to increase stockbreeding, led to the growth of livestock production in the subsequent period. Soviets introduced new irrigation projects and repaired the old ones, as it was necessary for agriculture of landlocked Central Asian region. Emphasis on cotton production in Uzbekistan created necessary conditions for the expansion of irrigation network. Though the improvement of irrigation system failed in the Tsarist period, Soviet government's heavy investment and implementation of modern engineering technology made it a success. The joint impact of mechanisation and irrigation pushed up the cotton production along with other crops in Uzbekistan.

As rapid industrialisation was another part of Soviet policy, emphasis was given on heavy industries like iron, steel and energy at the initial phase. The Soviet government successfully implemented the first two Five Year Plans in Uzbekistan. Shifting of a number of industrial enterprises of Soviet Union to Uzbekistan, accelerated the growth of industry in the postwar period. The postwar period marked a shift of heavy industries due to the development of oil, natural gas and hydroelectric power. More attention was given to industries like chemical, petro-chemical, oil and natural gas. Thus Uzbekistan came to have its own fuel, power and machine building base. Expansion of transport system also accelerated the industrial growth. Development of transport made the agricultural, especially cotton and industrial output available to other areas. New transport system helped the Soviet government in exploiting the natural resources as it reduced the gap between the industries and resources. Thus by 1985, the soviet government successfully abolished the age long economic backwardness to a large extent from Uzbekistan.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The social development of a country is closely related to industrialisation and agriculture. As mass illiteracy and ignorance are a great hindrance to economic progress, social development is directly proportional to economic development of a country. Whereas material development, productivity of labour and availability of qualified workers for rapid industrialisation leads to the socialist revolution, at the same time eradication of adult illiteracy, introduction of compulsory education for children, creation of modern health system accelerates the growth of a society.

Health Care

As health care was minimal during the Tsarist period in Central Asia, the Soviets laid great emphasis on health and social services. Free medical care was guaranteed to the people through various development programmes.

In the former Soviet Union, a social insurance system was established by the labour code of 1922 and amended in 1927 and 1937¹. It mainly consisted of three parts. The first part composed of medical facilities to both wage earners and their families. Hospital treatment as well as advice of a general practitioner was provided to these people. In the second part, pensions were provided to the old and disabled persons. Old age pensions varied between 50 and 100 percent of the normal wage. Payment for accident or illness reasons and disabled benefits amounted to between 60 and 100 percent of normal wages. The third part consisted of a combined insurance, which covered disablement and maternity benefits, funeral allowances, children's aid and assistance for travel. According to Charles Wilber, "the total outlays on health care increased from 2.1 billion rubles in 1928 to 9.5 billion in 1940 and to 15.8 billion

¹ Charles K. Wilber, *The Soviet Model and Underdeveloped Countries*, (Chapel Hills, 1969), p. 26.

rubles in 1961. The number of hospital beds increased from 207.6 thousand in 1928, to 790.9 thousand in 1940, and 1,845.4 thousand in 1961². In the post-war period there were 406 clinics in 1952, 160 hospitals with 8,100 beds in 1953, and 1,736 doctors with 4,724 nurses in 1954 in Kyrghyzstan. In Tajikistan there were 250 hospitals and clinics, several hundreds of doctors, and over 2,000 *Feldshers* (assistant physicians) and nurses in 1954³. There was an impressive growth of doctors of all specialties and number of beds per 10,000 inhabitants in the Central Asian republics in the period 1970-84.

In the years following the October revolution, healthcare system of Uzbekistan gained momentum. In 1913 there were 57 hospitals and clinics with 128 doctors, but by 1938 the number of doctors had increased to 2,367 in Uzbekistan. Postwar growth in health sector was also similarly great. "48 new medical institutes were built in Uzbekistan between 1947 and 1954 for the improvement of medical facilities⁴.

The following table 3.1 gives clear idea about the growth in number of physicians in all republics.

Table 3.1
Number of Physicians (per 10,000 populations)
In various Republics in (1970-80)

	1970	1975	1980
RSFSR	30.1	34.8	40.3
Uzbek SSR	21.0	25.0	28.5
Kazakh SSR	22.9	27.6	31.8
Kyrghyz SSR	21.4	24.7	29.1
Tajik SSR	16.5	20.6	23.5
Turkmen SSR	21.9	25.9	28.3

Sources: Devendra Kaushik, *Socialism in Central Asia: A study in the Transformation of Socio-Ethnic Relations in Soviet Central Asia*, (Bombay: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1976), p. 145. and Andrew Bond, *et.al*, "Economic Development Trends in the USSR, 1970-1988: part-I (Consumption, Investment and Income Redistribution)", *Soviet Geography* (New York), Vol.32, No. 1, 1991, p. 23.

² Ibid, p. 27.

³ "Public Services: (Uzbekistan, Tadjhikistan, Kirghizia): Health Services in Central Asia", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1955, p. 45.

⁴ Ibid, p. 45.

A good number of medical institutes were opened in different Republics to facilitate the growth of health care in Central Asia. Stalinabad medical institute was opened along with training schools for nurses in Tajikistan. Kyrgyz medical institute was built to train hundreds of native doctors. One medical institute was also established in Frunze, Kyrgyzstan.

The first medical institute in Uzbekistan was created in Tashkent to train the doctors. "The Uzbek physicians qualified for the first time in 1924 and since then till 1954 1,356 doctors got training in that institute. In 1954, 2,000 students were in attendance, 700 of which were women of Central Asian nationality. By 1954, the institute had published 4,000 papers"⁵. Various specialised medical research institutes worked with the Uzbek Academy of Sciences and the all-Union Academy of Medical Sciences. Conferences were held between USSR Academy of Medical Sciences and the Uzbek Ministry of Health. These conferences were attended by delegates from all over the world. Creation of awareness among the people about diseases and the health care system was the main objective of these conferences.

The first bacteriological laboratory of Central Asia (vaccine and serum institute) was opened at Tashkent. A tropical institute was established at Bukhara in 1924. It was mainly responsible for vigorous hygiene campaigns among the people. There was a shortage of doctors of local origin, familiar with the local language and area. "Thus a medical faculty was founded at Tashkent University and began teaching local students in 1931"⁶.

In the early Soviet years an attempt was made in the Central Asian Republics to bring under control the most prevalent semi-tropical diseases (malaria and other parasite-borne diseases). Measures were also taken to control syphilis and tuberculosis. Propaganda campaigns were made to promote in public health. Anti-malaria institutes were set up in different Republics, which led to a sharp reduction in the mortality rate. In Uzbekistan, universal vaccination for smallpox was completed in

⁵ Ibid, p. 46.

⁶ Alec Nove and J.A. Newth, *The Middle East: A Model For Development?*, (London, 1967), p. 88.

1936 by which smallpox was eradicated from Uzbekistan. Plague and cholera have been completely eradicated from Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan. Remarkable success was achieved through research in combating helminth infestations, brucellosis, and goiter. Skin diseases were gradually eliminated. In the pre-revolutionary period eight out of every ten Uzbeks suffered from malaria⁷. Anti-malarial institutes headed by the institute of Malaria and Medical Parasitology were opened at Samarkand. Between 1911 and 1914 tuberculosis was responsible for a high mortality rate in Uzbekistan. So to eradicate diseases like tuberculosis anti-tuberculosis clinic was established at Tashkent in 1920. By 1926, two anti-tuberculosis institutes at Tashkent, one each at Samarkand, Kokand and Andizhan came into existence. The Uzbek anti-tuberculosis institute, which was established in 1936, was in charge of training, treatment and preventive measures. B.C.G. vaccination for children became universal.

Health services were more efficient in the towns of Uzbekistan than in the rural areas. Town councils were responsible for general sanitation and hygiene propaganda in the urban areas. The fear of epidemics gave impetus to the propagation of knowledge of hygiene. Public health workers were divided into groups. They distributed pamphlets, gave talks and arranged vaccination. Even in factories, hygiene and sanitation were given priority due to health education. Medical care in rural areas was treated as a problem due to the vast distances. Thus ambulance aircrafts were used to solve this problem. Before the war these were used for urgent transportation, but after the war these were used for taking specialists to assist local doctors. During the harvest of cotton, town and larger rural hospitals sent doctors into the countryside to organise special medical services, i.e., kindergartens, crèches and health propaganda units.

Special attention was given to the mother and child welfare during the Soviet era. There were no crèches or kindergartens in Central Asia before 1917. Orphanages were there in larger towns only. But after the coming of the Russians special care was

⁷n(3), p. 47.

provided to the children. In the postwar period number of kindergartens increased in this region. Child health was given more attention in "children's polyclinics". "By 1953, in Kazakhstan there were 34 children's hospitals with 2,690 beds and 3,000 beds for children in other hospitals"⁸. Midwifery centers were organized in *Kolkhozes*. Maternity homes, Women's clinics, mother welfare centers were established in different regions. All these measures led to a drop in high infant mortality rate. 'Infant mortality rate declined from 273 per thousand in 1913 to 184 in 1940 and 32 in 1961"⁹. Birth control practices and the employment of women in qualified work reinforced the drop in the birth rate.

Rapid industrialisation made the welfare organizations for mother and child welfare more necessary and feasible in Uzbekistan. The number of pediatricians and the gynaecologists multiplied year by year. Newly built *Sovkhozhes* had their own maternity homes. Special care was taken of the pregnant women. Hygiene was given priority. Attempts were made to bring birth rate under control in the subsequent period. Child health was given more attention through the children polyclinics. Infant mortality rate declined in Uzbekistan.

Resort treatment also played an important part in Soviet system of medicine. These resorts were designed to meet the needs of tuberculosis patients, who were numerous in this area. The main Uzbek resort was at Chartak, 25 kilometers from Namangan. The water of the resorts contained iodine, bromine, chlorine salts, lithium and iron in small quantities. They were used for the treatment of rheumatism, nervous and intestinal diseases. Artificial lakes and parks were created to make the resorts popular. A hot spring near Tashkent was used for the treatment of skin and other intestinal diseases¹⁰. "Sanatoria and rest homes increased from 31.7% (1975) to

⁸ "Public Services: Mother And Child Welfare:", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1955, p. 222-223.

⁹ Wilber n(1), p. 27.

¹⁰ n(3), p. 52.

34.7% (1980) and subsequently to 33.8% in 1984 in the whole Central Asian region”¹¹.

Thus in 1940, there were only three doctors and 30 hospital beds for 10,000 persons in Uzbekistan. And in 1979 there number increased to 43 doctors and 112 hospital beds for 10,000 persons”¹². Central Asian Republics, especially Uzbekistan were ahead of even developed countries of the world in free subsidized health care.

Education

Lenin described illiteracy as one of the enemy of the society. He said that as long as there are things like “illiteracy in our country, it is not possible to talk about politics”¹³. So the Soviet government under his leadership tried to eradicate illiteracy from the society through its policies and programmes.

As in the pre-revolutionary period Central Asian people used the Arabic alphabet in writing, the first task of the Soviet government was to modify the Arabic script. In 1923, an improved Arabic alphabet was adopted for the Uzbeks as well as for Kazakhs and Kyrghyzs. But for the Russian government the dangers became obvious of allowing its people to continue the use of an alphabet that gave them a common mode of expression with Muslim neighbors outside the Soviet Union. “In June 1927 it was decided to introduce the Latin alphabet”¹⁴.

The remarkable phase in Central Asia’s social development began in 1929-30. Vigorous campaign was launched in 1929 to wipe out illiteracy. Thousands of volunteers took part in this campaign called *Kultpokhod*. Illiteracy among adults was also soon liquidated. Uzbekistan was not far behind the other Republics. Campaign against illiteracy was also organised in Tashkent. “On July 25, 1930 the Central

¹¹ Boris. Z. Rumer, *Soviet Central Asia: “A Tragic Experiment”*, (London, Sydney, Wellington, 1989), p. 139.

¹² Vinod Mehta, “Development Experience of Soviet Central Asia and the Countries of the Third World”, In R. G. Gidadhubli, ed., *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 234.

¹³ V. I. Lenin, *On The Soviet State Apparatus: Articles and Speeches*, (Moscow, 1969), p. 316.

¹⁴ N.N.Agrawal, *Soviet Nationalities Policy*, (Agra, 1969), p. 357.

Committee of the Communist Party decided to introduce compulsory primary (four class) education for children in the whole Central Asian region"¹⁵. With the development of local languages, the significance of the Russian language gradually got recognition. In 1938, Russian language became compulsory in all schools of the Soviet Union. Russian language became second native language. "By January 1939, the divergence that existed in the literacy figures of different Union Republics had come down, 72.6 percent of all females in the USSR became literate and no union Republic had as much as one-third of its population (over the age of 9) unable to read and write"¹⁶.

Turkey also adopted identical Latin alphabets as was officially introduced in Central Asia in the same year under the leadership of Kemal Attaturk. This aroused new fears among the Soviet leaders that "a new Pan-Turkic literature might develop in the Latin alphabet and this new script might attract the Central Asian people towards Turkey and away from Russia created fear among the Russians"¹⁷. Thus by the beginning of 1937 Latin alphabet was replaced by Cyrillic alphabet. The main objective behind it was to enrich the non-Russian people with the words borrowed from Russian language. It was not only implemented in Uzbekistan but also in all Central Asian Republics.

By 1961, eight-year compulsory school system was introduced in Uzbekistan. After the completion of compulsory eight-year schooling, most of the students continued their education. Two-third students joined secondary schools to complete the ten-year education. Another fifteen percent joined technical schools. The remainder went to vocational schools to become skilled workers. Lenin pointed out that the task of the secondary school is to make it's pupils capable of becoming a

¹⁵ Devendra Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from the Early 19th Century*, (Moscow, 1970), p. 246.

¹⁶ Agrawal, n(14), p. 359.

¹⁷ Elizabeth. E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rules: A Study in Cultural Change* (New York, 1966), pp. 191-192.

skilled man and he should have a broad general education, polytechnic outlook, basic idea about science subjects and minimum knowledge in agricultural sciences¹⁸.

Intensive training was given to the teachers in Uzbekistan and this was reflected in the improved standard of instruction. In 1932 various measures were taken to improve the pay scale of teachers. It resulted in greater improvement in schools, better discipline and planned and comprehensive curriculum. "During the first Five Year Plan, 366 School buildings were put up in Uzbekistan bringing the total number to 4,666 in 1932 and the number of teachers was 19,314. During the second Five Year Plan period, 735 schools were built and the number of pupils grew from 567,700 in 1933-34 to 917,900 in 1937-38"¹⁹. Emphasis was also given on infrastructure of the schools. Along with it attention was also paid to the extracurricular activities of the pupil. Various literary, musical, dramatic and sporting circles were established as part of extra-curricular activities of the pupils. Secondary schools had small but adequate laboratories for their pupils.

The third Five Year Plan devoted its attention to technical and professional training. The idea was to give technical knowledge to the students. High-level technical institutes were also established in all Republics. Soviet government divided higher education in to two parts. First part was consisted of universities and specialized institutes of university standard along with medical institutes, and Academies of arts. "All these were known as *VUZ*, i.e. higher educational establishments"²⁰. The second part was comprised of institutes for the training of mechanics, agricultural workers, pharmacists, teachers of primary schools etc. These institutes were of lesser standard and were collectively referred as *Tekhnikums*. These *Tekhnikums* trained men and women for immediate production work, where as the institute products were of advisory or supervisory nature. "The normal course duration in a *Tekhnikum* was of three to four years, by correspondence it was five

¹⁸ *Collected Works of Lenin, 1900-1923, Vol. 36, (Moscow, 1966), pp. 533-534.*

¹⁹ "Cultural Affairs The Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan Part I: Primary and Middle Schools: Chapter II" *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1956, p. 45.

²⁰ "Cultural Affairs :Higher Education In Uzbekistan" *Central Asian Review* , Vol. 3, No. 1, 1955, p. 68.

years but three for those who already had a ten-year school education”²¹. Several pedagogic *Tekhnikums* were established in Uzbekistan to meet the shortage of qualified teachers. Attempts were also made to “polytechnise” the schools in Uzbekistan. These polytechnic institutes trained mining engineers, geologists, hydrologists, architects, building engineers, chemical and mechanical engineers along with the engineers for the electric power industries.

The most impressive effect was obtained at the lowest level of technical education. This type of education made its appearance with the opening of *FZU* schools (Fabrichno-zavodskoye uchenichestvo, Factory Training) in 1920²². These schools were revised in 1933 to cut down the time spent on general educational teaching. Two year Trade and Railway schools and six-month *FZO* schools (Fabrichno-Zavodskoye obucheniye, Factory Teaching) were opened. *FZO* schools were different from *FZU* schools as they had a slightly different title and only a six-month course instead of a course of from six months to two years. These schools were also not organized immediately at the factories where the pupils were to work. These schools trained the pupils with technical knowledge to become skilled workers. “The XIX and XX congress of the CPSU in 1952 and 1956 were the land marks in the evolution of vocational education. To familiarise the pupils with the practical application of science, the schools began to organize excursions to *Kolkhozes* and various industrial establishments”²³. Special attention was paid to workshop training. The students were thus prepared to take jobs immediately after leaving school. Correspondence courses were also available for interested students to continue their studies.

In 1966 all the republics had their own universities. Academies of science were first established in Uzbekistan, later followed by other Republics. Uzbek Academy (1943), Kazakh Academy (1945), Tajik Academy (1951), Turkmenistan

²¹“Political and Cultural Affairs :Technical Education In Central Asia”, *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1956, pp. 356-357.

²² *Ibid*, p.357.

²³ Mrs. V. Mohan, “The Socio-Economic Transformation of Soviet Central Asia as a means to the Nationalities Question of the USSR: The Muslim Dimension”, In R. G. Gidadhubli, ed., *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1987), p.38.

Academy (1951) and Kyrgyz Academy (1954) were established one after another. Education was reorganized under fifth Five Year Plan in Uzbekistan. Co-education was introduced in 1954-55 with special efforts to attract both sexes in study and intellectual pursuits.

The first higher educational institution in Central Asia, the National University was renamed in 1923 as the Central Asian University that was opened in Tashkent in April 1918²⁴. This University was composed of various departments like economics, mathematics, history, literature and philosophy. Department of pedagogy, agriculture, zoology, botany, chemistry and geography were added to it in 1920. This University organized expeditions and published numerous scientific papers. A number of institutes like irrigation engineering, mechanised agriculture, textile engineering and railway transport were also established in Uzbekistan. In 1930 pedagogical institutes were established in Samarkand, Bukhara, Namangan, Andizhan, Khorezm etc. Samarkand State University was opened in 1938.

The introduction of mass education and emergence of a highly qualified national intelligentsia accelerated the development of science in Uzbekistan. By 1919 the research institutes of health and physiotherapy and the institute of microbiology began to function. In 1926 the institute of hydraulic engineering was reorganised into the institute for research into irrigation. The Uzbek scientific research institute was set up in 1929 with the objective of solving the problems of industry, agriculture and cultural construction. "Highest level of technical institutes were mainly established at Tashkent. Some of the important institutes were Uzbek Agricultural Institute, Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanisation Engineers and Tashkent Institute of Railway Engineers etc. These institutes were mainly under the control of the Union ministry of higher education"²⁵. The Tashkent Textile Institute trained engineers for cleaning and processing cotton and jute. Graduates from this institute were sent to different parts of the Union where cotton was grown and

²⁴"Cultural Affairs: The Cultural Heritage of Uzbekistan Part I: Higher Education: Chapter II", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1956, p. 46.

²⁵n(21), p. 354.

processed. The Tashkent Agricultural Institute trained phytopathologists (for the purpose of pest control) experts and agricultural chemists. The Tashkent Institute of Railway Engineers was the only establishment among the five Republics, which trained engineers of three types-line construction, mechanical and movement. It was one of the apex bodies of railway education. The Tashkent Institute of Finance and Economics was one of the most important institutes in Central Asia, which attracted students from Kazakhstan and Tajikistan as well as Uzbekistan and Russians. During Second World War a number of institutes and societies were evacuated from European Russia to Uzbekistan and it greatly benefited the cultural and academic life of the Republic. In the post-war period the scientific institutes continued to develop and widen their sphere of work.

Spread of mass education enhanced the significance of books, magazines and new papers in Uzbek language. A good number of newspapers were published in Uzbek along with Russian, Greek, Tajik and Crimean Tatar. The first Soviet Uzbek paper *Ishtirokijun* (The Communist), appeared in 1918. Some of the other important newspapers, which made their appearance, were *Sovet Ozbekistoni* (Soviet Uzbekistan-first appeared in 1918), *Josh Leninchi* (Young Leninist-first appeared in 1925) and *Ozbekiston Khotin-Kizlari* (Women and Girls of Uzbekistan-first appeared in 1950)²⁶. Scientific and technical books were also produced in Uzbek language in the Uzbekistan. The number of books and pamphlets produced in Uzbekistan were more than the other Central Asian Republics.

This table3.2 will give a picture about the number of books and pamphlets produced in Uzbek.

²⁶ Shirin Akiner, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, (London, 1983), pp. 282-283.

Table 3.2

**Number of Books and Pamphlets published in Uzbek
Throughout the Russian Empire/USSR (1913-1979)**

	1913	1940	1965	1979
No. Of Titles	37	687	1,005	1,058
Print Run	86,000	9,509,000	18,863,000	26,399,000

Sources: Shirin Akiner, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, (London: Kegan Paul International Ltd, 1983), p. 283.

Employment

Industrialisation took priority in the Soviet period. One of the important features of Soviet strategy in Central Asia was to provide jobs to all meritorious men and women. The planned development opened up employment opportunities. The Soviet period was characterized by the continuous numerical growth of the working class. Soviet Union as a whole was short of labour power. The population of Central Asia, which was rising at a faster rate, catered to its need. The cotton cultivation required higher manpower input. High income from the cotton cultivation not only induced the expansion of labour consuming cotton cultivation but also influenced the process of transformation of the population from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations. Mechanisation of agriculture contributed to increase the productivity of man. Reorganisation through consolidation of small peasant holdings increased the division of labour. Instead of each peasant performing all the farm tasks, some

specialized in ploughing, some in animal husbandry, etc²⁷. Consolidation of land holdings widespread the use of tractors, combine-harvesting machines, and other agricultural tools. This mechanisation process helped in releasing labor for non-agricultural work.

Growth of urbanisation helped to draw the workers into an industrial milieu and transformed them from seasonal, semiproletarians into hereditary and full time workers.

The share of worker class increased among the employed population in Uzbekistan. "Workers constituted 39.2 percent of the employed persons in 1959, 45.7 percent in 1970 and 52.9 percent in Uzbekistan"²⁸. The rural population in Uzbekistan, including the collective farm peasantry possessed great potential not only for its reproduction but also for the replenishment of its working class. The scientific and technical progress increased the labour productivity. "During 1975-80, 290 branches and shops were created in Uzbekistan to employ nearly 30,000 people"²⁹.

The working class in towns of Uzbekistan was mainly multinational in character. In Uzbekistan 50 % workers in skilled industries were from non-indigenous ethnic groups. These workers were mainly comprised of Uzbeks, Russians, Ukrainians, Bylorussians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Kyrghyz, Kara kalpaks Tatars and many others³⁰. The main reason was that the redistribution of young people from collective farms into industry and other sectors was a great problem in Uzbekistan. It was very difficult to break away the traditional rural people from their family to seek jobs in cities or towns³¹. However, efforts were made by the government to create vocational-educational institutes as stated before. The aim behind it was to train personnel not only for agriculture but also for jobs in construction and industry. These schools

²⁷ Wilber, n(1), p. 37.

²⁸ "Drawing Rural Uzbeks Into Industry", *The Current Digest Of The Soviet Press*, Vol. 34, No. 8, March 24, 1982, p. 8.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 8.

³⁰ R. T. Kamilov, "Growth Of The Working Class Of Uzbekistan (1953-58): Sociology of Labor", *Soviet Sociology*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Spring 1964, p. 34.

³¹ A Patnaik, *Central Asia: Between Modernity and Tradition*, (Delhi, 1996), p. 105.

helped in solving this problem to some extent and the transferred surplus manpower from rural areas to different cities. Gradually the percentage of local nationalities increased in the work force. "According to 1959 and 1970 censuses and other calculations the number of Uzbeks increased from 26.7 percent in 1959 to 35.5 percent in 1973"³². The number of workers also increased in light industry, petroleum extraction and food industry.

The Soviet government showed its concern for the establishment of skilled labour force. Necessary modern equipments along with financial resources were sent to Uzbekistan. Skilled workforce was dispatched to train the native Uzbeks. But most of the indigenous skilled workers were concentrated in the non-industrial spheres like education, culture, administration, and scientific professions. "Uzbeks comprised less than one-third of the intelligentsia in the productive sphere of the republic, while in the professions out side production their share was about two-third in 1970"³³.

Women participation in light, food, textile and sewing industries was increased rapidly. But the participation of female workers in heavy industries and transportation was less. The growth of women specialists in the Central Asian Republics was remarkable. Women were promoted to prominent positions in the sphere of agriculture and they successfully competed with men for increasing productivity. "The number of female Uzbeks quadrupled from 4.7 percent in 1966 to 17.9 percent in 1979"³⁴. But drawing of women into industries was not an easy task as stated above. During 1970s to draw women into production, day-care centers for children were provided. Job training classes for women were set up. City bus routes were extended to sub-urban areas. "In 1970, 57 percent of the employees in the country's trade and public-catering system were women"³⁵.

From 1970s, Uzbekistan had certain amount of positive experience of making rational use of labour resources. Soviet government was able to draw the unemployed

³²n(28), p. 9

³³ Patnaik, n(31), p. 136.

³⁴ n(28), p. 9.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

able-bodied population, especially women into industries. Prevalence of unemployment in the Central Asian Republics was not officially accepted as a problem. This region was regarded as the region with sufficient manpower as compared to Eastern Siberia or Baltic Republics³⁶.

Hence, the Soviet government brought radical changes in different sectors of the society like health, education and employment for the development of the Uzbek people. The post 1924 period saw a remarkable development in the field of education and health in Uzbekistan. Large amount of investment was allocated to health and education. The Soviet government granted free medical care to Uzbek people. Qualified doctors along with polyclinics, hospitals, mother and child welfare centers, crèches and holiday homes were provided to the people. Epidemic diseases that took a heavy toll of life in the past, were completely eradicated. Though there was some problem in the field of tropical medicine and high birth rate, still the medical service provided to the people was satisfactory.

The new educational policy of the government liberated the Central Asian, particularly the Uzbeks from the clutches of the orthodox *mullahs*. Introduction of mass education and science among the people, broadened their outlook. Introduction of technical education produced a class of skilled work force. It became easy for the people to shift from agricultural occupation to non-agricultural occupation. The success achieved in the field of mass education enhanced the publication of books, magazines and newspapers in national languages, which subsequently gave birth to a class of intellectuals.

The planned economic development of Soviet government created employment opportunities for the people of Uzbekistan. The newly built vocational and technical institutes prepared the students not only for agriculture but also for jobs in non-agricultural sector. Along with this a new class of women workforce was created, which participated mainly in non-industrial jobs like education, health and

³⁶ R. G. Gidadhubli, "Soviet Central Asia: Socio-Economic Challenges to Development", In K. Warikoo and Dawa Norbu, eds., *Ethnicity and Politics in Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1992), p.133.

culture. It was a difficult task to bring the traditional Uzbek women into the field of heavy industries. Another negative fact was that the traditional rural Uzbeks did not come to the urban areas for employment on a large scale. They considered their agricultural occupation as a better option. However, the Soviet government had some positive experience of creating opportunities for the unemployed people.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Bolshevik revolution brought about a new environment in Central Asia. After the revolution the Soviet policies and programmes thoroughly transformed the entire region and its people. As development of a community depends mainly upon maintenance of law and order, condition of women, religious situation, institution of marriages etc. in faces of many obstacles, the government set out to equalise both the sexes, maintain law and order and adopt new policy towards Central Asian Muslims.

Law and Order Situation

Muslim laws regulated by the native clergies were prevalent in Central Asia before its incorporation into Russia. Uniform Soviet law replaced these Muslim laws by 1927. Important acts were passed such as the principles of Legislation on the Land, the principles of Legislation on Marriage and the family, the principles of Legislation on Public Health and others. "Measures were taken by the Councils of ministers to enlarge the rights of the executive committees of different republics for planning, guidance of industry and social development"¹.

Lenin regarded bribery as an enemy of the society². The Soviet power adopted different measures to combat bribery, mismanagement, corruption and other social maladies. Legal service was reorganised to combat the anti-social activities. Industrial sabotage in the sense of deliberate mismanagement of the state enterprises was regarded as serious offence. "Prior to October revolution female lawyers were not permitted to be judges. But by 1977, one third of the judges were women. The

¹ P. F. Pigalev, "Improving The Functioning Of The Soviets Of Working People's Deputies", *The Soviet Law and Government*, (New York), Vol. 9, No. 3, Winter 1970-71, P. 225.

² V. I. Lenin, *On The Soviet State Apparatus: Articles and Speeches*, (Moscow, 1969), p. 317.

Leninist principle of broadly involving women in the government of the state was implemented in the whole of USSR”³. Acts were made to provide guarantees in labor relations involving pregnant women or women with children of nursing age⁴. Laws were made to free women from night work.

Communist Party Central Committee held different conferences and serious discussions in Uzbekistan about increasing responsibility to strengthen the state, labour discipline, socialist legality and law and order. Measures were taken by the Soviet administration with to combat hooliganism, parasitism, violation of labour discipline etc. Vigorous campaign was made to combat bribery, mismanagement and other negative manifestations of life.

But the safeguarding of public life was not satisfactory in some cities like Navoi, Namangan and some parts of Tashkent. To struggle against the crime, groups of qualified personnel of various departments and organisations were sent to different provinces and districts. The results of their work were discussed at the party’s provincial committee meetings. These meetings sharply discussed the shortcomings in the work of law-enforcement agencies and primary party organisations to prevent violations of law. Cooperation between administrative agencies and public organizations in preventing crime was quite effective. People’s Volunteer Police aide detachments and operational Young Communist League detachments (YCL) worked jointly to strengthen the law and order. “ In Samarkand and other cities, People’s Volunteer Police aide detachments and YCL detachments started patrolling directly in public places, actively identifying people who frequently idled away hours when they should be working or studying, or who were drunk heavily and disturbing the public life”⁵. These incidences were immediately reported to the officials. Violators of law were awarded punishments.

³ Female Lawyers, “ Statistical Data”, *The Soviet Law and Government*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Fall 1977 p. 88.

⁴ N. Sheptulina, “Improving Guarantees Of Women’s Labor Rights Under The Conditions Of Developed Socialist Society”, *The Soviet Law and Government*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Winter 1974-75, p. 75.

⁵ “Uzbeks Urged to Step Up War on Crime” *The Current Digest Of The Soviet Press*, Vol. 35, No. 14, May 4, 1983, p. 12.

The Soviet government enlarged the role of legal personnel in ministries, agencies, enterprises, and organizations etc. to strengthen the activity of the economic organizations⁶. New laws were made to reduce overtime, eliminate weekend and holiday work. Rights of enterprises were expanded. Role of legal services were also improved at collective farms, state farms and agricultural agencies. Cases of cheating, underemployment, use of wrong prices, supply, sale of machinery, fertiliser etc. forced the Soviets to improve the legal services. "Agricultural bodies were instructed to organize legal service to farms and to make use of legal means to improve the economies of collective and state farms"⁷. As a result of this number of lawyers as well as number of collective and state farms to which legal service was available grew considerably.

The Soviet government of Uzbekistan reorganized the legal services of the collective farms, state farms, and different industrial organisations. Even the legal services in the villages were reorganised "Thus, in the system of the Ministry of state farms of Uzbekistan, where until 1971 there was a single lawyer, legal personnel were introduced by 1973, in 26 state farms and in 1 poultry farm"⁸. The rural lawyers did a great work to protect collective and state farmland.

In spite of the government's efforts to control the law and order of the society, many violations of law were committed in the ministry of agriculture, local industry, consumer services and in trade and motor transport etc in the early 1970s. Certain officials failed to use the full force of the law for safeguarding of public property. Large-scale theft, falsified output, documents and bribes taken by officials alarmed the Soviet administrators. The existing police service was reorganised. Number of police officials was increased in public places, particularly in the evening. Strict disciplinary penalties were imposed on a number of people's courts for red tape and improper disposition of cases. Guilty officials were dismissed from their jobs. Thus the Soviets enlarged their legal activities to maintain the law and order.

⁶ N. N. Gorbunov, "The Legal Service Of An Economic Branch Ministry", *The Soviet Law and Government*, Vol. 10, No. 4, Spring 1972, p. 347.

⁷ G. Petrov, "Rural Lawyers", *The Soviet Law and Government*, Vol. 11, No. 4, Spring 1973, p. 375.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 376.

Emancipation of Women

After the great October revolution of 1917, position of women was radically changed through education and other social measures. Muslim women of Central Asia came out of *purdah* system and afforded opportunities for education to take active part in creative construction. "In the very first months following the October revolution the Soviet government abrogated all the old laws which humiliated the women and denied her equal status with men"⁹. For the emancipation of women it was necessary to make them politically conscious and convince them that they were equal with the men. "On the eve of international women's day in 1925, Stalin remarked that women are the harbinger of the great future of the masses"¹⁰. Afterwards efforts were made to make it possible through education and propaganda. The Soviet government also took stern action against the traditional customs concentrating on the status of women. "Changes were made in the system of law courts (September 1927) and the penal code (April 1928)"¹¹. *Shariat* courts were banned. New codes of law were introduced by the Soviet government. The Soviets targeted the old Muslim practices like dowry (*Kalym*), child marriage, forced marriage etc. Polygamy and child marriage became the thing of the past after the establishment of Soviet power. The Soviet government also made efforts to get women into the labour market and into the structure of the party. The main objective was to change the family forms of behaviour, by bringing out the women out of *purdah* and by giving them income. It was also hoped that women cadres would be able to impose a new model of modern womanhood, who were still seeking a special place in the society.

The formation of Uzbek Republic in 1923 marked the beginning of a period of profound social change, particularly for Uzbek women. The position of women was revived in this period. The Soviet state took steps to free women from the strict

⁹ Devendra Kaushik, *Central Asia in Modern Times: A History from the Early 19th Century* (Moscow, 1970), p. 249.

¹⁰ *Works of J. V. Stalin*, Vol. 7, 1925, (Moscow, 1954), p. 48.

¹¹ Oliver Roy, *The New Central Asia: The Creations Of Nations*, (London & New York, 2000), p. 79.

Islamic laws and local customs. "In 1927 the Soviet government launched *hujum* in Uzbekistan against all traditional, patriarchal social practices, including the marriage of under-age girls, bride price and the most visible symbolism of this oppression, the veil"¹². Efforts were made to educate the Uzbek women. The reactionary *mullah*, *bais* and *kulaks* formed a joint front against the women education. But the Soviet government carried out struggle against these religious fanatics and introduced education among the women. In 1928, 120 schools were opened for girls in Uzbekistan. Gradually number of girl students from primary schools up to technical colleges was also increased. As eight years of schooling was compulsory in Soviet Union, the attendance of girls of local nationalities in Uzbekistan was satisfactory. During the Second World War period special evening classes were held and to meet the shortage of teachers, short training courses were organised for Uzbek women and girls with 8-year education. "The number of girl students attending *VUZ* and *Tekhnikums* also increased in Uzbekistan"¹³. By which prominent Uzbek women scholars, professors, scientists, *Sovkhoz* directors and *Kolkhoz* chairmen came into existence. A new class of female doctors, engineers, professors, writers, artists etc came into existence. The number of women physicians out numbered those of the men physicians. "In 1969, women physicians comprised 72 percent in Kazakhstan, 66 percent in Kyrghyzstan, 61 percent in Uzbekistan and 60 percent in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, where as in United States women comprised only 7 percent of all physicians"¹⁴.

The Muslim women of Uzbekistan came out of the *purdah* system and were increasingly drawn into the economic activities. Collectivisation of agriculture and expansion of industrial capacity enabled women to avail the educational opportunities and discard their *purdah* in favour of a modern life style. One of the main objectives of the *hujum* in 1940s was the conversion of women into a productive labour force. Native women were holding responsible posts in every profession. There were prominent Uzbek women as scholars, scientists, *Sovkhoz* directors and *Kolkhoz*

¹² R. Vasundhara Mohan, "Status Of Women In Central Asia: A Study Of Uzbekistan", *Contemporary Central Asia*, (New Delhi, Kolkata), Vol. 6, No. 1-2, 2002, p. 45.

¹³ "Women In Uzbekistan", *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1968, p. 41.

¹⁴ "Women In The USSR: Statistical Data", *Soviet Sociology*, Vol. 11, No. 1, Summer 1972, p. 72.

chairmen. "By November 1964, a total of 18,700 Uzbek women with higher and 20,900 with specialised secondary education were employed in the economy of USSR"¹⁵.

But most of the women were employed in the textile or other light and food industries, where the main concentration of the labour force was female. As the majority of the indigenous people lived in rural areas, the female workers formed a high proportion of labour force in rural areas. "In 1964, 52 percent of those worked in the *Kolkhozes* of Uzbekistan were women as compared with an all-Union average of 55 percent"¹⁶. Campaigns were also undertaken to train girls as cotton harvester and agricultural machinery operators.

The following table 4.1 about the percentage of women workers in collective farms of different Republics.

Table 4.1
Women as percentage of the total collective farmers

	1969	1970	1980
USSR	53	50	47
RSFSR	51	49	44
Uzbek SSR	53	48	50
Kyrgyz SSR	50	43	44
Tajik SSR	48	43	46
Turkmen SSR	51	48	49

Sources: *Women In The USSR: Statistical Data, Soviet Sociology* (New York), Vol. 11, No. 1, Summer 1972, p. 71. and A Patnaik, *Central Asia: Between Modernity and Tradition*, (Delhi: Konark Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996), p. 138.

¹⁵ Ibid, P. 43.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 44.

From the above given data, we can conclude that women constituted about half of the able-bodied population in the collective farms of Uzbekistan. "But they constituted less than 3 percent of the mechanised agricultural workers. Women constituted 99 percent of manual workers in the state farms. The women workers mainly formed about one third of scientific workers, one-eighth of the doctors of sciences, one-tenth of the professors and about two-fifth of the head doctors in 1980"¹⁷.

Women also played an important role in the public life of Uzbekistan, since their representation in Republican and local Soviets was impressive. Thus 30.8 percent of the deputies to the Uzbek Supreme Soviet in 1967 and 44.1 percent of the Deputies to the local Soviets elected in 1965 were women, a large number belonging to local nationalities¹⁸. Representation of women of local nationalities on the Presidium of the Uzbek Supreme Soviet increased in the subsequent period.

Religious Situation

As Central Asian society was in a state of complete subordination to the orthodox *mullahs*, it was impossible for the Soviets to loosen their grip overnight. So the Soviets adopted a softer policy towards them. "During the first years following revolution, religious believers were added into the rank of Communist party"¹⁹. After the revolution the Soviet government did not try to separate the Central Asian Muslims immediately from their religion. "Lenin declared that the *mullahs* would be allowed to co-exist with the new political organisation"²⁰. On the popular demand, mosques and *medresehs* were returned to their former owners in Central Asia on the plea that the government was concerned exclusively with the economic progress of the region and it did not want to enter in to a struggle with Islam. But this policy

¹⁷ A. Patnaik, *Central Asia: Between Modernity and Tradition*, (Delhi, 1996), p. 138.

¹⁸ n,(14), p. 42.

¹⁹ Mrs. V. Mohan, "The Socio-Economic Transformation of Soviet Central Asia as a means to the Nationalities Question of the USSR: The Muslim Dimension", In R. G. Gidadhubli, ed., *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 41

²⁰ R. R. Sharma, *A Marxist Model of Social Change, Soviet Central Asia: 1917-1940*, (Delhi, 1979), p. 215.

changed during the Stalinist period. Now the mullah and the mosque became the objective of the attack. Anti religious programmes were launched. Varieties of taxes were imposed on clerics like Imams, Muftis, *Qazis* (judges). Clergy was deprived of various privileges. An amendment was made to the Soviet constitution in 1936 and it did away with the provision of religious propaganda. The Stalinist constitution of 1936, which prohibited *mullahs* from undertaking religious propaganda. There was also a forceful campaign against the mosques. Abolition of *Shariat* courts, religious courts and mosques became the aim of the anti-religious campaign in Uzbekistan. All *Waqf* properties were confiscated and financial power of the Muslim clerics was crushed.

But on the eve of World War II, Soviet government gave a new orientation to their religious policy in Central Asia. Defence considerations undoubtedly played an important role in such orientation to the policy. The leaders urgently required support and cooperation from the masses. Thus they decided to stop militant anti-religious campaign. During the war period, Soviet leaders gave a new shape to their religious policy that facilitated the consolidation of their political system. The judiciary reassured the masses to profess any religion according to their wish. Mosques and churches were reopened. Muslims also reacted favourably to this policy. "The chief of the Central Muslim Board, Abdurakhman Rassulev, appealed to the Muslim brothers of the world to prey to Allah to help in defeating the enemy of the red army"²¹.

After the war, Soviet leaders decided to play the Muslim card in a very prudent manner. The growing influence of the United States and panTurkism after the World War II was another important cause of Soviet's liberal policy towards the Muslims. Militants were asked to stop anti-religious campaign. Muslims also responded in a positive way to this policy. During this period Soviet government reorganised the Central Muslim Religious Board. "The Board was divided into four "Spiritual Directorates" in 1944, Tashkent, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan, Ufa European Russia and Siberia, Makhach-Qala, Northern Caucasus and Daghestan, and

²¹ Ashok Modak, " Soviet Muslim Policy", In R. G. Gidadhubli, ed., *Socio-Economic Transformation Of Soviet Central Asia*, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 74.

Baku, Transcaucasia”²². Each board was autonomous in both administrative and canonical matters. Mosques were reopened. Theological seminars were arranged for the training of the religious leaders. “Government also reopened two *medresehs*, the Mir-I-Arab in Bukhara and the Imam Ismail al-Bukhari in Tashkent for giving training to the religious leaders”²³. These *medresehs* were asked to give admission to those students who had completed the compulsory seven-year general education. They were also compelled to include non-religious courses in their curricula. Henceforth the Soviet government attached a high degree of importance to the influence of Islam. “The incidence in the Central Asian press of violent criticism of Islamic doctrine and practice was quite frequent, but after the issue of the decree of November 1954, it decreased to a great extent”²⁴.

Cultural exchanges were also encouraged between Uzbekistan and different Muslim states. As Tashkent became the head quarter of Islamic religious board, it drew the attention of the Muslims of other countries. “In July 1979 in Tashkent to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the journal *Muslims of the Soviet East* was attended by delegates from Jordan, Iraq, India, Turkey, Tunisia, Pakistan, Kuwait, Iran, Lebanon, Japan, Bulgaria and Ethiopia”²⁵. By 1980, Soviet Muslim leaders were sent to different countries to propagate the Soviet Muslim Policy.

Institution of Marriage

The first decades after the Soviet revolution in Central Asia witnessed a number of radical changes in the society. Lenin pursued a more meaningful and systematic policy towards the Central Asian community. Evil practices like *Kalym* (bride price) and *Kutarma* (keeping the bride till the dowry has been paid) were forbidden.

²² Ibid, p. 74.

²³ Shirin Akiner, *Islamic Peoples of the Soviet Union*, (London, 1983), p. 284.

²⁴ “Russia And Islam: New Trends In Soviet policy: Islam”, *Central Asian Review*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1956, p.2.

²⁵ Gidadhubli, ed., n (21), p. 78.

The post-revolutionary period saw the cross-national marriages, which was one of the indices of ethnic interaction and mutual influence of people. Among the tribal groups of Kyrghyz, there were some who traced their origin to Kyrghyz-Kazakh marriages. The Karakalpaks also had long marital ties with the Kazakhs. Marriages between Tajiks and Kyrghyz girls also took place, because the bride price or *Kalym* for a Kirghiz woman was lower than that of a Tajik. There was also a certain amount of marriages between the Kazakhs and Tatars. Mainly two ethnic groups in Central Asia—the Dungs and the local Central Asian Arabs were highly intolerant of marriages outside their own milieu even to persons of the same faith. The Dungs were strictly adhered to both ethnic and local endogamy.

Marriages between different ethnic groups also marked its special appearance in Uzbekistan. Among the Karakalpaks of the Ferghana valley, it was acceptable to marry girls of other nationalities, primarily Uzbeks. But marriages of Kara kalpak girls to Uzbek men were condemned. In Ferghana, marriages of Tajiks to Kyrghyz and Uzbek women occurred in earlier periods. The marriages between Tajiks and Kyrghyz girls were took place, because the bride price (*Kalym*) for a Kyrghyz woman was lower than for a Tajik. A new ethnographic group *Kurma* came into existence in Uzbekistan. "The *Kurma* group constituted a product not only of interbreeding but perhaps to an even greater degree of social mixing of parts of various Kazakh and Uzbek tribal people"²⁶. Mixed ethnic marriages increased in Uzbekistan in the mid-1930s. "According to the data available in 1936, total of 121,228 marriages occurred in Central Asian republics, 52,381 in Uzbekistan, 41,607 in Kazakhstan, 8,202 in Kyrghyzstan, 9,693 in Turkmenistan and 9,445 in Tajikstan. Of these marriages 15,695 were inter ethnic, with 6,224 took place in Uzbekistan, 5,362 in Kazakhstan, 1,352 in Kyrghyzstan, 1,400 in Turkmenistan and 1,356 in Tajikstan"²⁷.

Postwar period marriages between members of local nationalities marked some improvement over the past. Marriages of Uzbeks to women of the Kazakh, Kara

²⁶ N. P. Borzykh, "The Prevalence Of Ethnically Mixed Marriages In The Central Asian Republics And Kazakhstan In The 1930s", *Soviet Sociology*, Vol. 11, No. 3-4, Winter-Spring 1972-73, p. 395.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.396.

kalpak and particularly Tatar nationalities were noted. Uzbeks preferred marrying girls of other groups rather than giving their own daughters to others. Girls marrying out side their nationality were generally discouraged. In Uzbekistan as well as in all other Central Asian republics number of male involved in mixed marriages exceeded the number of married women. "In 1980s Uzbek men marrying women from other nationality was 6.6% of the total marriages, whereas women marrying men from another nationality was 5 % of the total marriages"²⁸. Mixed marriages involving Uzbek girls were even fewer in rural areas.

Uzbeks willingly married Tatar women whom they considered to be most cultured. Marriages between Uzbeks and Russian girls also occurred during the war period. Uzbek soldiers married the Russian girls. In rural families, non-Uzbek women generally had a good knowledge of the Uzbek language. They even learnt the ethnic lifestyle, etiquette and at the same time they also brought their own culture to the Uzbek families. The children used to speak both the languages of their parents. They were mainly given Uzbek names but some times Russian names, if the mother was a Russian girl. Divorce was not popular among the traditional Uzbeks. Large number of children increased the size of the family. In short, we can say that the traditional Muslim society had a high influence on the family system, which was reflected by the large families, less mixed marriages and few divorces.

Mahalla System

"Traditionally the Central Asian community relied on the *mahalla* (peasant community) as its base"²⁹. For centuries, *mahallas* regulated production and distribution of the end product in rural and urban areas. It organized and controlled people's private life in Central Asia. But the degree of control and organization varied from place to place. The *mahallas* owned the irrigation system, without which farming was unthinkable in this zone. The state was the indirect owner of the water and pasture land. The main custodian and consumer was the *mahalla*.

²⁸ Patnaik, n(17), p. 104.

²⁹ Yuriy Kulchik, *et.al, Central Asia After the Empire*, (London, 1996), p.8.

Even after the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia, *mahallas* remained unaffected. The new government did not intervene in their functioning nor infringe on their structures. The Soviet government repaired the old canals and water system. But the small watering system remained in the hand of the *Kishlaks* (villages) and *mahallas*³⁰. In *Kishlaks* the newly formed collective farms did not contradict the old practices. The new production units were formed on the basis of the *mahalla* or tribal principles. The Soviet rule introduced new educational system, urbanization, and industrialization in the traditional society of Central Asia. But it failed to undermine the old age customs and rituals of those people. The newly formed *kolkhozes* were divided into several *mahallas*. Soviets did little to disturb the *mahalla* system.

During the Soviet period large parts of Uzbekistan's fabled gray economy rested on *mahalla* foundation. After the establishment of Soviet power, new state courts, schools, hospitals replaced the old traditional system. "But as a glaring exception to this policy, *mahallas* were incorporated into the Soviet system of organization rather than targeted for dissolution"³¹. It is difficult to say whether the Russians saw *mahalla* as impossible to eradicate without risking revolt or they saw the institution as complementing development. But finally, Soviet government decided not to disturb it.

Just as pre-Russian government dealt with the *mahalla* as a basic administrative unit, the Soviet government retained *mahalla* as a local-self governing association in Uzbekistan. *Mahallas* often included collection of institutions, like a bazaar, a mosque, a barbershop, a teahouse (*chaikhana*) or a general store. *Mahallas* were named sometimes for a person, sometimes for an event etc. "In urban areas *mahallas* had one or two gates. Access to it was possible through these gates during the day and they were closed at night"³². In a *mahalla*, while the most of the female

³⁰ Ibid, p.8.

³¹ [WWW.Kentlaw.edu/jicl/articles/spring 2002/jicl% 20 sievers% 20 mahalla% 20 final5 20 for5 20 publications. pdf](http://WWW.Kentlaw.edu/jicl/articles/spring%202002/jicl%20sivers%20mahalla%20final5%20for5%20publications.pdf), p. 113.

³² Paul Georg Geiss, "Mahalla and kinship relations: A study on residential communal commitment structures in Central Asia of the 19th century", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2001, p.98.

socialised within the family courtyards and streets, men socialized in the mosques or in the market. Children socialized mainly on the streets. During the Soviet era, one used to become a member of a *mahalla* by virtue of residency, not by his choice. But they could maintain an association with a close relative's *mahalla*. When a woman got married, she had to shift to her husband's *mahalla*. In the family system the youngest son used to inherit the family home. He was also expected to take care of his parents, who remain in the family home, in their old age.

The *mahalla Aksaqal* became a symbolically elected chairperson of the *mahalla*, whose appointment was controlled by the local party apparatus. He was assisted by a subordinate committee. He was normally from a reputed family and maintained influence and authority due to his wealth and personal integrity. In case of external and internal disputes, he was contacted and he sought to settle conflicts peacefully. By the late Soviet period, the office occupied by the *mahalla* committee often looked like any Soviet office, decorated with Soviet symbols.

Every *mahalla* had its own mosque, cemetery and communal buildings. Though the buildings might have belonged to a person or institution, the infrastructure was regarded as communal property. The mosque was the place where people met, exchanged their ideas and also made decisions. The *mullah* was religious leader of the *mahalla*. He used to lead the family ceremonies like marriage, funerals and memorial days. *Mahallas* were also the place where the junior members learnt to show respect to the older ones.

New Soviet laws did not disturb the *Mahallas*, the guardian of traditions as it maintained the ideological appearance of a Soviet institution. As an institution the *mahalla* was recognised by the Soviet state, incorporated in to the system of Soviet institutions and thus legitimised³³. For these reasons *mahallas* successfully survived the Soviet period.

³³ Victoria Koroteyeva and Ekaterina Makarova, "The Assertion of Uzbek National Identity: Nativization or State-Building Process?", In Touraj Atabaki and John O'Kane, ed., *Post-Soviet Central Asia*, (London and New York, 1998), p. 139.

Hence, after the formation of the Uzbek Republic the Soviet government tried its best for the upliftment of the Uzbek people by adopting reforms in various sectors of the society.

As maintenance of the law and order is a key element in the progress of a society, the Soviets realised the fact and took appropriate measures as stated before. The government introduced new laws in place of traditional Muslim laws. Legal service was reorganised and expanded to combat bribery, hooliganism, mismanagement, corruption and other social maladies, which hindered the growth of a society.

Emancipation of women was the hallmark of social development in Uzbekistan. Launch of *hujum* in 1927, opened the path for a social change among the Uzbek women. Traditional social practices like polygamy, child marriage, bride price (*Kalym*) and *purdah* system were abolished to liberate the Uzbek women from the clutches of the Muslim society. New laws adopted by the government ensured the equality of both sexes. It is well known that higher the level of education among women, more is the prosperity of the society to which they belong. Hence the Soviet government gave emphasis on expanding education among women. Introduction of scientific and technical education in the subsequent period created a class of qualified and professional women in the Uzbek society. Though it was not easy for the Uzbek women to come out completely from the male dominated society, still education made them conscious to a large extent and they played active role in the nation building process.

In case of religion, Soviets handled Islam with utmost care. Lenin started the liberal policy towards the Muslims after the October revolution, which took a different shape in Stalin's period. But the Second World War created necessary conditions for the Soviets to apply peaceful policy towards the Muslims. Spread of education, cultural exchanges between Uzbekistan and other countries and attack on traditional beliefs created a new consciousness among Muslims.

Institution like marriages played a dominant role in the process of transformation of the society. Ethnically mixed marriages increased particularly among Uzbek men and women of other nationalities. It resulted in emergence of new ethnographic groups as stated before. Economic as well as cultural prosperity among Uzbeks created favourable conditions to mix themselves with other nationalities. In case of *mahalla* system, they retained their identity as before. Soviet government did not intervene in the private life of the *mahallas*.

Thus the Soviet government made remarkable achievement in transforming socially and culturally backward Uzbek society into a healthy and prosperous society.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

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The historical experience of Central Asia demonstrates a remarkable socio-economic transformation of the society. The nineteenth century Central Asia under the Tsarist rule marked wide spread poverty, antiquated technology, primitive agriculture, small raw processing industry, low productivity and wide spread illiteracy. The feudal society of Central Asia was drawn into the commercial network of Russian capitalism under the Tsarist rule. Tsarist Russia started growing cotton in the fertile land of Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan. Cotton oriented economy of Tsarist Russia failed to provide any significant impetus to the development of the poor masses. The poor peasants were exploited by the money lenders and feudal landlords. Side by side the society was under the regulation of orthodox Islamic laws. No striking changes took place in the field of health, education and liberation of women. Thus colonialism slowed down the process of socio-economic development as a whole.

The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was followed by radical transformation of the social and economic structure of Uzbekistan. By 1924, after the national delimitation process Uzbek Republic entered into a new era. The development of the industrial process under the new social relations was markedly different from the pre-revolutionary period. However, the extent of change in the developmental process was limited both by the influence of the earlier pattern that continued for a long period and also by the requirements created by the growth of the productive forces under the new socio-economic relations in the Soviet period.

The new agrarian relations established after 1924, freed the peasantry from various forms of bondage and indebtedness. The removal of colonial-feudal relations created conditions for the gradual socialization of the means of production. These changes freed the productive forces in Uzbekistan, which led to rapid increase in production. Modernisation, mechanisation and diversification of agriculture with expansion in irrigation and transport established new social relations in Uzbekistan.

Growth of modern technology and its implementation in transport system bridged the gap between natural resources and local industries. Collectivisation of agriculture replaced land estates and peasant proprietorship. But it had some negative impact on livestock. The number of livestock had fallen drastically during the collectivization process. However, revival of the number of livestock was made in the post war period with the coming of Khrushchev into power.

The extensive irrigation work no doubt made the desert Central Asian region into a fertile area. But at the same time it had its major negative impact on environment. The Aral Sea, the largest basin of Central Asia started shrinking persistently, with negative ecological and economic consequences¹. As much part of water flow of the Aral Sea was turned to cotton and grain fields, its volume has changed. "The sea level fell from 53 meters in 1960 to 40.3 meters in 1987 and the surface area shrunk from 67,000 to 41,000 km². Another negative outcome of extensive irrigation has been the salinisation of soil, which caused downfall in agricultural product per hectare. In 1985, highly saline soil constituted 60 percent of the total irrigated land in Uzbekistan. Intensive cotton monoculture and massive use of fertilisers exhausted the soil of Uzbekistan.

Though these are some of the negative aspects of the economic development under the Soviets, especially in Uzbekistan, growth and modernisation in industrial sector was quite impressive. The most noticeable growth of the productive forces was taking place in the sphere of industry. The Uzbek Soviet Republic could now overcome the narrow one-sided specialization of the colonial period and transform itself into industrial economy. The growth of industry was remarkable and so rose the share of the industry in the national economy. Industrial development created conditions for the integrated development of the region, which came to acquire its own fuel, power and machine-building base. Thus industry in Uzbekistan, underwent qualitative transformation during the period 1924-85. By 1985, Uzbekistan had already come to possess a powerful and modern industry.

¹ "Rethinking Central Asian Irrigation", *The Current Digest of The Soviet Press*, Vol. 32, No. 12, 23 April 1980, p. 7.

The rapid development of industry not only led to the growth of industrial centers but also changed the character of the existing urban centers into modern industrial towns. While Uzbekistan's new socio-economic relations provided industrial character to urban areas of the region, the speedy growth of the productive forces had its impacts on the migration process. The manpower requirements of both agriculture and industry went on expanding, while rural to urban migration of the indigenous Uzbeks could not make much progress. The incentives and manpower requirements in agriculture strengthened the ties of the rural population to land. Traditional rural Uzbeks also did not want to break away from the joint family to move to culturally different urban areas². In short, the diverse pulls of both industry and agriculture characterized the social mobility process of Uzbekistan.

The existing pattern of industrial and social change influenced the composition, structure and growth of Uzbekistan's working class. The specific nature of urban migration created a highly heterogeneous or multinational work force in Uzbekistan. The participation of the indigenous population in the industrial work force was highly disproportionate to their share in the total population. Nationalities with a higher level of urbanisation had also a share of workers in their social structure. Central Asian women had the lowest level of participation in the industrial labour force. Educated urban women were mainly engaged in professional works, whereas rural females were employed in agricultural activities. However, the working class of Uzbekistan had come to acquire certain characteristics, which it did not possess before.

The Communist Party and the Soviet government demonstrated particular concern for the establishment of a skilled local labour force in Uzbekistan. The Soviet government sent necessary industrial equipment, provided substantial financial resources and dispatched hundreds of skilled workers, engineers and technicians to develop large-scale training of local personnel. In addition to it, Uzbek workers were trained on a large-scale at the factories and mills of Moscow, Leningrad and other industrial centers of the country.

² A Patnaik, *Central Asia: Between Modernity and Tradition*, (Delhi, 1996), p. 104.

Soviets were convinced by the fact that there could not be any real equality of people as long as non-Russian nationalities remained socially and culturally backward. So they spared no efforts or resources to bring about a social revolution. The major vehicles of social revolution in Central Asia were the new educational system and improved health care system. The new educational policy not only broke the hold of tradition on the population but also prepared them to take up new and non-traditional occupations. Growth of Science and technology accelerated the modernisation process in Uzbekistan. The new educational system produced skilled workforce, necessary scientific and technical personnel and managerial cadres. While trying to bring different nationalities together, the Soviet government did not destroy the national languages and cultures rather allowed them to flourish in their own territories. High rate of literacy changed the life style of the Central Asian Muslims and they became less fanatic towards religion. The rapid promotion of education and knowledge created a new culture.

Investment in health care is a key factor in economic as well as social development. Soviets realised the truth and the progress in health care achieved by them, particularly in Uzbekistan was quite impressive. Free medical care was guaranteed to the people of Central Asia. A vast network of polyclinics, hospitals, mother and child consultation centers, crèches, sanatoriums took care of the health of the people³. A relatively educated and healthy people emerged out of Soviet strategy, which led to the utilization of their increased energy and talents for further development of their society.

The dramatic changes made in the socio-economic sector of Central Asian Republics under the Soviets rule included emancipation of women. The Muslim women came out of the traditional orthodox society and took active part in the nation making process. The formation of Uzbekistan as a separate Republic in 1924 marked profound social change for Uzbek women. Uzbek women freed themselves from the strict religious laws and created conditions to join the workforce. Progress in

³ Devendra Kaushik, *Socialism in Central Asia: A study in the Transformation of Socio-Ethnic Relations in Soviet Central Asia*, (Bombay, 1976), p. 145.

educational sector produced a new class of skilled women in the whole of Central Asia. Steps were also taken to eradicate social evils like polygamy, bride price, child marriage etc. Though the Muslim women got the equal status with that of men, it was not easy enough for the Uzbek women to escape the traditional male dominated society⁴.

As regards religion, Soviets handled Islam with much caution, except for a brief period. The Soviet's Muslim policy was influenced by several factors such as security concern of the Soviet government, style of functioning of different leaders, level of socio-economic development of the Central Asian Muslims. Lenin was reluctant to attack Islam and Islamic beliefs immediately after the October revolution. He adopted a liberal attitude towards the Muslims. But this policy took a new turn in Stalin's era. However the Soviet government could not afford to have the displeasure and hostility of the Muslims by suppressing Islam. Hence, they followed the policy of peaceful co existence in the subsequent period. Spread of education; campaign for changing the outlook of Muslim women and attack on old religious beliefs made the Muslims more liberal and less fanatic towards Islam.

Institutions like marriages and *Mahalla* system also had their effect in the social revolution. In the Central Asian Republics ethnically mixed marriages played an important role. Developed industry and agriculture along with the prosperity and culture of the people of Soviet Central Asia and Uzbekistan in particular led to the increased the number of mixed marriages. As a result, new ethnographic groups came into existence, particularly in Uzbekistan. Newly formed groups constituted the product not only of interbreeding but also perhaps to an even greater degree of social mixing of different nationalities. But the traditional society of Uzbekistan did not prefer to allow the Uzbek girls to marry outside the group, whereas there was no restriction for the Uzbek men to marry girls of other nationalities.

⁴R. Vasundhara Mohan, " Status Of Women In Central Asia: A Study Of Uzbekistan", *Contemporary Central Asia*, Vol. 6, No. 1-2, 2002, p. 43.

The traditional *mahalla* system was left untouched by the Soviets. As the *mahallas* were regarded as the custodian of traditions, Russians did not intervene in their functioning and did not infringe on their structures. *Mahallas* remained as local-self governing residential associations like before.

In the Central Asian Republics and Uzbekistan the change from the old age tradition to a new modern era was not altogether smooth. Economic achievement was ahead of the social development. Some western scholars have tried to ignore the contribution of the socialist system in the remarkable economic and social achievement. It is also argued that the success achieved in these Republics was not up to mark. But to change a traditional and economically backward tribal society in a historically brief period was not an easy task. Despite their shortcomings, the Soviet leaders had a genuine desire of giving people within the Soviet family of nations their due share as well as recognition. The Soviet policy marked a distinctive improvement over the past.

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